



Forest Preserve District of Cook County

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FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OF COOK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS PASSES 2012 BUDGET

December 15, 2011 - The Forest Preserve District of Cook County (FPDCC) Board of Commissioners passed President Toni Preckwinkle's proposed FY2012 budget by a vote of 14-0 at a meeting held on Thursday, December 15. Despite the continuing economic downturn, the \$195 million budget was balanced without raising taxes. Highlights include an increase in the land acquisition budget; additional funding for eight new ecology and restoration staff members; and a new district-wide internship program that will provide valuable training opportunities for students and young people.

"The Forest Preserve District is Cook County's most valuable gem and I commend the Board of Commissioners for passing the 2012 budget. This budget continues to move the district towards greater accountability and efficiency, while also better aligning with its mission to preserve and protect the natural lands and beauty of the forests," said Forest Preserve District of Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle.

The FY2012 budget includes:

- \$58M general operating budget (also known as the Corporate Fund), a 1.5% increase from 2011;
- \$5.7M for Construction and Development;
- \$13.8M for Capital Improvements;
- \$10.1M for Real Estate Acquisition, including \$4M in new money;
- \$15.5M for Brookfield Zoo; the Zoo raises an additional \$48.5M; and
- \$9.6M for Botanic Garden; the Garden raises an additional \$19.8M.

The FY2012 budget also reflects key recommendations and structural changes from the Forest Preserve District's desk audit that was released on October 12, 2011, including a reorganization of staff positions and the creation of a new human resources division.

“Under the leadership of President Preckwinkle and the Board of Commissioners, we've made substantial steps towards becoming a more efficient and effective agency,” said Forest Preserve District General Superintendent Arnold Randall. “In 2012, we will continue to focus on achieving greater accountability throughout the entire organization, while also enhancing our commitment to restoring our most precious natural forests, savannas, and prairies; acquiring key land parcels throughout the county; and expanding our public outreach and educational programs, particularly for children.”

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