

More than 1750 pieces of paper makes a large pile. It would be hard not to notice such a large stack of paper if it were dropped in front of you. Yet that is exactly what the DuPage County Forest Preserve Board did [at its Aug. 18 meeting].

That evening, over 1,750 signed letters opposing the Fleet Services Building at Blackwell Forest Preserve were presented to the forest preserve board. These letters were all signed by residents of DuPage County.

Presumably, the forest preserve board noticed the letters; six of the seven [board] members were in attendance when the letters were presented. The newspapers noticed. Two papers published articles mentioning the letters, one with a picture. And people in the audience noticed.

Yet, when the minutes of the Aug. 18 board meeting were finally reviewed for accuracy and approved on Oct. 6, there was no mention of the 1750 letters opposing the proposed \$7.5 million project. Failure to officially acknowledge receipt of these letters ignores the fact that the forest preserve board is accountable to the citizens of DuPage County.

Receipt of the letters was not the only thing missing from minutes of the Aug. 18 board meeting. At that meeting, four people made public comments, three in opposition to the Fleet Service Building at Blackwell and one with an excellent alternate site.

Accurately noted in the minutes were comments made by me and Dennis Clark (President of the West-Win Homeowner's Association and candidate for president of the DuPage County Forest Preserve Board). However, two speakers were not accurately reported. Chris Savina presentation of alternate sites for the Fleet Services Building was intended to encourage the board to make a bona-fide search for alternate sites, yet was recorded in the minutes as "alternative use of funds."

Boy Scout Jamison Kamchatka spoke about the beauty of the McKee Marsh area, praising the board for doing “an awesome job” with Blackwell and McKee Marsh and cautioning them not to ruin it by building a Fleet Maintenance Complex in the area. Mr. Kamchatka’s comments were simply recorded as “McKee Marsh.”

To inaccurately label public comment in official records is an insult to the speakers who made them and an insult to anyone who makes public comment. Is it now logical to assume that all comment is inaccurately recorded?

As a community member and taxpayer, this is annoying. But it is more than just annoying: This blatant attempt to downplay countywide opposition to a 28,000 square-foot maintenance building being built in the middle of the McKee Marsh area insures that future community members, as well as future board members, will have ***no idea*** of the widespread opposition to this project.

The worst problem is that there is no recourse. I could offer public comment at the next board meeting to request an amendment to the Aug. 18 minutes, but to what purpose? My comments would probably be recorded in the record as “Accounting Error.”

—Shannon Burns

1s726 Bender Ln.