



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

Minutes of the Legislation and Intergovernmental Relations

9:15 AM

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

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

ATTENDANCE

Present: Britton, Degnen, Aguilar, Anaya, Daley, Lowry, Morita, K. Morrison, Quezada, Scott,
Stamps and Trevor (12)

Absent: Gainer, and Moore (2)

Excused Absent: Miller, and S. 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

24-0509

COMMITTEE MINUTES

Approval of the minutes from the meeting of 12/12/2023

A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Degnen, seconded by Commissioner Daley, to approve 24-0509. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Britton, Degnen, Aguilar, Anaya, Daley, Lowry, Morita, K. Morrison, Quezada, Scott,
Stamps and Trevor (12)

Absent: Gainer, Miller, Moore and S. Morrison (4)

24-0476

Sponsored by: TONI PRECKWINKLE (President), Forest Preserve District of Cook County Board of Commissioners

PROPOSED APPOINTMENT

Appointee(s): Kim Ruffin, Ph.D.

Position: Council Member

Department/Board/Commission: Conservation and Policy Council

Effective Date: 1/1/2025

Expiration Date: 12/31/2027

The Council Nominating Committee recommends the appointment of Kim Ruffin to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Maria Pesqueira.

Dr. Kim Ruffin is an Associate Professor and Program Director of English at Roosevelt University. Her scholarly monograph, *Black on Earth: African-American Ecoliterary Traditions*, put African-American writers on the map of U.S. nature writing. She is also a certified nature and forest therapy guide and a creative writer. Her audio-guided forest therapy walks (hosted by Emergence Magazine, the Denver Museum of Art, and the Forest Preserves of Cook County) have been enjoyed by thousands of local, national, and global listeners. Her current book project has been supported by a Kalliopeia Foundation grant, an Aldo and Estella Leopold Writing Program Residency, and a nonfiction workshop at the Bread Loaf Environmental Writers' Conference. In this forthcoming book, she recovers overlooked environmental testimony of the formerly enslaved from a federal archive. This project will offer a ceremony of environmental homecoming that both returns African-American voices to the American nature story and illuminates a pathway forward in our time of ecological upheaval. Dr. Kim Ruffin's range of work supports her efforts to celebrate the opportunities and tackle the challenges of living on Earth.

A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Degnen, seconded by Commissioner Stamps, to recommend for approval 24-0476. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Britton, Degnen, Aguilar, Anaya, Daley, Lowry, Morita, K. Morrison, Quezada, Scott, Stamps and Trevor (12)

Absent: Gainer, Miller, Moore and S. Morrison (4)

24-0477

Sponsored by: TONI PRECKWINKLE (President), Forest Preserve District of Cook County Board of Commissioners

PROPOSED REAPPOINTMENT

Appointee(s): Alan Bell, Jacqueline Samuel, Ph.D.

Position: Council Members

Department/Board/Commission: Conservation and Policy Council

Effective Date: 1/1/2025

Expiration Date: 12/31/2027

Summary: The terms for Conservation and Policy Council members Alan Bell, Jacqueline Samuel, and Michael DeSantiago expire on December 31, 2024. Alan and Jacqueline are able and willing to serve an additional term. Michael DeSantiago, who has served on the Council for ten years, is stepping down. In December we will be submitting a resolution to honor and thank Michael for his service.

The Council Nominating Committee recommends that Alan Bell and Jacqueline Samuel be appointed to a new term beginning January 1, 2025.

Alan Bell is a partner at the law firm of Charity & Associates, P.C., focusing on municipal finance and real estate finance. He is also the founder and president of The Elements Group, which focuses on nature-oriented development projects. He serves on the boards of Openlands, the Land Trust Alliance, the Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance and the Black Ensemble Theater, and is a member of the National Association of Bond Lawyers. He enjoys bike riding along Chicago's lakefront and hiking trails throughout the Forest Preserves.

Jacqueline Samuel is the Program Director of the Master of Public Administration at National Louis University. Previously, Dr. Samuel served as the Project Manager for the Housing Authority of Cook County, South Suburban Safe and Thriving Communities Program. She also facilitated and developed quality-of-life programs for 10 years in the South Chicago Area. She has served on the Health and Healing Committee/ Mayor's Commission for a Safer Chicago, the Mayor's Kitchen Cabinet Commercial Development Advisory, Advocate Trinity Hospital Community Health Council, the Community Advisory Review Council for the Institute for Translational Medicine (CARC) and the Illinois ACE's Response Collaborative. Her most recent awards include the National Louis University REACH Award, the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital Courage Award and the Chicago Police

Department CAPS Award for the 4th District. Jacqueline was born and raised in Chicago. She has a love for the arts and has performed in numerous plays and films based in Chicago.

A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Degnen, seconded by Commissioner Trevor, to recommend for approval 24-0477. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Britton, Degnen, Aguilar, Anaya, Daley, Lowry, Morita, K. Morrison, Quezada, Scott, Stamps and Trevor (12)

Absent: Gainer, Miller, Moore and S. Morrison (4)

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Degnen, seconded by Commissioner Aguilar, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Britton, Degnen, Aguilar, Anaya, Daley, Lowry, Morita, K. Morrison, Quezada, Scott, Stamps and Trevor (12)

Absent: Gainer, Miller, Moore and S. Morrison (4)

Respectfully submitted,



Chairman



Secretary

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