



**Forest Preserve District of Cook County
Board of Commissioners**

Minutes of the Legislation and Intergovernmental Relations

9:15 AM

Tuesday, February 4, 2025

**Cook County Building, Board Room,
118 North Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois**

ATTENDANCE

Present: Britton, Degnen, Aguilar, Anaya, Daley, Gainer, Lowry, McCaskill, Miller, Moore,
S. Morrison, Quezada, Scott, Stamps and Trevor (15)

Excused Absence: Morita and K. Morrison (2)

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Chairman Britton asked the Secretary to the Board to call upon the registered public speakers, in accordance with Forest Preserves Code of Ordinances, Section 1-5-4.

No public speakers.

25-0104

COMMITTEE MINUTES

Approval of the minutes from the meeting of 1/14/2025

A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Degnen, seconded by Commissioner Daley, to approve 25-0104. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Britton, Degnen, Aguilar, Anaya, Daley, Gainer, Lowry, McCaskill, Miller, Moore,
S. Morrison, Quezada, Scott, Stamps and Trevor (15)

Absent: Morita and K. Morrison (2)

25-0016

Presented by: EILEEN FIGEL, Interim General Superintendent

PROPOSED APPOINTMENT

Appointee(s): Alaka Wali

Position: Member

Department/Board/Commission: Conservation and Policy Council

Effective Date: Immediate

Expiration Date: 12/31/2027

Alaka Wali is curator emerita of North American Anthropology in the Science and Education Division of the Field Museum. Alaka was born in India and came to the United States as a child. Curious about issues of cultural identity, she studied anthropology at Harvard and Columbia, focusing on the challenges facing Indigenous peoples and their efforts to maintain cultural practices and worldviews.

She was the founding director of the Center for Cultural Understanding and Change at The Field Museum from 1995- 2010. During that time, she pioneered the development of participatory social science research and community engagement processes based in museum science. She curated the North American collection, one of the Museum's largest regional anthropology holdings. Since 2000, she has worked closely with ecologists and museum educators to develop innovative community engagement strategies for people living in and around biodiverse regions of the Western Amazon and urban Chicago to expand inclusion of their voices in environmental conservation efforts.

Her research focuses on the relationship between art and the capacity for social resilience. She has authored several books, and published monographs and more than 50 articles on a wide range of topics, including museum practice, political ecology, racialized health disparities and urban anthropology. She has curated numerous exhibitions, pioneering co-curated exhibitions with Native American contemporary artists. She led the curation of the exhibition-Native Truths: Our Voices, Our Stories which opened in May 2022 and broke new ground for the Field Museum with a deeply collaborative approach that privileges the perspectives of Native American scholars, artists and community members. A companion edited volume became available in 2024 from BAR Publishing.

From 2016-2024, Alaka served on the Board of the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation which focuses on land conservation and artistic vitality in Chicago and the Low Country of South Carolina. She has also served on other Chicago region Boards including the Chicago Cultural Alliance and the Latin School of Chicago.

A motion was made by Commissioner Lowry, seconded by Commissioner S. Morrison, to approve 25-0016. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Britton, Degnen, Aguilar, Anaya, Daley, Gainer, Lowry, McCaskill, Miller, Moore, S. Morrison, Quezada, Scott, Stamps and Trevor (15)

Absent: Morita and K. Morrison (2)

25-0003

Presented by: EILEEN FIGEL, Interim General Superintendent

PROPOSED REAPPOINTMENT

Appointee(s): Jacqui Ulrich, Director, Department of Conservation & Experiential Programming

Position: Member of the Board

Department/Board/Commission: NeighborSpace Board of Directors

Effective Date: 1/15/2025

Expiration Date: Two (2) year term expiring 12/31/2026

Summary: The Forest Preserves of Cook County (the “Forest Preserves”) requests approval of the reappointment of Jacqui Ulrich, Director of the Conservation and Experiential Programming Department (“CEP”) to the Board of Directors of NeighborSpace, an affiliate partner of the Forest Preserves.

NeighborSpace is a nonprofit urban land trust in Chicago that preserves and sustains gardens on behalf of dedicated community groups. NeighborSpace owns and manages property so that community groups can focus on gardening. NeighborSpace-protected gardens give young and old alike an opportunity to get their hands in the earth and enjoy nature, right in their own neighborhoods.

CEP connects diverse audiences to nature through a wide range of educational and outdoor recreation experiences and is also responsible for community engagement and committed to developing relationships with citizens to energize them and connect them to nature. CEP works with program partners at the local level on programming, building relationships with groups to become long-term advocates, stewards and ambassadors of the Forest Preserves.

The Forest Preserves of Cook County, the City of Chicago, and the Chicago Park District worked together to establish NeighborSpace as a non-profit in 1997. These three (3) governmental agencies continue to provide leadership and financial support to protect community-managed open spaces in Chicago.

A motion was made by Commissioner Lowry, seconded by Commissioner Daley, to approve 25-0003. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Britton, Degnen, Aguilar, Anaya, Daley, Gainer, Lowry, McCaskill, Miller, Moore, S. Morrison, Quezada, Scott, Stamps and Trevor (15)
Absent: Morita and K. Morrison (2)

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Daley, seconded by Commissioner Anaya, to adjourn. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Britton, Degnen, Aguilar, Anaya, Daley, Gainer, Lowry, McCaskill, Miller, Moore, S. Morrison, Quezada, Scott, Stamps and Trevor (15)
Absent: Morita and K. Morrison (2)

Respectfully submitted,



Chairman



Secretary

A complete record of this meeting is available at <https://fpdcc.legistar.com>.