

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
LOREN NAGY, CHAIRMAN
AUGUST 12, 2021**

Members Present: Angela Churchill, Tom Galante, Heather Goudreau, Lee Haggas, Ryan Johnson, Laura Miller Hill, Suzi Myers, Loren Nagy, Pam Otto, Callie Ramirez.

Members Absent: Kathy Brens, Elli Chivari, Michael Stroud, Daniella Taylor.

Others Present: Marcelline D'Argento, AJ Reineking.

Visitors Present: Jack Thennisch.

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was convened by Chair. Nagy at 7:03 p.m.

2. Introduction of Visitors, Comments and Concerns

Jack Thennisch, a representative of Clarke Environmental, introduced himself to all present.

3. Minutes Review and Approval

Motion to approve and place into the public record the minutes of the July 8, 2021, Natural Resources Commission [NRC] meeting. Motion by Comm. Goudreau, second by Comm. Haggas to approve the minutes. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:04 p.m.

4. Old Business

None.

5. New Business

A. Clarke Environmental Presentation

Clarke Environmental [Clarke] is the mosquito abatement contractor for the city of St. Charles. Jack Thennisch presented information regarding Clarke's products and methods of mosquito control, low impact to other insects and animals, and mosquito control in relation to human and animal health. Mr. Thennisch answered questions from the Commissioners regarding targeted versus broad spectrum products, the half-life of the products Clarke uses and other related issues. A copy of Clarke's brochure is attached to and made a part of these minutes.

B. Comments – July 13, 2021 Climate Action Plan Chicago Region

Several members of the NRC attended the virtual Climate Action Plan event on July 13th. Topics such as sustainability, reduction in greenhouse emissions, adaptation to climate change and related issues were discussed. The Commissioners reported other issues such as monetary savings to taxpayers and community-driven action were note-worthy as well.

6. Committee Reports

A. Education Committee

Comm. Myers distributed a flyer for the upcoming NRC-sponsored community event, "Protecting Dark Skies" which will be held on September 16, 2021. Event information will be included in the September issue of *The Den* and posted on the NRC's Facebook page. A copy of the flyer is attached to and made a part of these minutes.

B. Langum Woods Clean-Up Committee

None.

C. Community Sustainability Committee

See Education Committee report above.

D. Single-Use Bag Committee

Comm. Churchill reported she had attended a brief meeting with representatives from the Batavia Environmental Commission and Batavia City Council. The Committee is awaiting an update on the State of Illinois' plans for handling single-use bags. The next meeting with Batavia is scheduled for the end of August.

E. Greenest Region Compact Committee

Comm. Galante distributed a copy of an article he had written for *The Den* entitled "Idling: Bad for You, Bad for Your Car, Bad for the Planet." The article fulfills the objective of Item *M37 Mobility* of the Greenest Region Compact [GRC] to "*Educate the community on the negative impacts of car idling.*" A copy of Comm. Galante's article is attached to and made a part of these minutes. Student Comm. Ramirez suggested including information regarding idling during drivers' education classes at the high schools in St. Charles. Comm. Goudreau suggested offering education to all the schools in St. Charles regarding the negative impacts of car idling.

In continuation from the July 2021 NRC meeting, Comm. Myers requested information regarding the Commissioners' selected items of interest from the GRC. Responses as follows:

L30d – Encourage planting and registering of pollinator gardens through the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge. Comm. Goudreau stated she would work with Comm. Otto and the St. Charles Park District on this item.

L30b – Promote native and sustainable landscaping initiatives community-wide by connecting residents to plants and information. Comm. Goudreau stated the annual native plant sale would support this item.

M34 – Encourage residents and visitors to walk and bike. Comm. Goudreau stated she would help promote walking and biking to work and school.

M3a – Earn Bicycle Friend Community designation. Comm. Miller Hill stated should would work on this item.

SC45 – Encourage the community to participate in sustainability initiatives and events.

SC50 – Host environmentally focused events. Comm. Goudreau stated the NRC's pumpkin smash, dark skies presentation and Arbor Day celebration complete these items.

W9a – Protect surface and groundwater from runoff and contamination. > Avoid the use of coal tar sealants on municipal property. The city does not use coal tar; this item is completed.

C9 – Discourage the use of high-emitting small engines, such as for landscaping [encourage the use of positive rather than discourage the negative]. Comm. Goudreau suggested promoting quiet electric lawn mowers and offering community incentives to trade in these types of equipment.

LPI – Engage with academia and non-governmental organizations to support the GRC2.
Comm. Miller Hill noted she, Student Comm. Ramirez and Comm. Otto will work on a plan to have students from St. Charles high schools mentor students at Lincoln Elementary School's environmental club.

City staff will obtain clarification as to whether non-voting Student Commissioners are counted in the number of persons in attendance at a non-public meeting as defined by the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Staff will report at the September NRC meeting.

F. Urban Forestry Management Plan
Deferred.

7. Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports

Motion to approve and place into the public record the Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports for the month of July 2021. Motion by Comm. Myers, second by Comm. Miller Hill to approve the reports. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 8:24 p.m.

8. Additional Items

A. Commissioners

None.

B. City Staff

None.

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion by Comm. Galante, second by Comm. Goudreau to adjourn the meeting. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 8:25 p.m.

YARD & HOME CHECKLIST

- Get rid of old tires, tin cans, buckets, drums, bottles, or any water holding containers
- Fill in or drain any low places (puddles, ruts) in yard
- Clean gutters periodically
- Keep drains, ditches, and culverts clean of weeds and trash so water will drain properly
- Cover trash containers to keep out rain water
- Repair leaky pipes and outside faucets
- Empty plastic wading pools at least once a week and store them indoors when not in use
- Make sure your backyard pool is properly cared for while on vacation
- Fill in tree rot holes and hollow stumps that hold water with sand and concrete
- Change the water in bird baths and plant pots or drip trays at least once each week
- Keep grass cut short and shrubbery well trimmed around the house so adult mosquitoes will not hide there



Making communities
more *livable, safe
and comfortable.*

TOGETHER, WE
CAN CONTROL
MOSQUITOES
AND ENJOY
THE GREAT
OUTDOORS



MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITY

Our responsibility to you...

- To abate existing mosquito breeding sources
- To prevent new breeding sites so residents can use and enjoy their backyards and other municipal recreational facilities
- To protect public health and comfort

We control breeding sources created by standing water, which may be found in street catch-basins, subdivision drains, roadside ditches, flood channels, ravines and other public rights-of-way. Routine larviciding, done as necessary throughout the season, will keep these areas mosquito free. It is our responsibility to work with whatever local, state, or federal agencies may be involved to keep these areas abated.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Property Owner Responsibility

Your responsibility as a property owner...

- To clear your property of any potential breeding sites
- To prevent any problem areas from reoccurring

Mosquitoes are an all too familiar summer nuisance. They are not only annoying, but they can be transmitters of West Nile Virus, St. Louis encephalitis, malaria and yellow fever to humans, and heartworm to pets.

Standing water means you could be raising mosquitoes!

You can take simple, positive steps to reduce menacing mosquitoes right at home, since many generations can breed right in your own yard.

Adult flying mosquitoes often rest in tall grass and shrubbery, that is not where eggs are laid. All mosquitoes begin their life cycle in water.

Some mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water where they hatch in just a day or two. Other mosquitoes may lay their eggs in old ditches, tin cans, or other water-holding containers. The eggs may remain unhatched for weeks or even months until they are covered with water!

So, **after significant rainfall**, remember to **remove any standing water from your yard** and help keep mosquitoes from hatching.

WEST NILE VIRUS



What is West Nile Virus?

West Nile Virus (WNV) is a mosquito-borne virus that can result in serious illness, and sometimes, death. The virus can infect humans, birds, mosquitoes, horses and other mammals.

Disease Transmission

West Nile Virus is transmitted through the bite of a mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected with the virus by biting a wild bird that has the virus. Though birds are the primary host of West Nile Virus, it is not transmitted directly from birds to people.

Who is at risk of contracting West Nile Virus?

The chance of contracting WNV is higher in persons over 50 years of age, however any individual living in areas where West Nile Virus has been detected is at risk.



Together we can eliminate potential breeding grounds and **increase our enjoyment** of the great outdoors.



PROTECTING DARK SKIES
Free Community Event Hosted by
the City of St. Charles
Natural Resources Commission

Thursday, September 16, 2020 at 5:00 pm
Location: Clarke Environmental Services, 675 Sidwell Ct, St. Charles, IL

Open your eyes and hearts to the joys of the night! As a Delegate of the International Dark-Sky Association, Adam Kreuzer is passionate about teaching about the beauty of dark skies and the ways we can protect the night from light pollution. Barb McKittrick, a Naturalist and dark sky-enthusiast, is especially interested in how local ecology responds to changes in nighttime light levels. Join us to hear Adam and Barb explain the concept of light pollution, discuss the impact of light pollution on humans and wildlife and explore with us how we can restore dark skies in our own communities.

Bios:

Adam Kreuzer is a local Delegate for the International Dark Sky Association (IDA), located in Tucson, Arizona. Adam grew up in rural Michigan where the night sky was dark and the stars were bright. After graduating from Michigan State University and The John Marshall Law School, he founded his law firm which is located in Wheaton and Chicago. Before becoming a Delegate with IDA, Adam was a spokesperson for the Sierra Club and a member of the Glen Ellyn Environmental Commission. He is a mushroom monitor for the DuPage County Forest Preserve. Adam is very passionate about all of Nature and, when not working, does his best to Save Dark Skies.

Barb McKittrick is the Environmental Education Manager at the Forest Preserve District of Kane County. She grew up in Chicago next to LaBagh Woods Forest Preserve, developing an early love for urban wilderness. After receiving a bachelor's degree in Biology from Aurora University, she began her career as a research biologist, and then shifted into a series of roles managing the business of science after receiving an MBA from Northwestern University. Barb is thrilled to have transitioned her career to being a full-time Naturalist so she can spend as much time as possible igniting in others a passion for enjoying and protecting our natural areas.

Idling: bad for you, bad for your car, bad for the planet

Let's take a nostalgia trip, especially for you kids of the '80s and before. Imagine your wintry school days, especially those days when you didn't have to walk uphill both ways in a snowstorm. Maybe your parents or an older sibling, or that of one of your friends, would pick you up at school. Maybe you rode the bus. Remember trying to find your transportation, in the low-lying gassy cloud of exhaust fumes from all the cars and buses idling? Mmmm, that smell. Good times!

Fast forward to pre-Covid winter 2019-2020 or maybe even this coming winter. Same situation, but much better visibility and less smell. Problem(s) solved, right? Not so fast!

I hear some saying wait, isn't idling, AKA "warming up your engine," better than starting up cold? Isn't idling better than turning off and then restarting your engine? Idling isn't that bad, is it, for our health, our car, our planet? All myths, and for the myth busting read on!

Myth: warming up your engine is better than starting up cold and driving away 30 seconds later.

Reality: presuming your car is fuel-injected, i.e., newer than the carbureted muscle-car era, warming up your engine and car interior strips oil from the cylinders and pistons. Meanwhile a certain solvent called gasoline damages your cylinder walls while running cold. The solution? Dress warm and drive for 5-15 minutes, your engine and toasty vehicle occupants will thank you.

Myth: idling is better than turning off and restarting your engine during those short stops waiting in drive-through lanes, at railroad crossings, at school, etc.

Reality: have you seen gas prices lately? Every hour of idling burns up to a gallon of gas, depending on your car's full efficiency. After only 10 seconds of idling, you've burned more gas and released more greenhouse gases like CO₂ into the atmosphere than if you stopped the engine and restarted when you're ready to go. Oh, and the engine effects already mentioned before.

Myth: my idling a little bit here-and-there doesn't have that much impact, does it?

Reality: multiply that little bit of idling from one car by over 250 million personal vehicles in the U.S. alone! I won't make you do the math, here are the answers: 30 million tons of CO₂ every year JUST FROM IDLING, 20 pounds of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere per gallon of gas burned!

While we're at it, how about our health? Pulmonary (you know, breathing), cardiovascular, allergies, asthma, etc., all affected by idling. For children, it's worse because they breathe about 50% more per pound than adults. If we curtail our idling, it would be like taking 5 million cars off the road. It may not be 5 million actual cars to make our commutes shorter, but we'll all sure breathe easier.

Tom Galante, Commissioner
Natural Resources Commission
City of St. Charles, IL

Learn more:

<https://www.anl.gov/es/reducing-vehicle-idling>

https://afdc.energy.gov/files/u/publication/idling_personal_vehicles.pdf

<https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/air-quality/motor-vehicles-air-quality/idle-reduction/why-idling-harmful>

<https://www.wbtv.com/story/32811461/car-idling-effects/>

<https://www.firestonecompleteautocare.com/blog/driving/idling-in-winter-bad-for-car/#>