

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
RALPH GRATHOFF, CHAIRMAN
MAY 10, 2018**

Members Present: Chair. Ralph Grathoff, Valerie Blaine, Kathy Brens, Jon Duerr, Heather Goudreau, Lee Haggas, Suzi Myers, Loren Nagy, Pam Otto, Caroline Wilfong

Members Absent: Raymond Hauser

Others Present: Chris Adesso, Marcelline D'Argento, AJ Reineking

Visitors Present: None.

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was convened by Chair. Grathoff at 7:04 p.m.

2. Introduction of Visitors, Comments and Concerns

None.

3. Minutes Review and Approval

Motion to approve and place into the public record the minutes of the April 12, 2018 Natural Resources Commission [NRC] meeting. Motion by Comm. Duerr, second by Comm. Haggas to approve the minutes. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:06 p.m.

4. Arbor Day Recap

Comm. Nagy reported on a potential commitment by Davey Tree Co. to promote Arbor Day 2019 through its client base. Comm. Nagy also shared a sample of proposed giveaways for children for the 2019 event. Comm. Otto noted attendance at this year's celebration was low due to the weather and because St. Charles District 303 schools were closed for a school improvement day on April 27th. The Commissioners agreed the Wild Rose School Woods Club artwork display and interactive presentation with the Mayor and Commissioners were enjoyable and informative. Comm. Otto stated the Woods Club may participate in Arbor Day again. Comm. Goudreau commented the teachers and students involved in Norton Creek Elementary School's outdoor education garden may be interested in participating in Arbor Day in the future as well. Comm. Goudreau will make contact with teacher(s) at Norton Creek Elementary School. Chair. Grathoff noted America in Bloom's participation was a welcome addition to the Arbor Day event.

5. Old Business

A. Location of Meetings

Staff invited the Commissioners to the Public Works offices [1405 South 7th Avenue, Conference Room B/C] for the May 10, 2018 meeting as a potential alternative location for NRC meetings [versus the Council Committee Room at City Hall, 2 East Main Street]. Chair. Grathoff requested input from the Commissioners as to changing the meeting location. The Commissioners decided the Public Works location was preferred based on larger conference/training room availability, audio/visual equipment and additional parking. All future NRC meetings will be held at Public Works.

B. NRC Student Members

The Commissioners were aware of interest in the NRC from two local students, generated in part by support from Mayor Rogina. Ms. D'Argento also received an inquiry from a prospective student NRC member, and will follow up to determine if/when he will submit

a request to join the NRC. Comm. Myers suggested “advertising” for student NRC members in *The Den* newsletter.

6. New Business

A. Welcome and Resources for New Commissioners

Welcome letters, information regarding the City’s Boards and Commissions Manual, City Code Titles 8.30 and 12, and NRC contact information were provided to new Comms. Goudreau, Haggas and Nagy by NRC staff liaison, Ms. D’Argento. Returning Comms. Blaine, Brens, Duerr, Grathoff, Myers, Otto and Wilfong also received copies of this information.

B. Election of Chairperson

In accordance with City Code Chapter 12.20.040 Section 3.C a Chairperson was elected by the NRC. Chair. Grathoff was re-elected by voice-vote by a majority of the Commissioners.

C. Spring Planting Update

Mr. Reineking informed the Commission spring 2018 planting will be completed next week.

D. Tree Inventory Update

Mr. Reineking informed the Commission Graf Tree Care will begin tree inventory phase three of four in June.

E. Dark Sky Presentation

Comm. Blaine presented *The Night Sky – Ecology and Human Health Ramifications*. The presentation included the following information:

- We are losing the night sky due to spreading light pollution.
- There are ecological and health-related ramifications to losing the night sky.
- Sky glow, light trespass and glare are three types of light pollution.
- Shadows are created when lights are too bright, reducing possible security/safety benefits from lighting dark spaces.
- Lights that are too bright create glare and negatively impact night driving.
- LED lighting interferes with nocturnal wildlife behavior and biological rhythms.
- LED bulbs at the blue end of the color spectrum create glare issues and sky glow versus warmer color bulbs; photoreceptor damage and melatonin levels are also impacted by blue spectrum lighting.
- Wildlife, including insects, bats and birds, is negatively impacted by bright lights. For example, moths are attracted to lights and spend time flying around lights and not pollinating plants. Fireflies flash to communicate and attract mates, but light impacts their flashing making it difficult for them to communicate.
- Light pollution is entirely reversible. Solutions include turning your lights on only when needed, using warm energy efficient bulbs and light shields.

The City has already implemented some dark sky friendly measures by phasing in shielded, warm LED lighting, installing motion detecting lighting [in offices and conference rooms at Public Works, for example]. Mr. Adesso informed the NRC that LED phased replacement lights were approved by City Council, and streetlight fixtures can be adjusted for proper direction and shielding. Lights are in the mid-spectrum range of 3600-3700 kelvin units. Mr. Adesso noted the City participated in Earth Hour on March 24th by turning off the lights in the tower at City Hall.

Chair. Grathoff and the Commissioners thanked Comm. Blaine for an excellent presentation and a great topic for the NRC.

7. Committee Reports

A. Education Committee

Comm. Myers proposed a book donation to the libraries at each of the St. Charles' elementary and middle schools, and to the St. Charles Public Library. The proposed book is *The Survivor Tree* written by Cheryl Somers Aubin. The book is based on the true story of a tree that survived after being buried in debris from the collapse of the World Trade Center buildings on September 11, 2001. The tree is healthy now and is planted by the fountains at the 9/11 Memorial Plaza in New York. The proposed book donation was approved by the NRC.

B. Langum Woods Clean-Up

Comm. Otto reported honor society students from Elgin Community College participated in trail chipping at Langum Woods.

Comm. Otto informed the NRC of an organization involved in Camp Kane that is interested in developing Langum Park [the organization is the Camp Kane Heritage Foundation]. Mr. Reineking noted the organization is not affiliated with the City/municipal government; Langum Park is City property. Mr. Reineking explained the representatives involved in the development of Camp Kane made a presentation to the City a number of months ago. The presentation included a concept plan for developing the path system already started in Langum Woods, adding a museum, an outdoor education center and other Civil War-related monuments. The Commissioners expressed concern about trees in Langum Woods being removed. Mr. Adesso explained there is a usage and restoration agreement between the City and the foundation with regard to the Jones Law Office, whereby the foundation may operate the law office [i.e. give tours]. The Commissioners requested that representatives from the foundation be invited to the next NRC meeting. Mr. Reineking will contact the foundation.

8. Communications – Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports April 2018

Motion by Comm. Brens to approve the above-referenced reports and place into the public record, second by Comm. Nagy. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:58 p.m.

9. Additional Items

A. Commissioners

Comm. Wilfong commented on a recent news report regarding light pollution on a remote Scandinavian island. The light pollution is endangering puffins on the island; and instead of flying toward the moon and the sea to feed, the birds are flying toward lights in the island's downtown area. School children on the island wake up in the middle of the night to rescue puffins from the downtown area and take them to the beach to release them.

Comm. Otto reported she had spoken with Bob Vann in the City's Building and Code Enforcement Department regarding the poor tree pruning on East Main Street. This issue was previously discussed by the NRC at the April 2018 meeting. Comm. Otto stated she was informed by Mr. Vann that the City's ordinances address tree-related hazards, not proper tree pruning. Additionally, this section of East Main Street is a state of Illinois roadway, and Mr. Adesso noted these trees are outside the state's right-of-way.

B. City Staff

None.

10. Adjournment

Motion by Comm. Otto to adjourn the meeting, second by Comm. Brens. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 8:04 p.m.