

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
LOREN NAGY, CHAIRMAN
FEBRUARY 10, 2022**

Members Present: Kathleen Brens, Angela Churchill, Tom Galante, Heather Goudreau, Morrighan Hayes, Ryan Johnson, Laura Miller Hill, Loren Nagy, Callie Ramirez, Deetya Solanki.

Present Via WebEx: Lee Haggas, Daniella Taylor.

Members Absent: Suzi Myers, Pam Otto, Michael Stroud.

Visitors Present: James Enck, John Rabchuk.

Others Present: Marcelline D'Argento, AJ Reineking.

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

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

2. Introduction of Visitors, Comments and Concerns

Mr. Enck and Mr. Rabchuk were in attendance as members of the River Corridor Foundation [RCF].

3. Minutes Review and Approval

Motion to approve and place into the public record the minutes of the January 13, 2022 Natural Resources Commission [NRC] meeting. Motion by Comm. Brens, second by Comm. Churchill to approve the minutes. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:04 p.m.

4. Old Business

A. Arbor Day

The Commissioners and city staff continued planning for the Arbor Day event scheduled for Saturday, April 30, 2022 at 11:30 a.m. in Pottawatomie Park. The following items were discussed:

- A parks clean-up will be held from 9:00 am to 11:00 am
- Clean-up volunteers will check in at Pottawatomie Park
- The clean-up event will be publicized on the city's and NRC's Facebook pages, in The Den newsletter, and at the high schools in St. Charles [after spring break at the high schools]
- Public Works will provide work gloves and trash bags for the clean-up
- City staff will coordinate with the Park District to determine sites for clean-up other than Pottawatomie Park [if volunteer turn-out exceeds the number of people needed to work in Pottawatomie Park]
- Volunteer waivers will be needed by the city and the Park District
- NRC Student Commissioners will be the guest speakers for the Arbor Day event
- The recipient of the Stewardship Award will be discussed at the March NRC meeting
- The city arborist will have a Black Tupelo tree available for planting at one of the schools in St. Charles on Friday, April 29th
- The school planting site will be determined at a later date
- A sample program was circulated with the theme "150th Anniversary of Arbor Day"

Planning for Arbor Day will be continued at the March NRC meeting.

B. Joint Meeting

Deferred.

5. New Business

Comm. Galante provided information on the Mason State Tree Nursery, which is the only state-owned and operated tree nursery in Illinois. The nursery is part of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and offers tree seedlings, pollinator packets, prairie plants and wildflower seed. Some members of the NRC have ordered plantings from the Mason State Tree Nursery.

6. Committee Reports

A. Education Committee

None.

B. Langum Woods Clean-Up Committee

Comm. Johnson reported a pre-spring clean-up will be scheduled.

C. Community Sustainability Committee

None.

D. Single Use Bag Committee

Comm. Churchill circulated a survey entitled Fox Valley Single Use Bag Survey. The survey will be distributed to residents to help determine the community's current use of single use plastic bags, the level of interest and support to reduce the use of single use bags, and potential challenges to using reusable bags. Chair. Nagy reported Mayor Vitek supports the distribution of the survey. Links to the survey will be placed on the city website and the NRC and city Facebook pages. A draft copy of the survey is attached to and made a part of these minutes. Comm. Brens noted reusable bags were disallowed during the pandemic, but are now approved to use again, and plastic bags can be recycled and used to make other items such as outdoor furniture.

Chair. Nagy reiterated the Committee's goals are:

- To reduce [not ban] the use of single use plastic bags
- To preemptively pass a city ordinance regarding single use plastic bags prior to the State of Illinois enacting similar legislation, thus allowing St. Charles to retain potential fees collected, rather than having such fees go to the State of Illinois
- To pass a city ordinance, and possibly suspend implementation of the ordinance, if necessary, for public health-related concerns, administrative or other reasons
- To have an ordinance go the St. Charles City Council for consideration possibly in April

Chair. Nagy noted he has been requested to update the City Council on the NRC's activities at the Council's March meeting.

Motion to approve the distribution of the Fox Valley Single Use Bag Survey. Motion by Comm. Miller Hill, second by Comm. Churchill to approve the distribution of the survey. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:52 p.m.

E. Greenest Region Compact Committee

None.

F. Urban Forestry Management Plan Review Committee

None.

7. Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports

Motion to approve and place into the public record the Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports for the month of January 2022. Motion by Comm. Brens, second by Comm. Churchill to approve the reports. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:54 p.m.

8. Additional Items

A. Commissioners

Comm. Brens thanked all who helped with the collection of the holiday lights.

Chair. Nagy distributed a publication from the Morton Arboretum entitled Management of Invasive Plants and Pests of Illinois. Additionally, Chair. Nagy noted bee-friendly pesticides are being developed and released in the marketplace to handle invasive pests.

B. Visitors

Mr. Rabchuk invited members of the NRC to attend the next RCF meeting on Wednesday, February 16th at 7:30 a.m. at the Baker Community Center.

C. City Staff

On behalf of Comm. Myers, Ms. D'Argento noted the annual election of the NRC Chairman would be on May 1, 2022, in accordance with St. Charles Municipal Code 12.20.040.C, Appointment of Members.

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion by Comm. Miller Hill, second by Comm. Galante to adjourn the meeting. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 8:00 p.m.