

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
LOREN NAGY, CHAIRMAN
DECEMBER 8, 2022**

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was convened by Chair. Nagy at 6:30p.m.

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Angela Churchill, Tom Galante, Heather Goudreau, Lee Haggas, Ryan Johnson, Laura Miller Hill, Suzi Myers, Loren Nagy, Pam Otto, Meagan Provencher.

Absent: Commissioners: Michael Stroud. Student Members: Morrighan Hayes, Callie Ramirez, Deetya Solanki.

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

Visitors Present: Jared Park.

3. Minutes Review and Approval

Motion to approve and place into the public record the minutes of the September 8, 2022 Natural Resources Commission [NRC] meeting. Motion by Comm. Otto, second by Comm. Churchill to approve the minutes. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 6:33 p.m.

4. Old Business

A. Natural Lawn Alternatives

Comm. Provencher reported she had developed some ideas and sketches for small areas of land to be converted from grass to lawn alternatives such as prairie gardens, pollinator gardens and sun or shade gardens, for example. The sketches were circulated during the meeting. Comm. Provencher suggested starting a lawn alternative garden on a small area of city property initially. Comm. Churchill suggested providing community education and encouraging local businesses and residents to start on a small scale on their private property. Recipes for prairie gardens, pollinator gardens, etc. could be provided. Comm. Otto noted the city's ordinance on mowing may need to be reviewed. Mr. Reineking explained the current ordinance permits ornamental plantings over eight inches. Comm. Myers suggested involving the Kane County Wild Ones organization. Comms. Churchill, Haggas and Provencher will work together on this initiative.

B. Tree Care and Mulching Door Hangers

City staff reported the parkway tree care door-hangers were revised as requested by the NRC. The revisions include improved graphics for correct mulching and more concise language on tree care. A copy of the new door-hangers was circulated during the meeting, and a copy is attached to and made a part of these minutes.

5. New Business

A. Recap of Joint Meeting

Chair. Nagy noted the October joint meeting went well. The Commissioners appreciated the onsite meeting with Public Works Engineering staff at the location of the city's 7th Avenue Creek project. Annual joint meetings with the Batavia Environmental Commission and Geneva Natural Resources Committee will be planned.

B. Park District 2023 Arbor Day Reservation

City staff informed the NRC the St. Charles Park District reservation for Arbor Day was due, and requested confirmation of the location of the event. The NRC confirmed the 2023 Arbor Day celebration will be held at Pottawatomie Park again. City staff will reserve this location with the Park District.

C. Appointment of New Student Member

Jared Park, a student at St. Charles North High School, re-introduced himself to all present. Mr. Park attended prior NRC meetings, organized and participated in river clean-up projects, and is interested in joining the NRC as a Student Member. Chair. Nagy requested a motion to appoint Mr. Park as a Student Member. Motion by Comm. Miller Hill, second by Comm. Otto to appoint Mr. Parks as a NRC Student Member. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 6:55 p.m. Chair. Nagy welcomed Mr. Parks to the NRC.

D. Waste Hauling Contract

Chair. Nagy reported the city's contract with Lakeshore Recycling Services [LRS] will expire in 2023, and there may be an opportunity to recommend changes to the contract when it is re-negotiated. NRC proposals include year-round composting and food scrap collection. The proposals will be forwarded to the city's Environmental Services Manager. At the request of Chair. Nagy, a list of other area municipalities that offer these services will be emailed to the NRC by city staff.

6. Committee Reports

A. Education Committee

Comm. Myers requested articles from the Commissioners for The Den for 2023. A sign-up sheet was circulated.

B. Langum Woods Clean-Up Committee

Comm. Otto reported a clean-up event is scheduled for Saturday, January 21, 2023, focusing on non-native plant removals.

C. Community Sustainability Committee

i. Pumpkin Smash Recap

Comm. Goudreau reported on the success of the November 5th pumpkin recycling event. Two dumpsters were filled with over 1,200 pumpkins.

ii. Holiday Lights Recycling

Comm. Goudreau reported the holiday lights recycling program is off to a great start and will continue through January 13, 2023. Collection containers are located at Public Works, City Hall, the St. Charles Public Library, Hickory Knolls Discovery Center and Pottawatomie Community Center. Additionally, Comm. Provencher will place a container for collection at Wasco Nursery.

D. Single-Use Bags Committee

Chair. Nagy reported the City of Batavia passed a single-use bag ordinance on November 21, 2022. A copy of the ordinance will be emailed to the NRC by city staff. Chair. Nagy stated the NRC will continue to pursue this issue with the mayor and city council. Legislation at the state level has not progressed to date.

E. Greenest Region Compact Committee

At the request of Comm. Galante city staff electronically distributed an article regarding lithium ion batteries in advance of the December NRC meeting. Comm. Galante reported on the hazards associated with the disposal of these types of batteries including spontaneous fires

and explosions. Comm. Churchill noted lithium ion batteries have caused refuse trucks to catch fire, and to avoid a truck explosion the load must be immediately dumped in the road. Comm. Galante stated the NRC could promote education and awareness regarding proper disposal of batteries, which would fulfill items 13D and WR21 of the Greenest Region Compact [WR13D Support proper disposal of electronic waste; WR21 Educate the community on recycling and composting practices]. Comm. Goudreau will include information on the NRC's Facebook page regarding battery recycling locations. City staff will confirm the types of batteries accepted for recycling at Public Works, and provide this information to Comm. Goudreau.

F. Urban Forestry Management Plan Review Committee

The Committee requested a Word copy of the Urban Forestry Management Plan [Plan] to facilitate editing. A copy will be forwarded to Comms. Churchill, Johnson and Nagy by city staff, and staff will participate in editing the Plan.

Comm. Johnson inquired as to how the city determines what types of trees will be planted in the parkways. Mr. Reineking explained each site is assessed by the city's arborist and criteria for planting is determined. Comm. Provencher asked if the trees are sourced in Illinois. Mr. Reineking responded affirmatively and noted the trees are selected and tagged at a nursery in northeastern Illinois.

7. Communications – Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports

Motion to approve and place on file the Public Services Division tree activity reports for September, October and November 2022. Motion by Comm. Churchill, second by Comm. Johnson to approve the reports. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:28 p.m.

8. Public Comment

None.

9. Additional Items

A. Commissioners

Comm. Johnson noted the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Mason State Tree Nursery will be offering seedlings for purchase. Comm. Myers suggested ordering seedlings to give away at the Arbor Day event.

B. City Staff

None.

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion by Comm. Otto, second by Comm. Galante to adjourn the meeting. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:32 p.m.

CITY OF ST. CHARLES NOTICE

NEW PARKWAY TREE CARE

A new parkway tree has been planted by the City of St. Charles, Public Works Department.

WATERING & MULCHING: The city will water the new tree the first 6 months after planting. After the city has completed the first 6 months of watering, residents are encouraged to slowly trickle water at the base of the tree for 15 to 20 minutes 2 times per week (weather depending) from April to October. Please note over-watering is harmful and can kill the new tree.



Additionally, the city will place mulch around the new tree. Wood mulch is a good source of nutrients and protection for the new tree. (continued)



CITY OF ST. CHARLES

Public Works - Division

Two East Main Street

St. Charles, IL 60174

630-377-4405

www.stcharlesil.gov/projects

Residents are requested to turn and add new mulch as needed at least once per year. If there is at least 2 to 4 inches of mulch, refresh the mulch by raking.

Piling up mulch at the trunk of the tree will kill the tree. This practice is known as “volcano mulching.” Pull mulch back several inches from the base of the trunk. Keep mulch flat, not mounded, so water will not run off.

MAINTENANCE: Trees planted on the parkway are the property of the City of St. Charles, and general maintenance for parkway trees is provided by the city. Please contact Public Works for trimming, other tree maintenance or questions at 630-377-4405.

Thank You

