

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
RALPH GRATHOFF, CHAIRMAN
MARCH 12, 2020**

Members Present: Kathy Brens, Angela Churchill, Andrew Diorio, Tom Galante, Heather Goudreau, Ralph Grathoff, Lee Haggas, Suzi Myers, Loren Nagy, Claire Norman, Pam Otto

Members Absent: Ryan Johnson, Jillian Leturno

Others Present: Chris Adesso, AJ Reineking

Visitors Present: Nancy Hannah

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was convened by Chair. Grathoff at 7:02 p.m.

2. Introduction of Visitors, Comments and Concerns

Ms. Hannah was in attendance as a private citizen and resident of St. Charles in support of the Natural Resources Commission [NRC].

3. Minutes Review and Approval

Motion to approve and place into the public record the minutes of the February 13, 2020 NRC meeting. Motion by Comm. Nagy, second by Comm. Haggas to approve the minutes. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:05 p.m.

4. Old Business

A. Greenest Region Compact II

Mr. Adesso reported the city's Community & Economic Development and Public Works Departments have completed all applicable sections of the Greenest Region Compact [GRC] spreadsheet with the current status as staff understands it to be, and the document is ready for the NRC's review and use. Comm. Otto reported she provided the "Land" section of the GRC to the Park District Superintendent and there is some information that can be added relevant to the St. Charles Park District. The NRC will review the GRC spreadsheet at the April meeting. Chair. Grathoff thanked city staff for their work on the document.

B. Curbside Composting

Comm. Goudreau reported five residents attended the information session held prior to the NRC meeting. Citywide curbside composting will begin on April 6, 2020.

5. New Business

None.

6. Arbor Day

Comm. Otto reported city staff has been working with both the principal at St. Patrick Preschool and Park District staff to coordinate the Arbor Day tree planting at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, April 24th. Based on current public health concerns, it is uncertain as to whether the preschool students will be able to participate. The city can still fulfill its Tree City USA criteria with a tree-planting in Lincoln Park. Chair. Grathoff requested input from the NRC as to having a stewardship award; a decision will be made at the April NRC meeting.

7. Committee Reports

A. Education Committee

Comm. Myers reviewed the upcoming articles the Commissioners are writing for *The Den*.
Comm. Otto reported *Kane County Connects* is issuing a “Countdown to Earth Day” series and she has been asked to write an article.

B. Langum Woods Clean-Up Committee

None.

C. New Committee

In connection with the start of curbside composting, Comm. Goudreau suggested the NRC could coordinate a tour of a composting facility.

D. Single-Use Bag Committee

Comm. Nagy reported the Single-Use Bag Committee met with Abby Beck, an alderman from the City of Batavia. Batavia has started to write an ordinance addressing single-use bags and is publicizing the issue with the assistance of the League of Women Voters, scouting groups and the Sierra Club. Batavia’s target goal is to pass the ordinance by April 20, 2020. Comm. Nagy noted single-use bag legislation has been introduced by the Illinois state legislature, which may impact fees collected and distributed by municipalities. There is a “grandfather clause” with the date of May 1, 2020, and Batavia is currently attempting to determine what the May 1st date represents. Batavia’s goal is to pass the ordinance by April 20, 2020, and use the remainder of 2020 to educate residents and organize implementation. Comm. Nagy noted the City of Geneva is not a home-rule municipality and could only pass a single-use bag resolution encouraging voluntary participation by retailers in Geneva. Additionally, Comm. Nagy shared information comparing other municipalities’ single-use bag ordinances.

Mr. Adesso explained that just the official process to pass a new ordinance generally takes four to six-weeks, and would require input and coordination from multiple departments within the city including Public Works, Finance and the Community & Economic Development Departments as well as the city’s legal counsel. Mr. Adesso recalled how the transition from Tree Commission to Natural Resources Commission was handled by first presenting information to the city’s committee as a whole, but perhaps discussions with city staff from other departments would be the first step with regard to single-use bags. The St. Charles Business Alliance [formerly the Downtown Partnership] may be able to offer some perspective and guidance as well.

Comms. Goudreau and Nagy stated there are indications that single-use bag state legislation is certainly forthcoming, and how the city chooses to respond will be important.

8. Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports February 2020

Motion to approve and place into the public record the Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports for the month of February 2020. Motion by Comm. Myers, second by Comm. Haggas to approve the reports. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:55 p.m.

9. Additional Items

A. Commissioners

Comm. Galante shared information regarding the Mason State Tree Nursery, the only Illinois state nursery where native Illinois trees and shrubs are grown. The Nursery also offers a pollinator packet of seeds for different native Illinois plants.

Comm. Otto reported there will be a Park District Fox River clean-up on March 21 and 22, 2020 and requested volunteers.

Student Comm. Norman reported she will be graduating this year and will eventually resign from the NRC. She has encouraged other members of her high school Eco Club to join the NRC to fill available openings for Student Commissioners.

Comm. Brens noted she has observed that recycling is not been consistently done at some of the elementary, middle and high schools in St. Charles. Perhaps the Student Commissioners could help promote better recycling practices at the schools.

B. City Staff

None.

C. Visitors

None.

D. Adjournment

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

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