

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
RALPH GRATHOFF, CHAIRMAN
MARCH 14, 2019**

Members Present: Chairman Ralph Grathoff, Kathy Brens, Jon Duerr, Tom Galante, Heather Goudreau, Lee Haggas, Ryan Johnson, Suzi Myers, Loren Nagy, Caroline Wilfong

Members Absent: Isabella Bernat, Chloe Fanning, Jillian Leturno, Pam Otto

Others Present: Chris Adesso, Marcelline D'Argento

Visitors Present: Claire Norman, John Thornhill

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

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

2. Introduction of Visitors, Comments and Concerns

Introductions were made by Commissioners, City staff and visitors.

John Thornhill representing America in Bloom - St. Charles [AIB] was in attendance, and summarized the success of the AIB-sponsored Christmas light recovery program. More than 2,600 pounds of lights were collected and diverted from landfills.

3. Minutes Review and Approval

Motion to approve and place into the public record the minutes of the February 14, 2019 Natural Resources Commission [NRC] meeting. Motion by Comm. Brens, second by Comm. Galante to approve the minutes. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:04 p.m.

4. Old Business

A. Arbor Day

Commissioners and City staff discussed plans for the annual Arbor Day celebration. The tree planting will be held at Munhall Elementary School this year. Plans are underway for Student Commissioner speaker(s), the NRC's stewardship award, flag ceremony and other items. The NRC extended an invitation to Mr. Thornhill for AIB to participate in the City's Arbor Day celebration again. Discussions and planning for Arbor Day will be continued at the April NRC meeting.

B. Storm Drain Markers

Chair. Grathoff commented on Mr. Reineking's presentation of the NRC's storm drain marker proposal to the Government Services Committee [GSC]. The GSC approved the initiative, and was enthusiastic about the project.

5. New Business

A. Potential Natural Resources Student Commissioner

St. Charles North High School student Claire Norman introduced herself to all present and expressed her interest in joining the NRC. Ms. Norman is currently the co-president of her school's Eco-Club, a member of the Science National Honor Society, and she plans to pursue environmental studies in college. Motion to nominate Ms. Norman as a Student Commissioner of the NRC. Motion by Comm. Duerr, second by Comm. Myers to nominate

Ms. Norman. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:25 p.m. Chair. Grathoff welcomed Ms. Norman to the Commission.

Note: In accordance with City Code 12.20.040.C Appointment of Members, there is a limit of four (4) non-voting high school and/or college NRC student members. Ms. Norman is the fourth and final student member to join the NRC.

B. Kane County Stormwater Ordinance Revisions

Comm. Myers introduced the topic of proposed updates to Kane County's Stormwater Management Ordinance [<https://www.kanecountystormwaterupdate.org/>]. Mr. Adesso noted the City is part of Kane County's Technical Advisory Committee [TAC], which is part of the Kane County Division of Environmental and Water Resources. Three City staff members serve on TAC, and St. Charles and other municipalities adopt the County's stormwater management ordinance. Comm. Myers encouraged the Commissioners to review the ordinance revisions and submit their comments during the 30-day public comment period.

C. Badges

Comm. Myers suggested members of the NRC and City liaisons may benefit from having name badges as do some of the other City Commissions. The NRC concurred, and City staff will order the badges in time for Arbor Day.

6. Committee Reports

A. Education Committee

None.

B. Langum Woods Clean-Up Committee

In Comm. Ottos' absence Comm. Goudreau reported she and Comm. Otto had discussed having the NRC host a spring wildflower walk in Langum Woods. Comm. Myers noted the wildflower walk would be a good way to increase awareness and appreciation of Langum Woods within the community. The walk would be approximately one hour on either Sunday April 28 or Sunday May 5 at 2:00 p.m. Comm. Goudreau reported Comm. Otto suggested inviting representatives from the Camp Kane Heritage Foundation to the walk as well as high school student clubs and the public. Comm. Johnson will coordinate with Comm. Otto. Comm. Wilfong suggested announcing the walk at Arbor Day, and Comm. Goudreau will help promote the walk via social media.

Comm. Johnson expressed interest in clean-up work at Langum Woods as his time permits. Mr. Adesso explained this would be permissible, but to inform City staff so staff can alert the Police Department.

7. Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports February 2019

Motion by Comm. Nagy to approve the Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports and place into the public record, second by Comm. Wilfong. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:53 p.m.

8. Additional Items

A. Commissioners

- Comm. Myers noted there is a Planning Commission meeting on April 8 at 7:00 p.m. regarding the Active River Project. Mr. Adesso explained that at the April 8 meeting the results of an economic impact study will be presented.

- Comm. Goudreau suggested hosting a tour of Public Works' wastewater treatment facility. Mr. Adesso stated this is a good idea, but a tour should be deferred as there currently is a lot of construction activity around the facility. Waivers would be required for the general public.
- Comm. Goudreau noted Earth Hour is on March 30th. This is a worldwide event that encourages awareness of energy usage and light pollution. Former Comm. Blaine gave a great presentation on dark sky awareness previously. From 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. March 30th people can participate in Earth Hour by turning off all lights and electronics.
- Comm. Goudreau reported on a closed hotel located in Lisle, Illinois. The contents of the hotel were liquidated and the remaining contents are being offered to non-profit organizations. Whatever is leftover will be landfilled. Comm. Goudreau asked if the Commissioners could reach out to any non-profits they may know such as churches, shelters, etc. that may be interested in the hotel items.
- Comm. Duerr offered to sponsor a neighborhood and river walk for the community as many parks and neighborhoods in St. Charles have historical elements and beautiful plantings.
- Comm. Johnson inquired as to other natural areas owned by the City [other than Langum Woods]. Comm. Duerr responded the area around Brewster Creek in the Woods of Fox Glen is owned by the City. There is also a native buffer along the Bob Leonard River Walkway. Mr. Adesso noted other natural areas owned by the City are primarily detention ponds. Comm. Johnson inquired as to quality standards for these areas. Mr. Adesso explained a detention pond was recently naturalized when erosion was corrected, and the standards for that particular project were part of the construction contract, but that a City standard for naturalized areas does not currently exist. Public Works and project contractors work together on construction naturalization standards. Comm. Johnson asked if it would be possible for the NRC to work on some City standards; Mr. Adesso responded affirmatively. Comm. Johnson expressed interest in working with Public Works to also develop general guidelines for City-owned natural areas.

B. City Staff

Mr. Adesso made a standing offer to the Commissioners to contact him if they are interested in Public Works' projects and activities, how they may be related to the NRC's mission or if they are curious in general. Mr. Adesso would be happy to facilitate a visit or conversation with member(s) of Public Works.

C. Visitors

None.

D. Adjournment

Motion by Comm. Myers to adjourn the meeting, second by Comm. Wilfong. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 8:15 p.m.