

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
LOREN NAGY, CHAIRMAN
MARCH 9, 2023**

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

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

2. Roll Call

- 3. Commissioners Present:** Angela Churchill, Tom Galante, Heather Goudreau, Lee Haggas, Ryan Johnson, Laura Miller Hill, Suzi Myers, Loren Nagy, Pam Otto. **Student Members:** Jared Park, Deetya Solanki.

Absent: Commissioners: Meagan Provencher, Michael Stroud. **Student Members:** Morrighan Hayes, Callie Ramirez.

City Staff Present: Marcelline D'Argento, AJ Reineking.

Visitors Present: John Rabchuk.

4. Minutes Review and Approval

Motion to approve and place into the public record the minutes of the February 9, 2023 Natural Resources Commission [NRC] meeting. Motion by Comm. Myers, second by Comm. Haggas to approve the minutes. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:15 p.m.

5. Old Business

A. Arbor Day Celebration

Planning continued for the annual Arbor Day event on Saturday, April 29th:

- Student Member Solanki circulated a flyer for review for the parks clean-up. The flyer will be posted at the high school and include a QR [quick response] code to scan.
- Clean-up participants should bring their own gloves.
- Chair. Nagy reported the girl scouts are tentatively scheduled for the presentation of the colors.
- City staff reported Wasco Nursery is confirmed to donate a tree for the raffle.
- The stewardship award will be presented to Jon Duerr, a former member of the Tree/NRC Commission, former Director of the Kane County Forest Preserve District, botanist, and currently working on a plant survey of Langum Woods. Motion to nominate Jon Duerr as the recipient of the 2023 stewardship award. Motion by Comm. Churchill, second by Comm. Myers to nominate Mr. Duerr. Voice vote: unanimous; nay – none. Motion carried at 7:19 p.m.
- Student Member Solanki volunteered to speak at the event. Student Member Parks will also consider speaking.
- This will be the city's 25th year as a Tree City USA community.
- Comm. Myers requested that World Migratory Bird Day information be available to hand-out at Arbor Day.
- Mayor Vitek has been invited to attend and Chair. Nagy is awaiting her response.
- Chair. Nagy confirmed he will attend the April 17th City Council meeting to accept the Arbor Day Proclamation.
- Donated plants from Midwest Groundcovers will be picked-up by Public Works staff on Friday, April 28th.

B. Rain Garden Presentation and Rain Barrels Sale Update

Comm. Miller Hill confirmed the rain garden presentation is rescheduled for April 13th from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm. A link for the rain barrel sale will be included in The Den newsletter, and on the city and NRC Facebook pages. Comm. Otto will facilitate publicizing the presentation and rain barrel sale through Kane County Connects. Rain barrels purchased through Upcycle will be available for pick-up from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Pottawatomie Park during the parks clean-up and Arbor Day celebration on Saturday, April 29th. Rain barrels will not be available to purchase on Arbor Day. City staff will email the link for purchasing rain barrels to members of the NRC as well.

6. New Business

A. Kane County Sustainability

Deferred in Comm. Stroud's absence.

B. Open Meetings Act Training

City staff distributed Open Meetings Act training information from the Illinois Attorney General's Office for NRC members with training to be completed.

7. Committee Reports

A. Education Committee

The Main Street window display is reserved for the NRC from May 1st to May 15th for World Migratory Bird Day. Comm Myers requested ideas from the NRC for the display. Comm. Miller Hill will assist setting up the window. Mr. Reineking will arrange to have the tower lights at City Hall out from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm. on Saturday, May 13th.

B. Langum Woods Clean-Up Committee

The NRC and city staff discussed joint clean-up efforts for winter 2023/2024.

C. Community Sustainability Committee

None.

D. Single-Use Bags Committee

Chair. Nagy reported the committee met with the city's Finance Department. Mr. Reineking reported he is in the process of obtaining information from other communities that have implemented similar ordinances. Chair. Nagy noted the Village of Northbrook recently passed a single-use bag ordinance.

E. Greenest Region Compact Committee

Comm. Myers noted the city and NRC's initiatives with rain barrels, the bicycle and pedestrian plan and reduction in the use of single-use plastic bags meet GRC criteria in various categories.

F. Urban Forestry Management Plan Review Committee

Review in progress.

8. Communications – Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports

Motion to approve and place on file the Public Services Division tree activity reports for February 2023. Motion by Comm. Galante, second by Comm. Churchill to approve the reports. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:55 p.m.

9. Public Comment

John Rabchuk was present on behalf of the River Corridor Foundation of St. Charles [RCF]. Mr. Rabchuk shared information on the RCF's plans to improve the river frontage and bicycle path on the east side of the Fox River from the pedestrian bridge north to Illinois Street. Mr. Rabchuk reported 90,000 visitors per year use this section of the path. Three proposals to develop designs have been received. The RCF will either pay for or find grants for all work to be completed. One concept is to cantilever the path out over the edge of the river similar to the paths in Batavia and Elgin. The goal is to have the project completed by the end of 2024. Comm. Myers noted the pedestrian bridge has been determined to be historically significant and asked if it would be changed in any way. Mr. Rabchuk noted the pedestrian bridge would be taken into consideration with the RCF's plans. Comm. Johnson invited Mr. Rabchuk to meet with the NRC again when the concept plan has been selected.

10. Additional Items

A. Commissioners

Comm. Johnson reported on Bell Bowl Prairie, a six-acre remnant gravel prairie located at the site of the Rockford airport. Several endangered species inhabit Bell Bowl Prairie. There are approximately 50 acres of gravel prairies remaining in Illinois. The Federal Aviation Administration recently determined planned road construction at the airport could proceed, going through the prairie. Comm. Johnson proposed implementing protection from development for Langum Woods at some point in the future.

B. City Staff

Mr. Reineking reported on the city's changeover to LED streetlights in follow-up to the February NRC meeting. Conversions have resumed after an approximate two year break during the pandemic.

Mr. Reineking reported Mayor Vitek will continue the Mayors Monarch Pledge previously signed by former Mayor Rogina. The city plans to plant a new pollinator garden at the north end of the municipal center property.

11. Adjournment

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