

MINUTES

CITY OF ST. CHARLES

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING

LOREN NAGY, CHAIRMAN

SEPTEMBER 8, 2022

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was convened by Chair. Nagy at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Angela Churchill, Heather Goudreau, Lee Haggas, Ryan Johnson, Laura Miller Hill, Suzi Myers, Loren Nagy, Pam Otto, Meagan Provencher, Deetya Solanki.

Absent: Tom Galante, Michael Stroud. Student Members: Callie Ramirez, Morrighan Hayes.

City Staff Present: Marcelline D'Argento, AJ Reineking.

Visitors Present: None.

3. Minutes Review and Approval

Motion to approve and place into the public record the minutes of the August 11, 2022 Natural Resources Commission [NRC] meeting. Motion by Comm. Haggas, second by Comm. Churchill to approve the minutes. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:02 p.m.

4. Old Business

A. Joint Meeting

Mr. Reineking confirmed Public Works Engineering staff will give an overview of the 7th Avenue Creek project and answer questions. The joint meeting will begin at 5:00 pm onsite at South 7th Avenue and Indiana Avenue, continuing with an informal general discussion and refreshments at the Public Works offices.

B. Dim the Lights for Migratory Birds

Comm. Myers reported the Lights Out books have been delivered to the St. Charles elementary schools and were greatly appreciated. Mr. Reineking confirmed the tower lights will be off at city hall from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm on Saturday, October 8. City staff will also facilitate having lights out information displayed on the marquee at the police station and have a press release issued through the city's Communications staff. The pocket displays in the lobby at city hall are also available for the lights out flyers.

C. Rusty Crayfish Event 2023

Comm. Otto asked if the city would consider participating in next year's rusty crayfish event. Mr. Reineking will review the city parking areas available near the river. Comm. Otto will provide additional details on this event at a later date.

D. Lawn Video

Comm. Haggas asked if the NRC would be interested in promoting lawn reduction as presented in the lawn video viewed at the August NRC meeting. Comm. Otto noted the St. Charles Park District had previously tried reducing lawn areas with mixed results. Comms. Myers and Miller Hill suggested having the Pottawatomie Garden Club walk include residents' homes where they have replaced grass with natural plantings, and involving the Kane County Conservation Foundation as well. Comm. Provencher suggested focusing on pollinator gardens and deemphasizing "no lawns." Comm. Goudreau suggested promoting rain gardens that collect storm water, and having the NRC sponsor a natural garden walk.

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Comm. Haggas noted some municipalities have changed their ordinances since natural plantings can be taller than maximum grass heights specified in the ordinances. Comm. Otto suggested having pollinator, natural and rain gardens as a possible theme for the next Arbor Day celebration.

5. New Business

A. Student Member Opening

There is an opening for a fourth NRC student member. The commissioners suggested contacting Jared Parks who recently attended a NRC meeting and participated in one of the river clean-up events. Ms. D'Argento will contact Mr. Parks via email.

6. Committee Reports

A. Education Committee

Comm. Myers thanked the Commissioners who delivered the Lights Out book to the schools, and shared a thank you letter received from the principal and library director of Lincoln Elementary School.

B. Langum Woods Clean-Up Committee

Comm. Otto reported a clean-up event is tentatively scheduled for January 21, 2023.

C. Community Sustainability Committee

Comm. Goudreau requested one dumpster for the pumpkin recycling event on November 5th. Mr. Reineking will ensure signs, cones and the dumpster are in place.

Comm. Goudreau reported there will be a river clean-up day on September 17th.

D. Single-Use Bags Committee

Chair. Nagy reported Batavia is drafting an ordinance regarding single-use bags. The NRC committee is working on a presentation to city council.

E. Greenest Region Compact Committee

Several of the Commissioners attended the city's recent five-year planning meeting for residents. The meeting was well attended and addressed GRC-related topics including bicycling and walkability.

F. Urban Forestry Management Plan Review Committee

None.

7. Communications – Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports

Motion to approve and place on file the Public Services Division tree activity reports for July and August 2022. Motion by Comm. Myers, second by Comm. Johnson to approve the reports. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 8:11 p.m.

At the request of the NRC, tree species and removal information will be included on the tree activity reports.

8. Public Comment

None.

9. Additional Items

A. Commissioners

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Comm. Churchill requested that information on correct tree mulching be included on the tree care door hangers placed by the city during spring and fall planting. Mulching information is included on the door hangers, but will be revised for the next printing.

B. City Staff

None.

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion by Comm. Myers, second by Comm. Churchill to adjourn the meeting. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 8:17 p.m.