

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
LOREN NAGY, CHAIRMAN
MAY 11, 2023**

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was convened by Chair. Nagy at 7:01 p.m.

2. Roll Call

- 3. Commissioners Present:** Angela Churchill, Tom Galante, Heather Goudreau, Lee Haggas, Ryan Johnson, Laura Miller Hill, Suzi Myers [Zoom], Loren Nagy, Pam Otto, Meagan Provencher [Zoom], Michael Stroud. **Student Members:** Callie Ramirez, Jared Park, Deetya Solanki.

Absent: Student Member: Morrighan Hayes.

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

Visitors Present: Mike Linder, Kane County Board; Debi Mader, resident.

4. Minutes Review and Approval

Motion to approve and place into the public record the minutes of the March 9, 2023 Natural Resources Commission [NRC] meeting. Motion by Comm. Churchill, second by Comm. Galante to approve the minutes. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:05 p.m.

5. Old Business

None.

6. New Business

A. Arbor Day Recap

Chair. Nagy noted despite the weather, the Arbor Day celebration went well. Comm. Goudreau reported she received positive feedback from Compass Academy regarding the tree planting ceremony. Comm. Otto suggested the NRC return to celebrating Arbor Day on the actual day [the last Friday in April] rather than on a Saturday. The city and NRC have always done a tree planting on Arbor Day at one of the city schools, and perhaps that could be the Arbor Day celebration rather than having a separate event. Comm. Myers concurred and noted criteria for the city's Tree City USA designation could be met with the tree planting ceremony and having the mayor read the Arbor Day proclamation [the city's tree ordinance and tree care spending budget also fulfill the Tree City USA requirements]. The next Arbor Day event will be further discussed in 2024.

B. Proposed Community Event

Comm. Stroud proposed promoting more community involvement with the NRC's initiatives and events, such as the rain garden presentation. Comm. Stroud suggested working with other like-minded groups and better publicizing NRC-sponsored events. Additionally, a garden could be planted to educate the community on the types of plants the NRC is recommending to residents for their own yards.

Comm. Provencher suggested starting an Instagram account for the NRC and offered to handle posting. Comm. Stroud stated he would participate as well. Student Member Solanki noted Instagram would be a better way to reach high school students, and offered her assistance. Staff will contact the city's communications manager regarding starting an

Instagram account for the NRC. Additionally, the commissioners discussed partnering with other environmentally focused organizations and participating together as a group at events that are already established. It's Our Fox River Day, a regional event scheduled for on September 16, 2023, is an example. Student Member Solanki suggested possible after school enrichment programs to educate and promote the NRC's initiatives with young school students and their parents.

C. Annual Election of NRC Chairman

Chair. Nagy expressed his interest in continuing to serve as Chairman of the NRC. Motion to re-elect Chair. Nagy as Chairman of the NRC. Motion by Comm. Churchill, second by Comm. Haggas to re-elect Chair. Nagy. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:30 p.m.

D. Kane County Board

Mike Linder introduced himself to all present and discussed his role as a member of the Kane County Board representing District 13. Mr. Linder informed the NRC of some of the Board's initiatives including air quality, recycling, watershed management, community gardening, farmland preservation, adopt-a-highway, Earth Day tree planting and native plant sales. Mr. Linder stated the Board has lobbyists in Springfield, IL and Washington, DC to track legislation and agencies with grant opportunities. Mr. Linder offered to partner with the NRC to share information bring NRC issues of mutual interest to the Board's attention.

7. Committee Reports

A. Education Committee

Comm. Myers noted the lights at city hall will be off from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm. on Saturday, May 13th in recognition of World Migratory Bird Day, and reminded the commissioners to turn off their lights as well.

B. Langum Woods Clean-Up Committee

None.

C. Community Sustainability Committee

None.

D. Single-Use Bags Committee

Mr. Reineking reported staff had obtained information from three Illinois communities currently collecting fees for single-use bags, which was then provided to the city's finance department for next steps.

E. Greenest Region Compact Committee

Comm. Miller Hill reported the rain barrel sale was successful and 18 rain barrels were sold and picked up during the Arbor Day celebration. Pick up for the next sale may be at Public Works.

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 March and April 2023. Motion by Comm. Otto, second by Comm. Churchill to approve the reports. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 8:07 p.m.

9. Public Comment

Resident Debi Mader was in attendance to express her concern with the city's long-term electric contracts, the Illinois Municipal Electric Agency [IMEA] and Prairie State, and proposed carbon capture. Comm. Miller Hill offered to connect Ms. Mader with environmental organizations outside of the NRC that have researched this issue.

10. Additional Items

A. Commissioners

Comm. Stroud suggested communications among members could be improved.

Comm. Otto noted a native plant sale is scheduled this Saturday through Wild Ones at Gray Willows Farm, and on Saturday, June 3rd Hickory Knolls will also have a native plant sale.

B. City Staff

None.

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion by Comm. Churchill, second by Comm. Stroud to adjourn the meeting. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 8:26 p.m.