

**DECENNIAL COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY
(EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE) MEETING AGENDA**



Thursday, February 15, 2024, at the Museum of the Grand Prairie Classroom,
Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 900 N. Lombard, Mahomet, Illinois, at
5:45 P.M.

RESCHEDULED meeting from Thursday, January 18, 2024, at 5:45 pm

- I. CALL TO ORDER
 - A. Roll Call
 - Jennifer Shelby, Resident
 - Robert Baird, Resident
 - Wendy Hundley, Commissioner
 - William Goodman, Commissioner, Chair
 - Bobbie Herakovich, Commissioner
 - Andrew Kerins, Commissioner
 - Greg Knott, Commissioner
 - Lorrie Pearson, Executive Director
 - B. Remote Attendance
- II. READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES
- III. PUBLIC COMMENT – *Meeting attendees are encouraged to participate during the Public Comment portion of the agenda. For further details on how to participate in the Public Comment section of the meeting, please refer to CCFPD Resolution number R-2013-04.*
- IV. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. Staff Liaison report
 - B. Implemented Efficiencies
 - C. Future study areas
 - D. Next steps
- V. ANNOUNCEMENTS
- VI. PUBLIC COMMENT- *Survey meeting attendees to provide input on the discussion had today.*
- VII. ADJOURNMENT

**DECENNIAL COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY
(EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE) MEETING Minutes**

Thursday, September 21, 2023, at 5:45 pm, Golf Course Clubhouse
Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 405 N. Lake of the Woods Road, Mahomet, Illinois.

Members in Attendance (Roll Call): Jennifer Shelby, Robert Baird, Wendy Hundley, William Goodman, Bobbie Herakovich, Andrew Kerins, Lorrie Pearson, and Nina Carmichael.

Quorum (7): Met

Commissioners present Wendy Hundley, William Goodman, Bobbie Herakovich, Andrew Kerins, and Greg Knott.

Remote Attendance: None

Public Comment: None

Welcome:

Member Bill Goodman called the meeting to order at 5:45 pm, beginning the meeting by welcoming the members and confirming that all members had received and reviewed the agenda for the evening. All attendees verbally confirmed that they indeed had. Goodman then handed over the floor to Nina to explain more about the committee and facilitate the items on the agenda.

Overview of State Statute:

Nina briefly introduced herself to the committee as the Leadership in Conservation Fellow at the Champaign County Forest Preserve District and her role as employee/staff liaison who will be driving the work of the committee: setting meeting agendas, bringing information and recommendations to them, following up on their comments, and preparing the final report.

Committee Introductions:

Lorrie recommended that all members include a little about their relationship to the Forest Preserve District and name what they wanted out of their time on the committee. After introductions concluded Nina Carmichael noted that because Greg Knott was appointed a commissioner of the Champaign County Forest Preserve District after the committee was formed. Therefore, Knott was not yet formally a voting member, but would be after the board meeting that evening.

Set Direction for the Efficiency Committee: Nina stated she would start on a three-part approach by 1. Coordinating an effort to compile and centralize all policies and procedures across the Champaign County Forest Preserves District to be held in a single location for greater accessibility and visibility and 2. Cataloging and studying these policies and procedures to assess what might be missing or needed 3. Soliciting input from staff regarding recommendations for

increased efficiency and accountability to further the direction and final recommendations to be included in the final report.

Approve 2024 meeting schedule: Kerins moved to approve the schedule, Hundley seconded, and, on a voice vote, the motion carried.

The proposed schedule was accepted as follows:

- Thursday, January 18, 2024, at the Museum of the Grand Prairie Classroom, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 900 N. Lombard, Mahomet, Illinois, at 5:45 P.M.
- Thursday, May 16, 2024, at the Golf Course Clubhouse, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 405 N. Lake of the Woods Road, Mahomet, Illinois, at 5:45 P.M.
- Thursday, August 15, 2024, at the Golf Course Clubhouse, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 405 N. Lake of the Woods Road, Mahomet, Illinois, at 5:45 P.M.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held in person on Thursday, January 18, 2024, at the Museum of the Grand Prairie Classroom, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 900 N. Lombard, Mahomet, Illinois, at 5:45 P.M.

Public Comment: None provided

Adjournment: Goodman motioned for adjournment at 3:45, and Kerins seconded. Voice vote was taken, and the meeting was adjourned at 6 pm.

February 8, 2024

Memorandum

To: Efficiency Committee

From: Nina Carmichael, Staff Liaison (non-voting member)

Re: Staff Liaison Updates

Overview:

According to the Fact Sheet Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiency Act provided by IAPD, the duties of each [Efficiency] committee include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- Study the governmental unit's governing statutes, ordinances, rules, procedures, powers, jurisdiction, shared services, intergovernmental agreements, and interrelationships with other governmental units and the State of Illinois.
- Collect data, research, and analysis as necessary to prepare a written report that includes recommendations with respect to increased accountability and efficiency.
- Provide a written report to the administrative office of the county board in each county in which the governmental unit is located no later than eighteen months after the formation of the committee.

Since the committee's last meeting in September of 2023, the Liaison has focused on three primary tasks:

1. Centralization of policies and procedures for the Champaign County Forest Preserve District;
2. Identifying policies and procedures for revision and future consideration; and the
3. Collection of suggestions regarding increased efficiency and accountability from staff.

These activities were chosen because of an expressed need for increased policy visibility and accessibility across departments and a continued commitment to engage staff contribution and collaboration.

Attachments:

1. Staff Proposed Efficiency Measures
2. IAPD Fact Sheet

Staff Proposed Efficiency Measures

Recording began in September of 2023

Objective: To comprehensively identify actionable areas of growth to successfully achieve increased operational efficiency.

Background: The following recommendations were provided by current Champaign County Forest Preserve District employees between September 2023 and February 2024. This list of recommendations will remain open for staff to add as the need arises with the intention to have scheduled reviews for committees and the leadership team to assess for feasibility (along with formalized proposals) on an annual basis.

Data Collection: Responses were collected using a combination of methods over the span of a 5-month period to optimize for accuracy and inclusivity.

- ⇒ September 5th - October 2nd (Email)
- ⇒ September 5th -Now (informal in-person interviews)
- ⇒ November 8-November 20 (Survey)

Current Policies & Procedures Revisions to Consider

- Collect the “last updated” date for each policy and make sure any old versions of policies are marked “void” (or equivalent).
- Create a schedule to review and revise policy and procedures for equity.
 - 3-5 to be reviewed and updated, edited, revised, etc., per year.
- Intergovernmental agreements concerning fees for rentals, space, materials, personnel, permits, etc.
- Streamline the electric vehicle purchasing process (bidding & purchasing policy applicable).
- Increase accessibility of staff reports and board packet information.
 - Email out to all staff.
 - Make available on the ccfpd.org website.
 - Have supervisors integrate review sessions into management.
- Revisit required Board approval of new full-time positions accounted for in the budget.
- Streamline Museum Collections acquisitions and deaccessioning process by refining the oversight and approval process.
- Remote work/working from home policy.
- Edit Forest Preserve Rules and Regulations/Ordinances to address changes in laws or trends in recreation.
 - E-bike use
 - Marijuana use
 - KRT
 - Concealed carry

- Enforcement of ordinances
- Add reading the staff report and/or board packet to job descriptions.
- Review on-call policy and procedures to ensure that it is enticing (overtime pay, the shift of on-call hours, increased staff, etc.)
- Bylaws
- Finance Manual
 - Assemble Business and Finance policies and procedures into a manual format
- Performance evaluation process.

Proposed New Policies & Procedures

- Artificial intelligence use in the workplace policy.
 - Intellectual rights policy update (if applicable)
- Chemical storage policy.
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion policy and procedure.
- Drone policy.
- Fee waiver policy.
- Golf chemical purchase policy.
- Grants policy.
- Returning seasonal pay policy.
- Security policy.
- Formalize all committee membership processes.

Mission & Vision

- Develop more methods for tracking alignment with the long-term vision for the organization. More consensus means less working outside the vision and a more direct path toward our goals.
- Place a higher value on habitat restoration and conservation.

Information Technology

- Transition the organization to a cloud-based system.
 - Audit files on current servers
 - Move all files
 - Allow for more real-time collaboration and the ability to see revisions in the document
 - Update phone systems throughout the Forest Preserves (complete)
 - Include pronouns in email signatures
 - Include all facilities in Outlook calendar
 - Provide training and accompanying materials (videos included) for staff to reference for employees around common IT issues and transitions.
- Streamline event and program registration so when are asking the public to register for any type of program (whether that be a Natural Resources program, a Museum and Ed

program, etc.) there is one consistent, easy, recognizable registration form (made very easily accessible on our website) for ease of registration and internal tracking on registration numbers.

- Provide robust IT training to employees (Supervisors) to feel comfortable and confident navigating the new cloud system and decrease reliance on Furat for everything IT-related.

Business & Finance

- Adjust the rollout of the Budget planning process to earlier in the year.
- Centralize summaries of funding stipulations (when applicable).
- Send out bi-annual reminders to department heads concerning project fund balances.
- Cross-train administration personnel on elements of business and finance.
- Increase compensation across positions, starting with those in lower pay grades. (addressed in the 2024 budget)
- Adopt an accounting/finance system that
 - Is logically organized
 - Has an approachable interface
 - Allows department heads/employees to see their budgets in real-time
 - Online portal for P-card and reimbursement submission
- Procurement training.
- Payroll training.
- Standardizing and improving the Purchase Order process – using new financial software or Access.
- Relocating the Finance folder to a centralized location.
- Switch the process for P-card use and/or the bank for P-cards to avoid lag time posting to the account.
- Invest in more online/digital systems for signatures, P-cards, PO's, meeting setup, and online utilization for the public opposed to manual data entry, reservations, bookings, volunteer signups, and so on - ideally using a software system that can perform comprehensive duties. Software and automation vs. staffing costs assessment.
- Improve the funding request process and visibility of the process.
- Increase the reserved compensation contingency (pool for promotions).

Marketing and advertising

- Elevate committee visibility, membership, and goals known to employees throughout the Forest Preserves.
- Increase social media presence across platforms.
- Replace older signage that read “park(s)” with “preserve(s)”
- Increase where we post jobs to help diversify the applicant pool.

Website

- Public feedback text box (name, contact info, suggestion): “Have a suggestion for programming needs” for example.
- Decrease delay for when the board packet is made public on our website.
- Integrate the Museum website with the Forest Preserve’s website.
- Add a Transparency Portal/tab to include the following items:
 - Racial demographics of employees
 - District-wide pay scale by position and date last updated (\$ & %)
 - Position titles with job descriptions linked which contain compensation and hour range in them
 - Yearly tab on the website for which capital projects were chosen and why which correlates to strategic plans timeline
 - Capital project selection process
 - Who can submit and how
 - Proposal evaluation rubric
 - Proposal evaluation team
 - Relationships/agreements with police & agricultural entities
 - Partnership scope and dates valid
 - Income streams: Breakdown of where funding comes from (private donations, federal grants, farming land, taxes, etc.)
 - Commissioner “job description (expectations)”
 - Foundation “job description (expectations)”
 - Commissioner biographies that speak to why they chose to serve, connection to the work/land, professional background, and expertise they bring to the position
 - Explaining the difference between a forest preserve and a park

Programming

- Increasing advertisement and outreach of programs and preserves.
- Increase public programs at LOW.

Leadership

- Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director providing more detail to the updates included in the staff reports.

Facilities

- Smart thermostats for all facilities with Wi-Fi (off-site control capacity).
- Attain a satellite office or land in the city of Champaign to increase presence and visibility.

Job Positions

- Increase marketing department staffing.
- Consider a new hybrid Natural Resources- Education-Volunteer staff position. Staff members would be housed in Natural Resources (75% maybe?) but have a partial

appointment/mandate to the Education and Volunteer Departments and their main task would be to:

- Supervise weekend NR service opportunities
- Elevate service opportunities with greater educational components
- Develop a service-learning curriculum for middle and high school sustainability clubs
- Ensure (all staff?) are trained in volunteer intake to provide support and redundancy for the volunteer coordinator
- Integrate habitat restoration, maintenance, and conservation to more job descriptions/duties.
- Develop more continuity or flexibility of benefits across roles and departments (working remotely, 10 hr. vs. 8hr shift).
- Explicitly state/advertise opportunities and permission to work together cross-departmentally.
- Advertise opportunities for cross-training more widely.
- Evaluate the amount of steps and documents for onboarding & termination.
- Evaluate benefit payment/billing procedures.
- Reorganize supervisors to connect more clearly to expertise and needed management styles.

Employee Collaboration

- Formalize committee membership (application, expectation, mission, objectives, sign off from supervisor, term length, max number of committees one can be on).
- Improve systems for organizing shared items and information so they are easily accessible (logically and physically).
- Create a system for continuity across facility management and upkeep.
- Clearly define the board meeting packet preparation process - who does what by when and where to locate necessary materials.
- Encourage standard search and use (when applicable) of Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) contracts. (In current Purchasing Policy)
- Standardize frequent meetings with the executive director/leadership team for increased familiarity.
- Ensure decisions are made with those who are most impacted and involved by the outcome.
- Expand and strengthen partnerships with clubs, organizations, and more.

Board

- Shorten and focus staff reports.
 - Full names in text instead of on sideline by department
 - Gear “Thank you” to the impact of the task to conceptually and contextually to paint a clearer picture.
 - Include how the items listed contributed to larger goals.



Fact Sheet

Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiency Act

Overview

The Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiency Act, 50 ILCS 70/1, *et seq.*, requires units of local government that levy any tax, including park districts, forest preserve districts, and conservation districts, to form a committee to study local government efficiencies and issue a report to the county board in which the unit of local government is situated. The Act does not apply to municipalities and counties.

IAPD worked with state legislators and other stakeholders to relieve the most costly and burdensome provisions of this legislation before it became law. Although still an unfunded mandate, the law gives park districts, forest preserve districts, and conservation districts the ability to appoint the committee membership and provides an opportunity for these agencies to demonstrate the countless ways in which they efficiently and effectively deliver park, recreation, and conservation programs, facilities, and services to their residents.

As one resource to our members, IAPD has prepared this fact sheet to assist in meeting the requirements of this new law.

Committee Formation

Units of local government are required to form a committee no later than June 10, 2023, which is one year after the effective date of the Act, and at least once every ten years thereafter.

Committee Composition

Each committee must include:

- The elected or appointed members of the governing board of the governmental unit;
- At least two residents of the governmental unit appointed by the board president and approved by the board; and,
- The chief executive officer or other officer of the governmental unit, if any.

The board president or their designee shall chair the committee. The chair may appoint additional members to the committee as they believe appropriate. Committee members serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for incurred expenses with the approval of the governmental unit.

The committee may, but is not required to, employ or use the services of specialists in public administration and governmental management, and any other trained consultants, analysts, investigators, and assistants it considers appropriate.

The committee is considered a public body to which the Freedom of Information Act and the Open Meetings Act applies.

Duties of the Committee

The duties of each committee include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- Study the governmental unit's governing statutes, ordinances, rules, procedures, powers, jurisdiction, shared services, intergovernmental agreements, and interrelationships with other governmental units and the State of Illinois.
- Collect data, research, and analysis as necessary to prepare a written report that includes recommendations with respect to increased accountability and efficiency.
- Provide a written report to the administrative office of the county board in each county in which the governmental unit is located no later than eighteen months after the formation of the committee.

Committee Meetings

The committee is required to meet at least three times. The committee may, but is not required, to meet during the regularly scheduled meeting of the governmental units if:

1. Separate notice is given in conformance with the Open Meetings Act;
2. The committee meeting is listed as part of the board of the governmental unit's agenda; and,
3. At least a majority of the members of the committee are present at the committee's meeting.

However, because the committee's membership is not identical to the park board membership, the park board would want to adjourn or recess its regular meeting before convening a meeting of the committee if it chooses to meet on the same day as a regularly scheduled meeting.

Each meeting of the committee must be public and held in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. The committee must provide an opportunity for any person to be heard at each meeting for at least three minutes. At the conclusion of each meeting, the committee must conduct a survey of residents who attended the meeting and ask for input on matters discussed at the meeting. Although not the required method, a survey conducted by email to all residents who attended the meeting and provided a valid email address is one way to satisfy this survey requirement. Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, all public bodies must keep written minutes for each meeting of the committee.

Committee Report

Each committee must provide its report to the administrative office of the county board in each county in which the governmental unit is located no later than eighteen months after the formation of the committee. If a governmental unit is located in multiple counties, it should provide the report to the administrative office of each county board in all counties in which the governmental unit is located. If the committee is formed on the last possible date (June 10, 2023), then the report would need to be provided no later than December 10, 2024. After the report is issued, the committee is dissolved until it is reestablished with newly appointed members in 10 years.

IAPD requests that member agencies provide a copy of the final report to IAPD so that we can utilize this information in future advocacy efforts.

Questions of Concerns

As always, for more information, please feel welcome to contact IAPD by phone at (217) 523-4554, or by email at janselment@ilparks.org or mremmert@ilparks.org

Implemented Efficiencies and Accountability Measures

Between September 2023 and February 2024

- Museum basement reorganization (cleaning, painting, organizing, downsizing, recycling, inventorying, etc.) has enabled improved access to items to ensure greater utilization, and for tracking what we have, where, and why.
- Improvements for Elks Lave Pavilion have included: in-house sealing of the floor by the Construction Department instead of floor replacement, resulting in a savings of \$11,000; insulating the plumbing and using heat from the pavilion in the bathrooms has eliminated multiple steps for Operations staff in monitoring piping during colder months; and installing ADA kitchen amenities.
- QR codes with step-by-step instructions for mobile tracking have been incorporated into facility inspection steps.
- The Forest Preserve website has been updated.
- A new VoIP phone system has been installed, and staff have been provided with access to an associated app and training. The new system allows for more seamless call forwarding, receiving voicemail through email, and the ability to use one's cell phone as though it is one's office phone.
- Improved WIFI connections for staff and the public at Homer Lake, Lake of the Woods, and Middle Fork.
- Organizational values are being identified to aid with accountability.
- Wages have been increased to be more competitive in the market, encouraging employee retention and reducing time and costs associated with recruitment.
- The utilization of Microsoft Teams is becoming standardized to reduce the added cost of Zoom accounts.
- We are in the process of transitioning all locally stored electronic files to a cloud-based system. The process includes auditing files on our current servers, then moving files with the help of our IT consultant to ensure retainment of important file metadata. Operating from a cloud-based system of files allows for more real-time collaboration, and will increase efficiency by allowing us to discontinue the use of, and payment for, one of our multiple layers of file backup systems in place for cybersecurity.

February 15, 2024

Memorandum

To: Efficiency Committee

From: Nina Carmichael, Staff Liaison (non-voting member)

Re: Future Study Areas

Action Requested

Staff requests that the Efficiency Committee provide guidance on whether staff should further investigate the types of items/policies that need Board of Commissioners approval.

Background

Historically, Board approval has been sought in a number of areas that may not be required by law, or necessary to maintain transparency or efficiency in Forest Preserve work. Staff asks for guidance on continuing to look into these scenarios, and, if warranted, bring to the Board of Commissioners formal request(s) to revise the process.

The proposed areas of review and revision include:

- 1) Evaluating which policies can be approved at an administrative level and which need to come before the Board for approval. Examples:
 - a. Board approval of job descriptions for new positions.
 - b. Personnel policies that do not have a financial implication.
 - c. Personnel policies that need to be updated to comply with changing state law
 - d. Accession/Deaccession of Museum and Education Collections policy
- 2) Items that have been approved through the greater budget approval process that are then taken back to the Board for action. Examples:
 - a. Board approval for vehicles
 - b. Interfund transfers

