

**AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Agenda Item number: 3.c

Title:

Natural Resources Commission Minutes – Information only

Presenter:

AJ Reineking

Meeting: Government Services Committee

Date: April 22, 2019

Proposed Cost: \$ n/a

Budgeted Amount: \$

Not Budgeted: ☐**Executive Summary** *(if not budgeted please explain):*

A duty of the Natural Resources Commission is to advise and consult with the Government Services Committee. The February 14, 2019 Natural Resources Commission meeting minutes are attached.

**Attachments** *(please list):*

\* Natural Resources Commission Minutes – February 2019 meeting minutes

**Recommendation/Suggested Action** *(briefly explain):*

For information only.

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

**Members Present:** Chairman Ralph Grathoff, Kathy Brens, Heather Goudreau, Jillian Leturno, Suzi Myers, Caroline Wilfong

**Members Absent:** Isabella Bernat, Jon Duerr, Chloe Fanning, Lee Haggas, Loren Nagy, Pam Otto

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

**Visitors Present:** Tom Galante, Ryan Johnson, Kristen Sernett

**1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance**

The meeting was convened by Chair. Grathoff at 7:03 p.m.

**2. Introduction of Visitors, Comments and Concerns**

Introductions were made by Commissioners, City staff and visitors.

Mr. Tom Galante and Mr. Ryan Johnson were in attendance to observe the meeting as potential new Natural Resources Commission [NRC] members.

Ms. Kristen Sernett expressed interest in NRC-sponsored activities.

**3. Minutes Review and Approval**

Motion to approve and place into the public record the minutes of the January 10, 2019 Natural Resources Commission meeting. Motion by Comm. Brens, second by Comm. Goudreau to approve the minutes. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:05 p.m.

**4. Old Business**

**A. Government Services Committee February Meeting**

Mr. Reineking noted the NRC's Storm Drain Medallion Proposal and Tree Species Ordinance Amendment [Title 12, Chapter 12.20, Section .030, D.] are on the agenda for the Government Services Committee meeting on Monday, February 25, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. Members of the NRC were encouraged to attend.

**B. Proxy Voting**

Chair. Grathoff reported he had discussed proxy voting with City staff at the Mayor's Office and determined most City Commissions do not utilize proxy voting. Chair. Grathoff recommended this topic be deferred unless anyone had a concern. Comms. Brens and Myers and Mr. Adesso suggested contacting the NRC Chair, another Commissioner and/or City staff in the event of a meeting absence to ensure their thoughts were communicated at the meeting.

**C. Arbor Day**

Arbor Day is Friday, April 26, 2019. The NRC's Arbor Day celebration will once again be held at 4:00 p.m. in Lincoln Park. Planning is underway, and Ms. D'Argento issued the annual checklist for the event to the NRC.

**5. New Business**

**A. Potential Natural Resources Commissioners**

With the departure of Comms. Blaine and Hauser there are two vacancies on the NRC. Messrs. Galante and Johnson expressed interest in joining the NRC and submitted letters of interest and resumes to Mayor Rogina and the NRC. Appointments to the NRC will be made by Mayor Rogina pursuant to City Code 12.20.040.

**6. Committee Reports**

**A. Education Committee**

Comm. Myers provided a recap of the NRC's 2018 book donation. *The Survivor Tree* was donated by the NRC to all the elementary and middle schools in St. Charles.

Comm. Goudreau suggested providing storm drain education to students and also having student volunteers help install the storm drain medallions.

**B. Langum Woods Clean-Up Committee**

In Comm. Otto's absence, Comm. Myers reported she and Comms. Otto, Goudreau were at Langum Woods for a scheduled work day, however, there were no high school volunteers in attendance as planned. Ms. Sernett suggested cross-marketing of events, such as the Langum Woods work day, with Batavia and Geneva in order to attract more volunteers. Comm. Brens suggested coordinating clean-up events with the City's Community Services staff. Comm. Goudreau asked it would be allowable to include other municipalities' events on the NRC's Facebook page; Mr. Adesso responded affirmatively. Comm. Myers noted trees and limbs that have fallen in the woods may be considered "habitat" but asked City staff for their opinion on whether or not to remove fallen trees and limbs. Mr. Adesso responded that if the limbs are not hanging causing a safety concern, Public Works would value the NRC's guidance on this type of issue.

Additionally, Comm. Myers provided a brief summary of the NRC's involvement with Langum Woods, which are the only City-owned woods in St. Charles. The former Tree Commission, now the NRC, sought to preserve Langum Woods for community enjoyment. There are seven acres of natural woods with walking path, and work days focus clearing the paths and removing invasive species from the woods. Cold weather work days are preferred as there are many wildflowers growing in Langum Woods during warmer weather that could be trampled. Comm. Goudreau suggested inviting the public to a wildflower walk in the spring to help bring awareness to Langum Woods and inspire the community to volunteer for work days.

**7. Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports January 2019**

Motion by Comm. Myers to approve the Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports and place into the public record, second by Comm. Brens. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:45 p.m.

**8. Additional Items**

**A. Commissioners**

Chair. Grathoff commented positively on the new LED streetlights on Prairie Street; the light is clean and clear, LED lights use less electricity and cause less light pollution. Chair. Grathoff asked when all the streetlights in the City would be replaced with LEDs. Mr. Adesso explained the City is in its first year of a three fiscal year plan to replace all existing streetlights with LED lights; the ROI for this project is only about five years.

The Commissioners thanked the visitors for attending the meeting and for their interest in the NRC.

**B. City Staff**

None.

**C. Visitors**

Messrs. Galante and Johnson restated their interest in joining the NRC, and commented positively on the scope of the NRC's activities.

Ms. Sernett asked if the City maintains signs along the Fox River regarding fishing restrictions and the containers for fishing line. Mr. Adesso explained the Illinois Department of Natural Resources or the St. Charles Park District, not the City's Public Works, would likely be responsible for this maintenance. Ms. Sernett commented she follows the NRC on Facebook and requested more information about the NRC's activities and responsibilities. Mr. Adesso explained the NRC is kept informed of Public Works activities, and has autonomy to pursue initiatives and events the Commissioners feel are appropriate. The NRC also has defined responsibilities set forth in City Code. Additionally, the NRC also makes recommendations to Public Works and to the City's Government Services Committee. Comm. Myers further explained the NRC represents the community and residents are encouraged to bring ideas and concerns to the NRC's attention. Chair. Grathoff noted some of the recent issues the NRC has addressed including dark sky preservation, pumpkin recycling, climate change, LED lighting, monarch butterflies and planning the NRC's annual Arbor Day event, among other topics.

Ms. Sernett commented she reads all of Comm. Otto's articles, but the NRC and its activities are not really publicized [that she was aware of]. She asked if the NRC would consider giving presentations at the St. Charles Public Library. Comm. Goudreau reiterated Comm. Myers comments regarding residents bringing ideas and concerns to the NRC, and added the NRC is generally open to becoming involved in more activities and events. A Fox River clean-up day is under discussion for this fall, and the NRC plans to continue pumpkin composting and recycling Christmas lights. Mr. Adesso explained residents are also welcome to contact City staff with any questions or concerns about the activities of Public Works.

**9. Adjournment**

Motion by Comm. Myers to adjourn the meeting, second by Comm. Wilfong. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:47 p.m.