

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
RALPH GRATHOFF, CHAIRMAN
JANUARY 9, 2020**

Members Present: Kathy Brens, Andrew Diorio, Tom Galante, Heather Goudreau, Ralph Grathoff, Ryan Johnson, Jillian Leturno, Suzi Myers, Loren Nagy, Claire Norman, Pam Otto

Members Absent: Angela Churchill, Lee Haggas, Caroline Wilfong

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

Visitors Present: Abby Beck, Nancy Hannah

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was convened by Chair. Grathoff at 7:01 p.m.

2. Introduction of Visitors, Comments and Concerns

Ms. Beck was in attendance on behalf of the City of Batavia as an Alderman and former member of the Batavia Environmental Commission to discuss the Greenest Region Compact II [GRC]. Please see 4.A. below.

Ms. Hannah was in attendance as a private citizen and resident of St. Charles in support of the Natural Resources Commission [NRC].

3. Minutes Review and Approval

Motion to approve and place into the public record the minutes of the December 12, 2019 NRC meeting. Motion by Comm. Nagy, second by Comm. Brens to approve the minutes. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:02 p.m.

4. Old Business

A. Greenest Region Compact II

Chair. Grathoff stated he invited Ms. Beck to the NRC meeting because he previously participated with her on an environmental panel and noted the city of Batavia has made significant progress toward the objectives of the GRC. Ms. Beck provided some background information on Batavia's approach to the GRC. The Batavia Commissioners divided the sections of the GRC document based on their areas of interest then reviewed and completed the entire document. During the review process, members of the Batavia Commission met with Batavia city staff to obtain information on items already completed. The Batavia Commission then determined in which areas they had strengths, weaknesses, momentum, capacity to complete items, etc., then formulated goals which were presented to Batavia's city council. Ms. Beck noted through the process of reviewing and completing the GRC, better collaboration was developed between the Batavia Commission, city staff and city council. Annual updates are presented to Batavia's city council on the progress and future goals for the GRC.

Chair Grathoff asked how long it took Batavia to complete its review of the GRC, and Ms. Beck responded approximately three months.

Comm. Otto asked if the Batavia park district is involved with the GRC. Ms. Beck noted there is no naturalist on staff at the park district since their programs are more recreational

and fitness based. However, there could be some environmental involvement with regard to landscaping.

The Commissioners discussed document sharing and how to divide the various sections of the GRC framework to facilitate review and get a baseline as to what has already been completed. Mr. Adesso informed the NRC that Public Works and the city's Community and Economic Development department will review the GRC document for items that have already been completed, items in progress, planned items, etc. Comm. Otto noted with the combined effort of the St. Charles Park District items such as education within the community are already being done.

Additionally, Ms. Beck provided information on the Fox Valley Sustainability Network [FVSN] and discussed a recent forum held on reducing the consumption of single-use plastic and paper bags. Ms. Beck reported that the Batavia Commission is currently working on a bag fee proposal, and is seeking support from the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and other service organizations. The city of Geneva is considering a resolution to have retailers to implement the use of reusable bags. A regional approach would result in the best outcome. The state of Illinois also considering measures regarding single-use bags.

Student Comms. Leturno and Norman expressed interest in discussing this topic at the high school(s) and determining if there is support. The Student Comms. also suggested the possibility of forming a new committee focusing on single-use plastic and paper bags. This topic will be further discussed at the February 2020 NRC meeting.

B. Curbside Composting

Mr. Adesso reported city staff met with representatives from Lakeshore Recycling Services [LRS] regarding activation of curbside composting services available through the city's refuse contract. They also discussed having the NRC partner with LRS on community education and public relations. Mr. Adesso prepared an executive summary for the city's Government Services Committee and this topic is on the agenda for the January 27, 2020 meeting. Members of the NRC will also attend the meeting.

5. New Business

Included with 4.A. GRC discussion above.

6. Arbor Day

Ms. D'Argento distributed the Arbor Day planning checklist and asked the Commissioners to review the document and consider what they would like to do for this year's event. Chair. Grathoff asked the Student Commissioners if they would consider speaking again. The annual Arbor Day celebration will be further discussed at the February NRC meeting.

7. Committee Reports

A. Education Committee

Comm. Myers noted an article for The Den for February will be due soon. Possible article suggestions included Arbor Day, the 50th anniversary of Earth Day or an article from one of the Student Commissioners.

B. Langum Woods Clean-Up Committee

Comms. Johnson and Otto stated the clean-up day will be held on the alternate date of January 25th based on the weather forecast for January 11th. The NRC's social media will be updated accordingly.

C. New Committee

None.

8. Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports December 2019

Motion to approve and place into the public record the Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports for the month of December 2019. Motion by Comm. Nagy, second by Comm. Galante to approve the reports. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:55 p.m.

9. Additional Items

A. Commissioners

None.

B. City Staff

Mr. Reineking distributed volunteer release waivers, which all Commissioners should sign if they plan to participate in activities such as clean-up days in Langum Woods. Once waivers are signed they will remain in effect indefinitely. Non-NRC volunteers [private residents, students, etc.] will be required to sign a waiver as well prior to participating in an activity. Mr. Reineking provided additional blank waivers to Comms. Johnson and Otto to distribute to non-NRC volunteers at the Langum Woods clean-up day. Comm. Brens noted volunteers under the age of 18 will need to have a parent/guardian sign the waiver on their behalf.

C. Visitors

None.

D. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion by Comm. Otto, second by Comm. Nagy to adjourn the meeting. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 8:00 p.m.