

**ILLINOIS NATURE PRESERVES COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

Illinois Department of Natural Resources
One Natural Resources Way
Springfield, Illinois 62702
Lake Level Conference Room
January 27, 2025, 1:30 PM

Item 1: Meeting Purpose and Logistics

Todd Strole, Assistant Director
Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Todd Strole provided opening remarks on the purpose and logistics of the meeting.

Item 2: Call to Order, Roll Call, and Introductions

Commission Chair Michelle Parker called the meeting to order at 1:39pm and read the roll call.

Commissioners Present: Dr. Abigail Derby Lewis, Michelle Parker, Radhika Miraglia, Toni Oplt, Tom Clay, Chris Evans, and Marcella DeMauro-Roth.

Others Present: Todd Strole, Sami Childerson, John Nelson, Kim Roman, Kelly Neal, John Griesbaum, Valerie Njapa, Kelly Neal, Debbie Newman, Angella Moorehouse Emily Taylor, Kaleb Baker, Lorraine Foelske and Byron Paulsen, INPC; John Rogner, Heather Osborn, Chris Young, Ann Holtrop, Dalton Sharrow, Dan Brown, Jeff Horn, Christina Feng, Taryn Bieri, Charles O'Leary, Michelle Bloomquist, Michelle Simone and Leon Hinz IDNR; Logan Pappenfort, Illinois State Museum; George Covington, David Thomas and Bill McClain, former INPC Commissioners; Blake Andrew and Lindsay Keeney, Illinois Environmental Council; Amy Doll and Kevin Rohling, Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves; Cynthia Kanner, Prairie State Conservation Coalition; Kim Erndt-Pitcher, Prairie Rivers Network; Jo Fessett, Illinois Audubon Society; Deb Kelly, Hilary Holt, Jean Matthiessen, Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation; Jill Kennay, Natural Lands Institute; Hall Healy, Audubon Great Lakes; Karen Witter, former INPC Director and Nature Preserve Owner; Joe Roth, and Dylan Scatena.

Item 3: Tribal Relations and NAGPRA

Logan Pappenfort, ISM, presented this item - see Attachment 1.

Item 4: Selection Process for Consultants to the Commission - Discussion

Todd Strole, INDR and Commissioner Tom Clay, Committee of the Whole Chair, presented this item.

Commission Chair Parker provided context for the upcoming discussion. She explained that Consultant Elections were put on hold at the September meeting for the sake of clarifying the role

and qualifications of Consultants before the elections. Thoughts, discovery, and conversation were all necessary to answer questions regarding the Consultant role.

Commissioner Clay, Committee of the Whole Chair, began by providing background on the statute that created the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission more than 60 years ago through the Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act (Act). It states that the Commission consists of nine members appointed by the Governor. Directors of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and Illinois State Museum (ISM), Chief of the Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS), as well as representatives of other agencies assisting the Commission may serve as Advisors. The IDNR and ISM Directors and the INHS Chief serve as Statutory Advisors. Currently there are nine Advisors, all within government or educational institutions. The Act provides the following on the role of Consultants: “The Commission may appoint Consultants.” This is all the guidance the Act provides. Therefore, there is a need as the discussion moves forward in the selection of Consultants to make sure those selected understand their role.

Commissioner Clay continued, describing how, as Chair of the Committee of the Whole, he devised a plan to collaborate with other Commissioners to generate points of discussion while staying in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. This involved sending a questionnaire to each Commissioner through email, compiling their answers and sending it off to the next Commissioner in a sequential manner to facilitate a “discussion” of goals and criteria without meeting. He then turned this information over to Todd Strole, who organized it in an identifiable manner to evaluate.

Commissioner Clay stated they hoped to use this and the 249th INPC meeting the following day to move forward with a nomination that will appoint Consultants until the September meeting, at which time a clear understanding of the Consultant process will be in place. This is to determine how Consultants are identified and appointed to the Commission. It is Commissioner Clay’s intention to act on the current Consultants and newly nominated individuals before the September meeting.

Commission Chair Parker added that part of what began this conversation were thoughts expressed by several Commissioners independent of one another. Questions were raised about the Consultant role, how they are vetted, and who in the room has a voice.

Commission Chair Parker commented that the process by which Commissioners and Advisors are appointed is well defined, being based on position, agency affiliation, education, and experience. This offers opportunities with the role of the Consultant to bring in other points of view and expertise. This may include people who are not top of mind for the role of Commissioner or Advisor yet are still critical to the conversation.

Commission Chair Parker summarized that it is that independent but shared belief by so many Commissioners that there must be a way to open the space, and the Consultant role was identified as the best way to accomplish that.

Commission Chair Parker followed up on a comment Commissioner Clay made about the pause on Consultants at the 248th meeting. She stated it was made clear that Consultants would be critical to the Commission in the coming months, especially in the face of the legislative session.

Considering that, it was decided that a motion would be made at the 249th meeting to elect the slate of Consultants that was proposed in September but put on pause. Then, the next election at the 251st meeting in September 2025 would be reflective of the new process being discussed at this meeting.

Todd Strole explained he would facilitate the conversation on Consultants, and he reiterated that at the time of this meeting, there were no Consultants for INPC since the election was paused at the 248th meeting. He made that point to clarify for the audience, especially those who were Consultants in the past. Typically, Consultants have the right to engage in the conversation at will, but since there were no current Consultants, audience members wishing to comment must be called upon by the Commission Chair.

Strole explained how he synthesized a list of the information captured from the emails Commissioner Clay compiled. He identified criteria, expectations, areas of expertise and guidance on the selection process. This document was provided to the Commissioners for reference.

The Commissioners were asked whether the preference would be to go through each category or jump around, pointing out examples in each list. Strole provided anecdotal instances to consider based on his expertise. He described some categories, such as institutional knowledge, are covered by staff and former Commissioners, some of whom are on the current Consultant slate. Other areas of expertise, such as animal pathology, are not topics the INPC typically runs into but if there were a need to call the Illinois Natural History Survey with questions, they may decline to answer without a contract in place. These are all things to consider when devising the criteria for Consultants. Another example provided was the instance of mining operations close to INPC sites, which comes up frequently. Is there a need for a dedicated Consultant on mining when there is a division dedicated to it at IDNR? He said he was unsure, but these are questions we should be asking.

Commission Chair Parker noted the document compiled by Strole included a long and diverse list of areas of expertise. A common theme appears to be a need for flexibility and responsiveness to current INPC needs, which is reflected in the diversity of the list. She then suggested shifting toward defining expectations, particularly the expectation of service. She described the role of the Consultant not just as something to be seen as an honor but as a role with an expectation of service. Defining expectations and what that service looks like might inform other aspects that need to be discussed.

Todd Strole continued the conversation, noting that often the Consultant's role has been to be available for a conversation based on their expertise. He cited George Covington as an example, who has not only served as a Commissioner but has been an invaluable source of information related his legal expertise on conservation easements. He also described a future in which he foresees a need for Consultants to help defend the basic tenets of INPC operations, such as a white paper on management practices and prescribed fire. There is a range of service, from a quick phone call to the need for a formal consult. There is a limit to these expectations, as Consultants are volunteers.

Commissioner DeMauro-Roth asked about how expansive the role of Advisors is. What ability do they have to work with staff in the agencies they head and address future issues? Would an Advisor have the ability to reach into their agency and draw on expertise there to advise the Commission?

Todd Strole answered that the extent of this reach was demonstrated recently with the herbicide drift issues and concerns. The Advisor from INHS was contacted to advise on how best to handle this, ultimately leading to the Commission hiring INHS staff to conduct a study on lands in the INPC system. In essence, the answer to Commissioner DeMauro-Roth's questions is yes, the Advisors have the capacity and ability, within limits, to get answers and advice within their agencies.

Commissioner Derby Lewis commented on her experience as a Commissioner, noting the need for Consultants has historically been for guidance in a certain area. She suggested keeping the definition basic rather than descriptive based on a certain moment in time. Needs may change in the future.

Todd Strole clarified that he did not expect a well-defined picture of the Consultant role to be completed by the end of the Special Meeting. Rather, the discussion should help to clarify for Commissioners what Consultant appointments might look like moving forward. The discussion will help to define edges, but not to box in.

Commissioner Derby Lewis noted the list provided to Commissioners referenced potentially capping the number of Consultants due to budget constraints since Consultants are eligible for travel reimbursement for attending meetings. She noted if a limit is placed on the number of Consultants, then term limits should be considered to promote new perspectives and areas of expertise among Consultants.

Todd Strole confirmed that Consultants are eligible for reimbursement for travel expenses, but explained this is an accommodation that they don't often claim expenses for. Many are reimbursed by the organizations they are affiliated with.

Commissioner Derby Lewis noted that the reimbursement allows for equity for a more diverse constituency, not just those who can afford to attend on their own or their agency's dime.

Commissioner Miraglia asked for clarification on the objective of the day.

Todd Strole replied that he hoped to walk away with direction from the Commission on what they would like to see as a process for identifying and appointing Consultants. This information would be used to prepare a draft guidance document to be presented to the Commission at the May meeting.

Commissioner Miraglia commented on the structure of the discussion based on the document provided to Commissioners. She suggested, based on the presentation by Logan Pappenfort, that reciprocity be considered by thinking about what Consultants can learn and get out of their role with the Commission.

Commission Chair Parker explained what would be helpful at this meeting is to articulate general guidance on the expectations, criteria and how to apply this to a slate of Consultants. Most recently, this process encompassed Commissioners submitting names to the Chair of the Committee of the Whole, who then presented the names for voting at the September meeting. There is no actual process or vetting of Consultants. To reiterate, the goal is to determine what the process is, to define the role and then use that information to develop a slate of Consultants for voting.

Commissioner Clay stated the first step is to define the role of Consultant so it can be clearly communicated. The next step is to ask current Consultants if they want to continue based on this clarification. Then it can be determined whether Consultants are serving in this role because of their expertise or because they are representing their organization. This would be followed by a vetting process for new Consultants before finalizing with a vote.

Todd Strole noted that all Consultants on the current slate have been asked if they would like to continue in the role, and they indicated they would.

Amy Doll was called on to speak. She offered some insight after hearing that some individuals on the Consultant slate were not aware the vote didn't occur in September. She indicated most Consultants wish to continue in their role, but it may be worth confirming before a potential vote at the meeting the next day.

Todd Strole clarified that each Consultant was contacted prior to the September meeting and submitted a brief bio and agreed to serve.

David Thomas was called on to speak, indicating that if Commissioners or staff were to approach an Advisor with a question, they would absolutely refer them to the right person to answer the query, within reason. These Advisors are a scientific resource.

Commissioner Evans asked if a directory could be put together of the Consultants and their areas of expertise and delivered to INPC staff and Commissioners for reference.

Todd Strole answered that historically that has not been done, but recently the short bios that were provided could serve that purpose.

Commissioner Miraglia asked if this list of Consultants includes the only people that staff are allowed to consult with.

Todd Strole answered no.

Commissioner Miraglia followed up, asking what the distinguishing feature of a Consultant is.

Todd Strole replied that rather than cold calling another expert, there's an expectation that named Consultants will be responsive. They should be available to consult with.

Commission Chair Parker suggested broadening that to a capacity to serve. It should also be determined that they have the time to commit.

Todd Strole asked if Commissioners would like to add more expectations. There was no response. He asked what part of the process the Commission would like to discuss next.

Commission Chair Parker stated there may not be a need to discuss expertise, as those areas will be based on the needs of the time. Therefore, criteria may be more important for identifying a great Consultant within a certain field.

Commissioner DeMauro-Roth noted there are some areas that come up with every dedication, such as reserved rights and management practices, demonstrating a baseline need for expertise.

Commission Chair Parker said she is concerned that having a standing list of expertise may create a tiered system of Consultants.

Commissioner Miraglia asked, in the context of needing to prioritize some fields over others, if there were ever a situation when too many candidates were nominated. She also asked if staff ever noticed areas of expertise missing from the list that they would like to see.

Jo Fessett was called on to speak. She stated there are so many topics that it would be impossible to have a Consultant for each. A criteria or expectation from Consultants might be the ability to connect with a community of experts that could assist with a particular need.

Commissioner Derby Lewis agreed that this is something that should be considered for criteria.

David Thomas was called on to speak. He stated that the number of Consultants was never an issue during his time with the Commission. Most Consultants would be asked for input prior to a meeting, but many are barely utilized.

Todd Strole agreed. The lack of engagement is part of what prompted the current discussion, with questions about who they are, what are their capacities, and how to engage them more.

He read off the three criteria established in the document provided to the Commissioners, the first being: Credential of excellence in their field (which was intentionally left vague).

Commission Chair Parker commented that the word “credentials” implied academia and suggested alternate words such as “reputation for excellence” or “demonstrated excellence.”

Commissioner Derby Lewis looked up the word “credentials” in the Webster dictionary, reading the definition as “qualifications, achievement, personal quality or aspect of a person’s background.” Using this definition, she said she is okay with its use but also liked “demonstrated excellence.”

Todd Strole agreed and then read the other additional criteria, the second being: Ability to reach into a community of experts. This is exactly what was previously discussed. And the third: Desire to serve. This is also an expectation, so it is unclear if it is needed in both. Expectations and criteria could be lumped together rather than being separate sections.

Debbie Newman was called on to speak. She suggested a criterion of “continuity” might be worth exploring. In her nearly three decades of service to the Commission, many Consultants have been former Commissioners or staff who hold a long-term view of INPC. She pointed out people in the room who have been around a long time and part of their own credentials is their continuity and ability to bring institutional knowledge from decades ago. She noted the Commission is over 60 years old, so to be able to reach back and get that knowledge from before is important.

Commissioner Derby Lewis wondered, considering Newman’s comment, if continuity could be categorized under considerations rather than criteria. She showed appreciation for the concept of continuity and suggested it may even fit under general guidance.

Todd Strole suggested that collectively Consultants should have some level of continuity, demonstrated in general guidance. Not as a criterion for individuals but an expectation that the constituency would hold continuity.

Commission Chair Parker expressed the need for a general statement about a broader picture, continuity, and knowledge transfer balanced with new and traditionally overlooked perspectives that have historically been left out of the conversation. She agreed with general guidance of continuity and not wanting to lose that knowledge.

Jo Fessett was called on to speak. She asked if there was a general-purpose statement for Consultants and Commissioners.

Commissioner Clay answered yes, in statute it states Commission members shall be persons who have demonstrated an interest in the preservation of natural areas.

Todd Strole added the purpose of the Commission is to secure for future generations, the benefits of enduring system of natural areas. This is directly from statute. The Act only states that the Commission may appoint Consultants. He repeated information from the beginning of the meeting regarding Consultants serving as a source of knowledge and guidance.

Todd Strole moved on to the general guidance section of the document noting there are collective and individual expectations. The general guidance includes six items.

- 1) Selection criteria should be broadly defined so the selection process is both robust and flexible over time to address a broad range of concerns over which the Commissioners need or want input on from different individuals/perspectives. He stressed the need to not over define the role, saying, “We don’t know what we don’t know.”

- 2) Consultants have more flexibility to be in opposition in a way a staff member may not. A Consultant, depending on their organizational affiliation, can often voice concerns and opinions publicly where a state employee may not.

Commissioner Evans commented that he agreed, but if it is going to be general guidance, item two will need to be reworded.

3) Good geographic representation across the state. This harkens back to the conversation about collectively versus individually. Some expertise is hyper local, regional or statewide and it's important to have all of that.

4) Emphasize Consultants from positions outside of agencies. This is related to item two, that sometimes there are certain constraints within agencies.

Commissioner Oplt commented there can be moments when experts find themselves in conflicting positions. It seems there should be some Consultants who fall outside of those conflicts, seeking honesty and accountability for the decisions that need to be made.

Todd Strole replied that this could also relate to the fact that government is slow. This applies to the speed at which some issues can move within state government versus outside organizations.

5) The number of Consultants should be capped due to budget constraints. It was mentioned to discuss term limits. Do we want term limits? Do we want a hard number of Consultants?

Commissioner Clay commented that statute currently outlines a one-year term.

Todd Strole agreed, Consultants have an unlimited number of one year appointments currently. He expressed that the Commission could perhaps generate a list of topics each year that are relevant and fill Consultant positions based on the evolving needs of the Commission.

Commissioner Evans commented that one of the justifications of term limits would be to make sure new voices and perspectives get on the Consultant list to be heard. He said he can see this as a benefit, but there may be some specific areas of expertise where retaining it would be helpful. The Commission could reappoint those on yearly basis.

Commissioner Miraglia said she isn't convinced there should be a cap because it could limit flexibility. Would budget constraints be the only reason to cap numbers?

Todd Strole commented that budget seems to be the only practical reason to have a Consultant cap. Perhaps a condition might be that there is no cap if there is no negative budget impact.

Commissioner Miraglia replied that if the number of Consultants becomes an issue, it should be brought to the Commission rather than setting a hard rule.

Todd Strole commented that we have existed without a set rule for 61 years.

Commission Chair Parker suggested that dealing with budget concerns as they arise may be the best course of action. If the budget becomes an issue, then frank conversations about expenses could occur.

Commissioner Derby Lewis commented that a big part of the discussion is to provide opportunities for new voices and perspectives to be added to the Commission. She noted that if the criteria are over-defined, then there will be a need to have these types of conversations on a regular basis.

Todd Strole indicated that item five of the general guidance would be modified.

6) Complimentary skill sets instead of too much redundancy. Staff have certain skill sets skills, and the skill sets of Consultants can fill voids. Collectively, there should be a broad range of expertise without too much redundancy.

Commission Chair Parker commented on strategies to build boards. One of the worst ways to do so is to rely on board members to recommend board members, because then you just end up with a group of friends. She expressed the need to capture Consultant nominations beyond Commissioner first degree networks. The method she used in building the Audubon Great Lakes Board was to ask staff for recommendations rather than other board members. This allowed her to recruit excellent board members she would have never otherwise identified. She expressed the need to build a more expansive way to identify Consultants as well.

Todd Strole stated that the slate of Consultants has been primarily done by the Chair of the Committee of the Whole in consultation with other Commissioners. It is not usually done in consultation with staff. So, to start off, how is a list of names generated? Commissioners, staff, other Consultants and Advisors are all options. He agreed with the need to get beyond first degree connections but there is also a need to remain within the mission.

In terms of process, Todd Strole said it is currently brief. There is a legal requirement to name a Chair of the Committee of the Whole whose primary function is to bring forth a slate of candidates for Consultants. He proposed that in the future, the Chair of the Commission, Chair of the Committee of the Whole, and current INPC Director work together to finalize any list of candidates for the Commission's consideration. These individuals would refine the list of proposed Consultants based on the general guidance discussed.

Commissioner Miraglia commented that there are some points that all Commissioners need to weigh in on. Perhaps that is during the voting? She is hesitant to agree to the list being limited by only a few people.

Commission Chair Parker commented there would be a vetting process that all Commissioners would be party to.

Todd Strole agreed and stated that in the process section, item two is the repeated theme that a prospective Consultant should submit a completed questionnaire to be reviewed by all Commissioners. This could include resume, research, affiliations and so on. This is so Commissioners are not just voting on a name but are provided with some information. He agreed there is a need to be careful about assigning too much power to a small group of people to oversee the final slate of Consultants. Debating merits of individuals in a public meeting should be avoided. Going into private session could be an option, but legal counsel has advised that this should be

avoided per the Open Meetings Act. While not impossible, these decisions belong in the public domain.

Commissioner Derby Lewis commented the most important thing here is transparency, asking if there could be a way to review a draft slate of candidates prior to the meeting without violating the Open Meetings Act? She referenced Commissioner Clay's strategy for building the initial Consultant document that has been used for discussion at this meeting. Would there be a similar strategy to employ? Or a way to provide an explanation for why the slate of Consultants is the way it is? There should be transparency and accountability for these decisions.

Todd Strole suggested adding a step to address these concerns prior to the three-person group finalizing a slate of candidates.

Commissioner Clay proposed the three people might be the Vice Chair, Chair of the Committee of the Whole and the INPC Executive Director. Those three positions can have a conversation without violating the Open Meetings Act. This group could communicate with the remainder of Commissioners regarding the slate of candidates in advance of the September meeting.

Commissioner Miraglia agreed that would be sufficient. She asked how we can make sure those three are following the guidelines set forth?

Commission Chair Parker referred to a suggestion made by Commissioner Kessel. Information from the candidates would be distributed far enough in advance so that Commissioners can review and have the opportunity to give feedback or to voice concerns to the designated three as they build the slate of candidates. For transparency, all Commissioners should be able to review the information before the slate of candidates is presented to the Commission at the September meeting. This puts responsibility on Commissioners to be proactive in their review of candidates. Those responsible for putting the final list of candidates together will need to be responsive to that feedback, with clear accountability regarding why a person does or does not appear on the slate of candidates. By removing the Commission Chair from the deciding group, it should distribute power more evenly.

Todd Strole thanked the Commissioners for their feedback, then asked about next steps, particularly for the 249th meeting the next day. One of the options is to approve the list presented in September 2024, with or without proposed additions. The other option is to continue the pause on Consultants.

Commission Chair Parker stated there is a critical need for Consultants in the upcoming legislative session. She suggested the Commission approve the slate of Consultants, with or without the proposed additions, for a term up to September 2025, at which time the newly determined process will be employed.

Commissioner Clay stated he would make a motion to present the slate of 23 consultants at the 249th meeting the following day. The term would be from the 249th meeting until September 2025 at which time the term would expire to preserve the standard election cycle. In September, those

same 23 would be presented again for a vote along with the six additional candidates that were previously discussed.

Commissioner Chair Parker recommended that all Consultants be subject to the new process, with no Consultants automatically being approved.

Commissioner Clay agreed.

Commissioner Miraglia asked if the six additional individuals who were proposed as new Consultants in September should be included now.

Commissioner DeMauro-Roth stated they should be included.

Commissioner Evans commented the only reason he sees not to include them is that he does not know who they are and is uncomfortable voting on a slate of candidates he has no information on.

Todd Strole stated he could provide that information to the Commissioners. The additional six were not included in the September list previously provided. He noted the statute states that Consultants are appointed for one year and he is not sure the Commission has it in their authority to abbreviate that term. He will consult the Open Meetings Act or legal counsel to ensure that is possible. He suggested appointing them for a year at the 249th meeting then re-appointing them at the September meeting.

Commissioner Clay confirmed that at this time nothing needs to be voted on regarding Commission officers.

Commissioner Miraglia asked about next steps. The Commissioners will receive the information on the slate of candidates before the meeting the next day. How will a discussion about individual candidates be avoided in an open meeting?

Todd Strole answered that there is no intent to avoid sharing the names. They will be a part of the public meeting tomorrow but the vote will be on the slate as a whole and individual candidates will not be discussed.

Karen Witter was called on to speak. She described how she worked with the Commission in the 80s and is a landowner of a current nature preserve. She worked in state government for 35 years and served on many advisory committees where she begged people to take advice. After this long deliberation regarding a revised process for Consultants, she suspects that past Consultants have not been overworked. She encouraged the Commission to discuss how to best utilize these excellent people and to be one of the few state entities that takes advantage of their Consultants' expertise.

Joe Roth was called on to speak. He asked that legal counsel advise on whether the vote at the 249th meeting can be retroactive to the previous September. This would keep the Commission on the one-year timeline. He went on to say that Consultants are the eyes and ears of the Commission. They are keeping abreast of news and issues, reading papers, and collectively can keep abreast of

issues more than any one staff member. In that regard, there is more to the Consultant position than offering their opinion in an email. He called to empower Consultants to pass on information if they see a threat or something that could become a threat to natural areas. He stressed that it is a two-way communication between Consultants and the Commission. He encouraged the Commission to take advantage of all the eyes and ears present at this meeting because it's impossible for the Commission staff to keep track of everything happening in the state. He stressed the need to communicate to Consultants that the Commission wants their honesty and opinion.

Todd Strole commented the retroactive rule is clever and he would investigate.

Commission Chair Parker asked whether a summary of what was agreed to during this meeting would be available for a possible motion at the 249th meeting. Or is there more work to do?

Commissioner Clay commented there is more work to be done.

Todd Strole stated a summary for the meeting the following day would not be impossible, but very difficult. He proposed that a document be prepared for Commissioner review prior to the May meeting, then voted on at the May meeting so that it could be employed for the September meeting.

He thanked Karen Witter for her comment, reiterating the importance of making good use of the body of expertise that Consultants offer.

Commission Chair Parker thanked all who commented; Commissioners for the conversation, in particular Commissioner Derby Lewis who set the groundwork for this conversation at the September meeting. Fleshing this out will be added to her legacy as Commission Chair. She then thanked Commissioner Clay for doing all the legwork to prepare for this, which was a lift. She thanked Todd Strole for all the time he spent thinking this through.

Commission Chair Parker closed by saying that the Consultant role is one of the few things the Commission has control over. So, as we think of evolving the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission 20, 30, 40 years into the future, this is an opportunity and a critical body of work.

Item 5: Adjourn

It was moved by Commissioner DeMauro-Roth, seconded by Commissioner Oplt, and carried that the meeting be adjourned.

The Special Meeting was adjourned at 4:15pm.