

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
LOREN NAGY, CHAIRMAN
JANUARY 12, 2023**

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, Tom Galante, Heather Goudreau, Lee Haggas, Ryan Johnson, Suzi Myers, Loren Nagy, Meagan Provencher, Michael Stroud.

Student Members Present: Jared Park, Callie Ramirez.

Absent: Commissioners: Laura Miller Hill, Pam Otto. Student Members: Morrighan Hayes, Deetya Solanki.

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 December 8, 2022 Natural Resources Commission [NRC] meeting. Motion by Comm. Myers, second by Comm. Churchill to approve the minutes. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:02 p.m.

4. Old Business

A. Arbor Day Celebration

City staff distributed a draft of the NRC's Arbor Day checklist, and requested confirmation of the day and time for the 2023 Arbor Day event. The Commissioners agreed to host a tree planting ceremony at one of the schools in St. Charles on Friday, April 28th as customary, and to have the Arbor Day celebration at Pottawatomie Park on Saturday, April 29th starting at 11:30 a.m. Follow-up items:

- Comm. Goudreau will contact the Compass Academy at School District 303 regarding the tree planting ceremony.
- The Commissioners will consider potential nominees for the annual Stewardship Award.
- City staff will email a list of past Stewardship Award recipients to the NRC.
- Commissioners and city staff will review the items on their respective checklists for completion.

B. Contact List Updates

City staff circulated a copy of the NRC contact list for updates.

C. Batteries

In follow-up from the December NRC meeting, City staff provided clarification on the types of batteries accepted for recycling at Public Works. Essentially, household batteries that fit in your hand are accepted, such as 9-volt batteries, AA, AAA, C and D cells. Information on battery recycling will be posted on the NRC's Facebook page.

5. New Business

A. Hornets Nests

At the request of Comm. Otto, city staff electronically distributed information regarding bald-faced hornets in advance of the January NRC meeting. A copy of this information is attached to and made a part of these minutes. Upon residents' requests, the city forestry crew has been removing insect nests from parkway trees. Comm. Myers reported on behalf of Comm. Otto [absent] regarding the benefits of leaving hornets' nests in city parkway trees. The NRC agreed that residents should be provided this information, and an article will be written for *The Den* newsletter.

6. Committee Reports

A. Education Committee

None.

B. Langum Woods Clean-Up Committee

Comm. Johnson noted the Langum Woods work day is coming up on Saturday, January 21st from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

C. Community Sustainability Committee

Comm. Goudreau reported on the success of the holiday lights recycling program. To date, over two gaylord containers of lights have been collected. Comm. Goudreau thanked Comm. Myers and [former] Comm. Brens for volunteering to collect lights for the past several weeks. Comm. Goudreau noted the preferred timeframe for future collections would be from November 1st through the end of February. This year's collection will end on January 13th.

Comm. Goudreau reported she had attended a recent Kiwanis Club meeting and spoke on behalf of SCARCE [School and Community Assistance for Recycling and Composting Education], and also discussed the holiday lights recycling program.

D. Single-Use Bags Committee

Chair. Nagy reported the Committee is scheduled to meet with city staff from the Finance and Community & Economic Development Departments on February 10th. The NRC will be updated on the outcome of this meeting.

E. Greenest Region Compact Committee

None.

F. Urban Forestry Management Plan Review Committee

The Committee is continuing to review the Urban Forestry Management Plan. At the request of the NRC a copy of the current Plan will be emailed to all Commissioners by city staff.

7. Communications – Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports

Motion to approve and place on file the Public Services Division tree activity reports for December 2022. Motion by Comm. Johnson, second by Comm. Churchill to approve the reports. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:41 p.m.

8. Public Comment

None.

9. Additional Items

A. Commissioners

Student Member Park reported volunteers from his high school's Key Club will participate in the January 21st Langum Woods clean-up.

Comm. Goudreau confirmed she and Comm. Miller Hill are working with the Conservation Foundation regarding the March 9th rain garden presentation and rain barrel sale at Public Works scheduled immediately prior to the March NRC meeting from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm. The event will be hosted by the NRC and presented by the Conservation Foundation.

Chair. Nagy reported he attended a Morton Arboretum presentation on the environmental challenges of Oak trees in northern Illinois. Oak trees are simultaneously experiencing both drought and drowning conditions. Chair. Nagy explained that current deluge rainfall trends, rather than long, soaking rainfalls, have caused drought stress for trees at higher elevations due to run-off; while Oak trees at lower elevations are experiencing root-rot from heavy rainfalls in a short periods of time. The long-term prognosis for Oak trees in northern Illinois is uncertain.

B. City Staff

None.

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion by Comm. Churchill, second by Comm. Myers to adjourn the meeting. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:50 p.m.

Bald-faced Hornets

Background info: Large paper nests in trees are built by bald-faced hornets, which are a species of paper wasp. A new queen starts the construction in spring and once the first brood hatches they take over the building and other tasks so she can focus producing eggs.



Bald-faced Hornet, *Dolichovespula maculata*, Latin for the 'spotted little hornet with the long cheeks'

Wasp Nest Talking Points

- The nest will not be reused by the wasps, nor will any wasps survive the winter.
- The frozen larvae and adults are a great source of protein for birds like chickadees.
- Once torn open for food, the nest will start to break down and wear away in the elements.
- In warmer months, bald-faced hornets help keep insect populations in check. They feed many types of insects to their developing offspring, and are especially fond of flies and even other species of wasps.
- Adults feed primarily on nectar. In the process, they pollinate the flowers where they are feeding.