



AGENDA MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 23, 2025
TO: Forest Preserve District Finance & Administration Committee
FROM: David Petschke, Director of Finance
Benjamin Haberthur, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Presentation and Discussion of the Tax Levy for Fiscal Year 2026-2027

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the committee with information to support a recommendation for the upcoming 2025 property tax levy.

BACKGROUND:

Preliminary audit results for fiscal year 2024/25 are shown below (please note full figures will not be available for approximately two months):

GENERAL FUND

Revenues

- Budgeted Amount - \$12,036,081
 - Actual Amount - \$12,427,804
 - Difference – Surplus of \$391,723 (3.3%)
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- Investment Income – Surplus of \$260,980 – A majority of the surplus was due to the current interest rate environment and the diversified investments resulting in more interest income than what was budgeted in the fiscal year.
 - Personal Property Replacement Tax (PPRT) – Deficit of \$207,184 – The original amount budgeted was based on Illinois Municipal League (IML) guidance, however the revenue was lower than anticipated due to the State continuing to divert revenue prior to it being distributed to local agencies.
 - Campground Revenue – Surplus of \$185,412 – This surplus was primarily due to an accounting methodology change that was approved by the District's auditors. The District had previously recorded a deferred revenue for reservations recorded online prior to the reservation date in the next fiscal year. Due to the immateriality of the entry, the reservations system will be on a cash basis going forward to greatly reduce staff time involved in the manual accrual calculation process.
 - Sale of Material – Surplus of \$105,009 – Surplus was due to the District selling vacant lots, vehicles, and equipment in excess of the budget estimates through the online Public Surplus auction website.

Expenses

- Budgeted Amount - \$12,759,082
- Actual Amount - \$11,491,439
- Difference – Surplus of \$1,267,643 (9.9%)
- Full Time, Part Time, and Overtime Employee Wages – Surplus of \$182,218 – The District had a surplus budget of \$182,218 in full time, part time, and overtime wages. While the District spent 97.3% of the total budget in the fiscal year, the primary factor that contributed to a surplus in wages was staff turnover and the time it took to replace vacant positions with qualified replacements.
- Employer Portion of Health Insurance – Surplus of \$218,977 – The District budgeted a total of \$1,039,137 for employer paid health insurance in the fiscal year. The actual expenses were \$820,160 during the year. This surplus was primarily due to employees electing plans that have lower costs or waiving coverages. It is also due to employee turnover and the time it took to replace positions with qualified candidates.
- Carry-Over Expenditures (Vehicles & Fuel System) – Surplus of \$535,680 – This carryover amount represents both vehicles and a fuel system replacement that were budgeted in fiscal year 2024-2025, but were not delivered prior to the District's fiscal year end. The District anticipated a delay in the delivery of these items and had budgeted for the carry-over of these vehicles and fuel system into the 2025-2026 fiscal year.
- Interfund Transfers – Surplus of \$190,085 – The District budgeted a total of \$1,308,411 of operating transfers to the IMRF, Social Security and Liability Funds. Actual expenses were \$1,118,189 to comply with each respective fund balance policy.

IMRF FUND

Revenues

- Budgeted Amount - \$492,894
- Actual Amount - \$362,785
- Difference – Deficit of \$130,109 (26.4%)

Expenses

- Budgeted Amount - \$492,894
- Actual Amount - \$372,868
- Difference – Deficit of \$120,026 (24.4%)
- The IMRF Fund performed as expected for the fiscal year.

INSURANCE LIABILITY FUND

Revenues

- Budgeted Amount - \$395,108
- Actual Amount - \$358,282
- Difference – Surplus of \$49,310 (12.1%)

Expenses

- Budgeted Amount - \$407,592
- Actual Amount - \$354,362
- Difference – Surplus of \$53,230 (13.1%)
- The Insurance Liability Fund performed as expected for the fiscal year.

SOCIAL SECURITY FUND

Revenues

- Budgeted Amount - \$460,858
- Actual Amount - \$455,753
- Difference – Deficit of \$5,105 (1.1%)

Expenses

- Budgeted Amount - \$460,858
- Actual Amount - \$442,572
- Difference – Surplus of \$18,286 (4.0%)
- The Social Security Fund performed as expected for the fiscal year.

Each year the Finance and Administrative Committee determines the direction for the upcoming property tax levy which is then forwarded to the Executive Committee with a budget for levy purposes before going to the Full Commission for approval. Staff requested the most current information from the clerk's office and received the following:

- Rate Setting EAV is estimated at \$23,436,973,365 (final percentage is not determined)
- Preliminary new construction figures for the county are \$288,425,018 (partial year)

Based on these estimates the District would be eligible for a Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase of 2.9%, or \$445,832 in additional property tax revenue in FY 26-27 and between \$153,973 and \$197,105 in additional revenue from new construction.

The Illinois Downstate Forest Preserve Act (70ILCS 805/13.1) stipulates that each Forest Preserve District must approve their tax levy ordinance after the first Monday in October and by the first Monday in December in each year the board shall levy the general taxes for the district by general categories for the next fiscal year. Application of this statutory requirement to the 2025 Forest Preserve District commission meeting schedule, means The District must pass a budget for tax levy purposes at the Full Commission meeting on October 14th, then the tax levy ordinances and abatement ordinances must be filed at the following Full Commission meeting on November 11, 2025.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Determining firm figures is extremely difficult at this early stage. None of the numbers from the clerk's office are final. Based on estimates, and using the new construction figure shown above, the District would anticipate an increase of up to \$642,937 in additional revenue if the board approves a levy for both CPI and New Construction.

RECOMMENDATION: *For discussion and direction.*