Friends of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County
Board of Directors Meeting
Sept. 22, 2026 • 5:30 p.m.
Forest Preserve District of DuPage County Headquarters, Board Room

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The Friends of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County board of directors will conduct its meeting in person at the Danada headquarters building, located at 3S580 Naperville Road in Wheaton. For more information or if you plan to attend, please call 630-871-6400.

Call to Order and Welcome — Jeanette Wells, Chair

Roll Call

Public Comments

Meeting Minutes Approval — Joe Suchecki, Secretary

New Business — Jeanette Wells

Action Items

- Motion to Approve 2027 Meeting Dates
- Motion to Approve Volunteers of Distinction Award Process
- Motion to Approve sponsorship request from National Wildlife Rehabilitation Association
- Motion to Approve nomination of Jeanette Wells for reappointment to the Friends Board

Information Items

- Presentation of Recommended Slate of 2027 Officers — Jeanette Wells
- Anticipating requests for funding from the District — Jeannine Kannegiesser, Friends Executive Director
- Fundraising planning — Jeannine Kannegiesser

Committee Reports Finance — Tom Murphy, Treasurer

Action Items

- Motion to Accept Financial Dashboard Summary Report through July 31
- Motion to Approve Recommended Financial Report Updates

Information Items

- 2027 Budget Draft Presentation
- Investment update

Ex-Officio Reports

Jeff Gahris — District Commissioner
Jeannine Kannegiesser

Adjournment — Jeanette Wells

Dates to Remember

- Friends Board Meeting on Nov. 17 at 5: 30 p.m. at The Preserve at Oak Meadows
- Giving Tuesday on Dec. 1

Friends of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
September 22, 2026

The Friends of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County met at the District Headquarters at 3S580 Naperville Road, Wheaton, on September 22, 2026.

Call to Order

Chair Jeanette Wells called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Roll Call

Secretary Joe Suchecki called the roll. In attendance were Chair Jeanette Wells, Carl Alston, Mike Dyer, Ashley Guest, Larry Larson, Tom Murphy, Carl Shultz, Dave Stang, Joe Suchecki, and Tom Williams. Denise Krohn was absent. Staff members Lulu Hertenstein and Jeannine Kannegiesser also attended.

A quorum of the Board was present.

Chair's Welcome

Chair Wells welcomed the public, board members and staff to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending as well as for their time and efforts on behalf of the Friends.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes.

Chair Wells recognized Secretary Suchecki to discuss approval of the meeting minutes from the July 21, 2026 Friends meeting and the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on August 25, 2026. Secretary Suchecki asked if there were any corrections to the draft minutes of the last Board meeting. There were no comments on the draft minutes. Mr. Suchecki entertained a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Motion to approve the July 21, 2026 meeting minutes was made by Mr. Alston and seconded by Ms. Guest. Upon voting, the motion to accept the draft minutes was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Secretary Suchecki asked if there were any comments or corrections to the draft Finance Committee meeting minutes. There were none. Mr. Suchecki asked for a motion to accept the Finance Committee minutes. Motion by Mr. Murphy, second by Mr. Williams. Upon voting, the minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

New Business

Chair Wells initiated discussion and consideration of several items of new business starting with the Friends Board meeting schedule for 2027. Staff proposed meeting dates of January 19, March 16, May 18, July 20, September 21, and November 16. All meetings will be held at

District headquarters except the November meeting that will be held at The Preserve at Oak Meadows. In addition, the Friends Development Committee will meet on February 16 and August 24, and the Finance Committee will meet on April 27 and August 17.

Chair Wells entertained a motion to approve the meeting schedule for 2027. A Motion to approve the 2027 meeting dates was made by Mr. Williams. Second by Mr. Larson. Upon voting, the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

The next item on the agenda was approval of the process to select nominees for the Friends Volunteer of Distinction Award for 2026. Chair Wells recognized Ms. Kannegiesser to explain the award and the proposed process. The Volunteer of Distinction Award recognizes District volunteers who have demonstrated exceptional service to the District. Nominations for the award are submitted by other District volunteers. Two Friends Board members will review the nominations and select the award recipients.

Friends staff recommended that the award process be revised this year to recognize volunteer groups as well as individuals. The staff proposes awarding individual awards to two volunteers as well as one volunteer group. This will allow recognition of groups as well as individuals.

Chair Wells asked for a motion to approve the Award of Distinctiion process. Mr. Murphy made a motion to approve the revised process for the 2026 award as presented by Ms. Kannegiesser. Second by Mr. Suchecki. There was no further discussion. Upon voting, the motion to approve the award process was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Chair Wells recognized Ms. Kannegeisser to present information to the Board on a request for funding that the Friends received from the National Wildlife Rehabilitation Association (NWRA). The District, and in particular the DuPage Wildlife Conservation Center, is hosting the annual meeting of the NWRA in 2027. The meeting will be held in the Chicago area in February 2027. The NWRA requested that the Friends support the meeting by sponsoring the 2027 NWRA Symposium at the $5,000 Advocate level. The sponsorship could be directed to fund participation in the meeting by staff and volunteers from the Center.

Board members had a number of questions about the request and were generally supportive of providing some funds to the NWRA. Mr. Shultz made a motion that the Friends provide support for the symposium at the $5,000 Advocate level. Motion seconded by Mr. Williams. Further discussion ensued regarding the level of sponsorship. Based on that discussion, Mr. Shultz amended his motion to support sponsorship at the $10,000 Champion level. Second to amend the motion by Mr. Williams.

Upon further discussion regarding the level of sponsorship and the Friends interest in assisting the staff and volunteers at the DuPage Wildlife Conservation Center, the Board came to consensus that the Friends should support the conference as well as provide financial assistance for Center staff to attend the conference. Consequently, Mr. Shultz accepted a friendly amendment to the motion under discussion to provide support to the NWRA at the $5,000

Advocate level and to support Center staff by funding three scholarships to attend the conference. Mr. Williams seconded the amendment to the motion.

The final motion under consideration by the Board to provide $5000 to the NWRA to support the symposium and to provide funds for three District staff to attend the meeting was open for discussion. There was no further discussion. Upon voting, the Board approved the motion by unanimous voice vote.

Chair Wells again recognized Ms. Kannegiesser to discuss the renomination of Chair Wells to another three-year term on the Friends Board. Ms. Kannegiesser requested the Board to approve the renomination and forward the nomination to the District Commission for approval.

Mr. Stang made a motion to approve the nomination of Chair Wells to another three-year term on the Board. Second by Mr. Dyer. There was no discussion. Upon voting, the motion passed by unanimous voice consent.

Ms. Kannegiesser continued by bringing three information items to the Board. She indicated that a slate of officers will be brought to the Board for consideration at the November meeting. The proposed slate of officers is as follows: Chair, Dave Stang; Vice-chair Joe Suchecki; Treasurer Tom Murphy; Secretary, open.

The District has requested that the Friends fund a number of programs and projects to support the District's mission in 2027. The funding request will be brought to the Board at the November meeting. The District is requesting a transfer of funds from the Friends to the District of $550,000 to $560,000. The request enumerated a variety of specific requests involving many programs within the District. Board members expressed some reservations regarding the size of the request, and there was discussion regarding the current resources available to fulfill the request. Further consideration will be held at the November meeting.

Ms. Kannegiesser then indicated that the Board needs to focus more on fundraising in 2027. She proposed that the agenda for the January Board meeting emphasize fundraising efforts.

Chair Wells thanked Ms. Kannegiesser for the information.

Treasurer's Report

Chair Wells recognized Mr. Murphy for presentation of the Treasurer's report. Treasurer Murphy presented the treasurer's report, including the financial dashboard for the period ending July 31, 2026. He reported total assets of $973,625. The net revenue through July was $88,699. Treasurer Murphy asked if anyone had any questions on the Financial Dashboard. There were none. Mr. Murphy entertained a motion to accept the financial dashboard summary through July 31, 2026. Mr. Williams made a motion to accept the Financial Dashboard as presented. Second by Ms. Wells. There being no further discussion, the motion to accept the July 31 financial dashboard was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Treasurer Murphy then discussed some proposed changes to the financial reporting format. District staff indicated that they must prepare the current financial dashboard report manually while their financial and accounting software can provide the same information through automatic reports. They requested that the Friends consider altering the format to save District staff time and resources. Mr. Murphy explained the potential new format and asked for Board approval. Ms. Guest mad a motion to approve the change in financial reporting format. Second by Mr. Dyer. There was no discussion. Upon voting the motion to revise the financial reporting format was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Treasurer Murphy presented the proposed Friends annual budget as an information item to the Board. The proposed 2027 budget includes total revenue of $970,000 and total expenses of $369,200 resulting in net ordinary income of $600,800. The proposed budget and disbursements to the District of around $550,000 would leave the Friends with assets of approximately $1,000,000 at the end of 2027.

Treasurer Murphy indicated that there has been no movement regarding the substantial bequest to the District from a donor and that the bank handling the trust has not made any progress in disbursing the funds to the Friends. Mr. Murphy indicated that he believes it is time to initiate efforts to release the funds.

Ex-Officio Reports

Chair Wells recognized Executive Director Kannegiesser to provide a staff report. Ms. Kannegiesser indicated that Commissioner Gahris was not able to attend the meeting tonight. He did provide some updates for the Board and reported that the Commission continues with their progress on a number of issues. Some recent events include the removal of the Kress Creek remediation site from the US. Environmental Protection Agency Superfund site list, reopening of the Mayslake Peabody estate, continuing progress on the Roosevelt Road trail overpass, the success of the A Night for Nature, and a "solarbration" to recognize the District's completion of the headquarters solar array.

Ms. Kannegiesser indicated that she had nothing more to report to the Board. She did remind the Board that the slate of officers still needs a Secretary and that the November meeting will be held on November 17th at The Preserve at Oak Meadows followed by a reception.

Chair Wells thanked Ms. Kannegiesser for her comments.

Adjournment

Chair Wells asked if there was any other business before the board. There was none.

There being no other business, Chair Wells called for adjournment of the meeting. Mr. Murphy made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Second by Mr. Larson. The motion to adjourn was approved by unanimous voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:52 pm.