March 11, 2022

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Commissioners

From: Lisa Sprinkle, Marketing Manager

Re: March Staff Report and Strategic Plan/Program Budget First Quarter Report

Executive Director (Lorrie Pearson)

- The District was awarded GFOA's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for our 2020 fiscal year. It is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting.
- At the end of this report is a summary of the progress made on the program budget actions in the FY2022 budget during the first quarter. Feedback on the format of this report is requested.
- Several senior staff attended the second of a two-part online seminar on performance
 measurement through the Civic Leadership Academy at Northern Illinois University. An
 interdepartmental team was then formed to operationalize the strategic plan, including
 identifying actionable steps that can both be measured and incorporated in future budget
 documents.
- As part of the Champaign County First Virtual Advocacy Week March 7-10, I spoke with Senators Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth and Representative Rodney Davis to request assistance facilitating conversations with Norfolk Southern and Union Pacific railroads to overcome barriers to expansion of the KRT. Michael Daab presented the same information to State Senators Mike Marron and Scott Bennett and the DCEO Deputy Director Jonathan McGee due to scheduling conflicts.
- Attending the IAPD Legislative Conference in Springfield on March 8 and 9, I met with State Senator Scott Bennett. At his request, we have invited him to an upcoming prescribed burn so he can learn more about that process. The conference included an informative session on the importance of including diversity in procurement processes at a time when we are discussing that topic.
- Attended the Prairie State Conservation Coalition Training March 10-11, learning about relevant pending legislation, recent research on combatting invasive species, citizen science programs, conservation leadership internships, a recent climate assessment for Illinois, and accessibility of outdoor spaces.

Planning and Construction Department (Mike Daab and Mike Fry)

- The IL Department of Transportation has issued bids for construction of Phase 2C of the Kickapoo Rail Trail, which stretches 1.5 miles from County Road 2650 East to the Champaign/Vermilion County line.
- Engineering Resource Associates has been contracted to finalize permit drawings for the Lake of the Woods Spillway project.
- Water fountains for Middle Fork River Forest Preserve have been ordered and will be installed by Construction Department and Middle Fork Operations staff upon arrival.

• Willow Pond Renovation is approximately 35% complete. White Construction has completed excavation and will begin installing the clay liner once the soils have had time to dry.



- Planning staff have been meeting with representatives from Visit Champaign County and additional individuals to discuss the potential development of disc golf facilities at CCFPD and the marketing of Middle Fork River Forest Preserve at the Rantoul Sports Complex.
- The Sustainability Committee met on February 28th. Primary items of discussion included a solar energy proposal for Middle Fork and developing a resolution request to highlight Board of Commissioners support for CCFPD actions to mitigate climate change. The solar project is on hold pending further development of IL solar policy that could positively affect funding, and the resolution will be developed for Board action in April.
- Staff attended the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) 30 by 30 Conservation Task Force listening session on agriculture on March 3rd. A highlight was hearing how IL DNR manages their significant agricultural holdings to ensure a certain level of conservation practices are followed.
- Staff attended a Basics of Land Acquisition webinar presented by the Land Trust Alliance on March 1st.
- The Construction Department has completed repairs to the Golf Maintenance building that was damaged in one of the snowstorms. They were able to repurpose some materials and purchase others relatively inexpensively, thereby keeping the total repair costs below our insurance deductible.
- Work on the Headquarters vestibule is underway. The area will improve energy efficiency by preventing heating/cooling losses, much like an airlock. Currently, when the visitor entrance is opened, a suction effect happens that immediately changes the temperature of the front half of the building.

Business and Finance (John Baker)

- Coordinated the finalization of the two outstanding Agreed Upon Procedures Audits needed for grant reimbursement on the Museum Collections Center (\$238,200) and OSLAD peninsula projects (\$32,842).
- Reviewing and updating 2021 District financials from a cash to a modified accrual basis continue to drive the work of the Finance time this past month. This includes submission of update Internal Control Questionnaires covering every aspect of the District's financial system.
- Initiated phishing test of all District e-mail accounts in the ccfpd.org domain. We are just beginning to assess the reports and identify additional cyber-security training needs.

Human Resources (Dara Edgington)

- During the month of February HR processed zero hires and one separation, resulting in a turnover rate of 1.64% for the month. Our current headcount sits at 60 employees including 43 FT staff, 16 PT, and 1 paid intern.
- The District documented four incidents with PDRMA over the month of February: one employee incident, one patron injury reported, one vehicle incident, and one incidence of vandalism.
- Seasonal hiring for 2022 is off to a strong start with 14 offers extended thus far.

Marketing (Lisa Sprinkle)

- Lisa worked with Clanin Marketing for a website audit prior to updating the website later this
 year. Key items learned include: we are averaging 86,000 visits to the website over the past two
 years. Top page visits after the homepage are: https://www.ccfpd.org/forest-preserve/middle-fork-river/campground; https://www.ccfpd.org/Forest-Preserves/Middle-ForkRiver/International-Dark-Sky-Park; and https://www.ccfpd.org/forest-preserves/homer-lake-illinois.
- Media coverage last month included:

Champaign County Forest Preserve District has a cool use for your Christmas Trees

https://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/champaign_county_forest_preserve_district_has_a
 cool use for your christmas/

Kickapoo Rail Trail moving along at a snail's pace

o https://www.news-gazette.com/news/tom-kacich-kickapoo-rail-trail-moving-along-at-a-snails-pace/article 39d7691a-79db-5fa9-bed9-5e5f974f987c.html

50 Things to do Spring Break in Champaign-Urbana

 https://www.chambanamoms.com/2022/02/15/50-things-to-do-spring-break-champaignurbana/

Tom's Mailbag – Feb. 19, 2022

https://www.news-gazette.com/toms-mailbag/toms-mailbag-feb-18-2022/article ebbea3ff-4f60-5749-8644-9afa64bb07c6.html

Inside Out | Everyday, people counting birds make a difference

o https://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/parks-recreation/inside-out-everyday-people-counting-birds-make-a-difference/article 728d0d94-2f0a-5d1f-8e41-f8f7f585e58f.html

Where to play inside for free

o https://www.chambanamoms.com/2022/02/20/play-indoors-free-champaign-urbana/

Museum of the Grand Prairie to open new infectious disease exhibit in May

o https://mahometdaily.com/museum-of-the-grand-prairie-to-open-new-infectious-disease-exhibit-in-may/

Champaign County Forest Preserve District received a land donation from PACA

- o https://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/champaign_county_forest_preserve_district_received a land_donation_from_pac/
- Social media numbers continue to increase.

	FACEBOOK	+/-	INSTAGRAM	+/-	TWITTER	+/-
CCFPD	6,065	+35	2,801	+0	570	+0
KRT	4,036	+119	135	+2	139	
MGP	4,560	+31	1,219	+14	262	+2
HLIC	3,000	+18				
GC	1,780	+7	327	-2	109	+1
FPFF	508	+3				

• February Facilities Rental Report

February 2022 Rental Information					
# Rentals	Date	Facility	\$		
5	Feb-22	Elks Lake Pavilion	\$1,750.00		
4	Feb-22	Izaak Walton Cabin	\$540.00		
2	Feb-22	Lake of the Woods Pavilion	\$650.00		
3	Feb-22	Salt Fork Center	\$750.00		
14			\$3,690.00		

Volunteer Coordinator (Sue Gallo)

- February saw 13 new applicants and six new volunteers giving their first time last month. For February events, 68 volunteers comprised of new and existing event and regular volunteers helped with the Kickapoo Rail Trail Invasive Removal. Thanks to the WheelHouse for supporting the volunteer effort with a coupon! Kudos to NR staff for being so well prepared for the enormous group! The event went exceedingly well and over an acre of honeysuckle was removed. This completed the volunteer component of an ICECF grant obligation and made great progress toward a social media grant obligation.
- Sue was/is in conversation with volunteer groups for event help or setting up their own help service event (Lambda Theta Phi Latin Fraternity, UIUC Campus Honors Program Civic Engagement Committee, Pi Lambda Chi Latina Sorority, Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society, Hack4Impact, Phi Gamma Nu Professional Business Fraternity, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, Ilini

Rotaract, Red Bison, Troop 25, Uni High, CVS)

• The Youth volunteer brochure was completed. Kudos to Cathy Schneider for ensuring this kept progressing. Many thanks to Lisa for her great design work and patience!





- Sue met with Barb and Pam about the overlap with service and learning, with M&E staff about steps volunteers need to complete and how they might be able to add learning to service, with Mike Daab, Lisa and Lorrie about 'Ambassador volunteers' and with Dara about COVID policy changes.
- Old records were achieved from the filling database and an updated paper volunteer application was created to provide options to prospective volunteers.
- Organizing a Clean Up along the KRT for 10 am to noon, March 26 and an Earth Day Garlic Mustard Removal Event on April 22 and 23 are in the works. Please plan to attend!

Grants and Development Specialist (Ryan Anderson) Grants Submitted

- Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation-\$189,325- District
 - Funds for the purchase of 32 acres of new property contiguous with a land acquisition currently in negotiation
- Illinois Humanities Active History Micro Grant- \$750- Foundation
 - o Funds for a public program and speaker at the Museum of the Grand Prairie

Grants Awarded

- Illinois Department of Natural Resources- \$726,900- District
 - Funds for the construction of a new greenhouse located outside the Museum of the Grand Prairie. This facility will include bathrooms, a classroom space, gardens staff work space, and interpretive gardens space.

Grants Denied

- Ford Ridge Wind- District
 - Our application for to Ford Ridge Wind for funds to purchase new property was not selected.

Donor Recognition

• We plan to recognize the donors from 2021 in the April/May leaflet as we did last year.

End of Year Giving 2021

• We are sending out 150 thank you cards to donors who gave on Giving Tuesday through the end of 2021. Thank you to the Foundation members who volunteered to write thank you cards!

Fundraising Trends (as of 2/25/22)

Donations 4 Year Summary

("Adjusted" numbers have transactions >\$20,000 and match grants removed)

4 year totals:	2019	2020	2021	2022(ytd)
# of donors	325	348	436*	39
Total \$	\$462,999.87	\$182,614.87	\$201,036.58	\$8,280.97
Total \$ (adjusted)	\$130,838.87	\$140,399.44	\$176,036.58	\$8,681.77

^{*127} first-time monetary donors in 2021

Adjusted Revenue by Month (Jan-Mar)

	Jan		Feb		Mar	
2018	\$	7,051.24	\$	2,517.91	\$	4,208.15
2019	\$	1,908.00	\$	5,395.06	\$	4,725.00
2020	\$	5,350.00	\$	13,593.01*	\$	4,141.05
2021	\$	2,355.11	\$	3,382.72	\$	11,872.00**
2022	\$	4,917.80	\$	3,763.97		

Natural Resources (Peter Goodspeed)

- In February, staff continued doing timber stand improvement projects in the District's high-quality woodlands including:
 - Felling and girdling of small sugar maples and other aggressive trees throughout 1.8 acres of Homer Lake Twin Oaks woodland
 - Girdling aggressive trees throughout 3.2 acres of the upland section of Heron View Forest Preserve
- Staff continued to remove woody invasive shrubs in some critical areas that included:
 - A section adjacent to the North Waterfowl Area of Middle Fork River Forest Preserve
 - Another section of Maple Sugar Grove at Homer Lake Forest Preserve
 - Another section of the Rotary Hill Woodland at Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve
 - Phase 2 of Buffalo Trace, one of the oldest prairie restorations on the property
- Because of the substantial ice cover this winter, staff were able to place 20-30 Christmas trees out on Sunset Lake at River Bend Forest Preserve.
- The entire NR department was able to attend the Illinois
 - Association of Conservation Districts (IACD) conference that was held at Starved Rock Lodge.
- Emily and Peter attended the Forestry and Natural Resources Career Fair at Purdue to enhance our recruiting efforts.
- The department hosted a volunteer woody shrub removal event at the Kickapoo Rail Trail. The event was a huge success with 67 volunteers participating.









Lake of the Woods Golf Course (Chris Edmondson and Joie Torres)

- We remained closed outdoors in February and also had several days in which indoor facilities were closed due to winter storms (a total of 4.5 days). For the month, we had \$11,461 in revenues, including \$2,126.50 on the golf simulator.
- We also sold our older model golf simulator in February (\$2,000), since it had become outdated and the hardware and software were no longer supported by TruGolf (the Simulator company from which it was purchased). As mentioned previously, we are looking at a launch monitor



simulator system moving forward. This would allow us to use the launch monitor throughout the year for golf lessons, and then as an indoor simulator in the winter months. This new system would also eliminate hitting boards, sensors, and overhead track lights, which we have had numerous problems with and are in need of constant repairs.

• Staff has continued to prep the Pro Shop for the upcoming golf season. Merchandise has been steadily arriving and we hope to have most, if not all, received and stocked by April. We also spent much of the month deep cleaning our back storage and receiving areas, along with the

locker rooms and snack bar.

- The week of February 7th-11th, David and Jason spent the days at Lincoln Trail Elementary School in Mahomet, teaching golf to the over 750 kids in the PE Classes. They used the SNAG Golf Program, which incorporates large plastic clubs, tennis balls, and Velcro targets, suitable for gymnasium use, to teach the basics of golf in a fun environment.
- The school program mentioned is one of the strategic objectives for the golf course in 2022.
- All reels, bed knives, and sharping blades are completed.
- Joie Torres attended a measurement performance training with other management departments.
- Joie Torres and Mackenzie Drinkwalter will be testing for their pesticide license.
- The Golf committee will be doing a volunteer spring cleanup on March 24- 25.



Museum and Education Department (Barb Garvey and Pam Leiter)

- Pam Leiter and her team at the Homer Lake Interpretive Center (HLIC) put together statistics, and started strategizing to gather more info, in support of the new nature center Feasibility Study goals that the Planning Department has outlined for 2022.
- Museum of the Grand Prairie (MGP) Customer Service Retail Associates prepared for reopening of the museum and museum store. This has also included the order of new merchandise including many sustainable products, spring-themed items, and several items tied to the museum's upcoming exhibit on infectious diseases.
- Beginning March 1st, the museum reopened and resumed its pre-pandemic Spring Hours, Open every day from 1-5 pm.
- Rankin Center had improperly installed attic insulation mitigated to help manage condensation and continuing HVAC instability.
- Mark Hanson received four applicants for the Smithsonian Robert Smith Internship position and began the selection process.
- Jen Grove and Mark Hanson removed all artifacts from the woman suffrage exhibit and rehoused and photographed the textiles. They began the prep work in gallery spaces for new infectious disease exhibit. They are also beginning to process incoming loans for the infectious disease exhibit.
- Jen Grove and Mark Hanson addressed preservation concerns named in CAP assessment for Civil War-era breech conversion musket, Busey presentation sword, and Busey saber on display in Lincoln exhibit.
- Museum staff sought the opinion and input of the Museum Advisory Committee concerning the removal of the totem poles from the museum stairwell.

- Barb Garvey and Mark Hanson talked on February 16 and March 2 with Dr. Susan Frankenburg's "Case Studies in Community Museums," a U of I museum studies seminar class. We also discussed potential projects for her students to undertake for the museum.
- For a few weeks in February, Pat Cain put together a "Mysterious Artifact Exhibit" for temporary display at the Tolono Public Library. The mini exhibit featured 5 unique artifacts from the museum's education collection and asked viewers of the exhibit to use interactive clues in order to determine the use and history of each artifact.
- Pat Cain hosted the 2nd program in this year's Garden Speaker Series. Continuing this year's theme of medicinal plants, Bethany Elkington, James Graham, and Bernard Santarsiero of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences in the College of Pharmacy at the University of Illinois-Chicago explored the history of medicine and how the concepts of illness and disease, and their treatments, have evolved over time. Lastly, the presenters discussed their involvement with The Atkins Medicinal Plant Garden at the UIC College of Pharmacy. The program currently has 189 views on the MGP Facebook and YouTube pages.
- On February 8, Barb Garvey and Pat Cain hosted a virtual exhibit opening program "Hearts and Flowers." for the MGP's new online exhibit, *Textile Traditions: The Quilts of Stanley and Dorothy Rankin*. The exhibit and program discussed many quilts from the collection of longtime museum friends and donors, Stan and Dorothy Rankin. Now available for view on Facebook and YouTube (144 views). Barb Garvey also gave a similar program live to the residents at Windsor of Savoy on February 8. (10 participants). The exhibit is viewable at https://mgp.omeka.net/exhibits/show/rankinquilt
- In honor of Abraham Lincoln's birthday, on February 13, Barb Garvey and Pat Cain hosted a virtual program titled "Happy Birthday Aby Baby: Lincoln's Aging Face." The program reviewed several portraits of Abraham Lincoln, some made in East Central Illinois. Barb discussed how the invention, the photograph, and individual photographers with differing skills captured Lincoln's character at different phases of his life paying particular attention to the Alschuler portrait made in Urbana. The program currently has 161 views on the MGP Facebook and YouTube pages.
- Pat Cain welcomed scouts back for an in-person program at the museum. Working with a local cub scout troop based out of Mahomet, the program featured an interactive scavenger hunt and tour of the museum's main exhibit areas as well as discussion of the importance of history with 25 scouts and parents.
- Pat Cain and Barb Garvey hosted the virtual program titled "Maple Sugar Days: Remembering John Garvey." The program featured a rebroadcast of a virtual program Pat and John produced last year on the history, science, and how-to behind maple sugaring. The program also was an opportunity to share memories of John following his passing last year. Barb, Pat, and many viewers tuning in share several beautiful memories of John and it was wonderful to see. The program currently has 282 views on the MGP Facebook and YouTube pages.
- Marina Montez Ellis prepared and sold 3 My Valen-Tiny Garden Kits.
- Katie Snyder, Pat Cain, Marina Montez-Ellis and Mike Dale collaborated to bring about the first meeting of volunteers for the "Healing Garden," which is tied to our upcoming indoor exhibit at Museum of the Grand Prairie, "A History of Healing." 14 volunteers attended. The Healing Garden potentially will have 3 sections, Medicinal Plants, Meditative Space, and Healthy Foods. We continue to welcome more volunteers.
- Jennifer Wick's Owl Prowl on February 11 at Homer Lake had 11 participants. Her Owl Prowls for 2/17 and 2/24 were both cancelled due to snowstorms, so she added a rescheduled date on March 3 at Homer Lake. Most of the people who were signed up for the two cancelled events transferred to the rescheduled date.

- Jennifer Wick had an all-day event for the Great Backyard Bird Count on February 21 and had a total of 43 participants throughout the day.
- Jennifer worked with Tara Hohoff (IBCP, INHS) to prepare for another season of bat monitoring at Lake of the Woods, and selected a monitoring transect for Homer Lake to try out this spring as well.
- Summer camp registration goes live March 11 and recruiting Counselors-in-Training is well underway. Many thanks to Sue Gallo for an amazing new District-wide youth volunteer brochure this year, and to Cathy Schneider for coordinating the Counselors-in-Training program for the Department each year.
- Stacey Clementz taught a birthday party in St Joseph with the rat snake for a local family. They also sponsored the rat snake as a gift to the birthday girl. 14 participants were present.
- Stacey and Jennifer are partnering with the Urbana Park District on the Earth Day for Everyone event on April 23 (rain date April 24) at Meadowbrook Park. CCFPD will have a booth there.
- Stacey continues to work with Sarah Kaper and Chelsea Prahl on the Climate Change loan kit; and continues to work with CAC members on education PR initiatives on climate change.
- HLIC Facebook stats, Feb 1-28: Average Daily Organic Reach: 871 (Sum: 24,384); Average Daily Page Engaged Users: 42 (Sum: 1,189)
- MGP Facebook stats, Feb 1-28: Average Daily Organic Reach: 1196 (Sum: 47817); Average Daily Page Engaged Users: 4 3(Sum: 1196)

Lake of the Woods (Tammy Fry and Michael Dale)

- During a recent trash run at Sangamon River Preserve a staff member discovered a cardboard box containing 3 rats. They were turned over to the Humane Society to find new homes.
- The 1996 Dodge Dakota sold for \$4,350.00 on E Bay.
- Botanical Garden and Operations staff continued to work on honeysuckle removal at Lake of the Woods when time and weather allowed.
- Staff has done an excellent job with the two most recent snowfall events trying to keep roads and sidewalks clear as safely possible.
- Most of the staff was able to go through the Illinois pesticide training in preparation for license renewal testing.

Middle Fork River (Matt Kuntz)

- Willow Pond renovation project has slowed due to the inclement weather the past couple of weeks. Snow melt and rains continue to fill the pond. Other than a few minor fixes, the floor is ready to be installed once dry.
- Camping reservations have started coming in for this season at a pretty good pace.
- Middle Fork staff have started building fish structures for Willow Pond, to be placed once the floor of the pond is placed. These structures include boulders, fallen trees with full root bases, and several upright hedge trees designed by Middle Fork staff.

Homer Lake (Brian Taylor)

- Colton and Roy finished upgrading all the lights at the Salt Fork Center with energy efficient LED fixtures.
- We received our tornado shelter from Safe Sheds Incorporated. The reinforced concrete shed can with stand wind driven debris up to 250 mph and it has enough room to easily hold 10 people. In the past employees would have to seek shelter in the crawl space of the park residence.

District Cultural Competency Initiatives

- Katie Snyder prepared a Civil Rights Tub for two 3rd grade classes at Leal totally 36 students (gen ed and dual language). It contained picture books about the Civil Rights movement of the 50s-60s, Jackdaw primary source photographs and a Visual Thinking Strategies lesson with both national and local paintings from the Civil Rights movement.
- Katie Snyder presented, "Revisiting Your Legacy: African American Oral History Project," to Community Coalition. 205 viewers on Zoom and Face Book
- Katie Snyder presented four Black History Month Read-Alouds on Facebook: "Champions on the Bench: The Cannon Street All Stars," (90 viewers); "Let the Children March," (918 viewers); "Sit-In: How Four Friends Took a Stand by Sitting Down," (109 viewers); "R-E-S-P-E-C-T," (391 viewers).
- Katie Snyder attended a workshop with a group of Social Studies educators throughout the state
 of Illinois, "Envisioning Justice, and Imagining Freedom, Schooling vs Education," offered
 through the UI College of Education. The workshop examined whose history is taught and
 whose history is erased in today's school systems as well as the emphasis on testing skills vs
 critical thinking skills.
- Katie Snyder attended the second in a series of workshops through Chicago Wilderness entitled, "Foundations of Internalized Racism," which centered on reflections on, and how to dismantle White Supremacy Culture. This is part of the JEDI Series (Increasing Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in our Workplaces and our Community) for Conservation Practitioners.
- Katie Snyder attended, "Hidden Stories: History of African Americans in Champaign County," a webinar with Angela Rivers and Barbara Suggs Mason highlighting the plans for the new Champaign County African American Heritage Trail.
- Staff continue to invest a lot of time in the CCFPD DEI committee, co-led by Dara & Pam, as we formulate next steps and priorities. The committee is now organized into subcommittees who are formulating their goals and action steps for the year: Community Engagement and Partnerships; Marketing and External Communication; Internal Culture; Budget, Resources and Long-Term Planning.
- Barb Garvey attended the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area Diversity Working Group and Steering Committee meetings in February.
- Mark Hanson attended a Champaign County African American Heritage Trail meeting; we are community partners in that endeavor.
- Mark Hanson trained Katie Snyder and contractor, Crystal Womble, to continue the Revisiting Your Legacy African American oral history project.
- Ryan Anderson and Mark Hanson began the 2022 ISHRAB grant process to fund the continuation of digitizing oral histories from the Doris Hoskins archive.