

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
LOREN NAGY, CHAIRMAN
AUGUST 10, 2023**

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Prior to Roll Call, Chair. Nagy reported that that Comm. Stroud had stated he was resigning from the Natural Resources Commission [NRC]. Comm. Stroud had been present prior to the start of the meeting, and left the meeting before the Call to Order.

The meeting was convened by Chair. Nagy at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

3. Commissioners Present: Tom Galante, Heather Goudreau, Lee Haggas, Ryan Johnson, Suzi Myers, Loren Nagy, Meagan Provencher. **Student Member:** Jared Park.

Absent: Commissioners: Angela Churchill, Laura Miller Hill, Pam Otto, Michael Stroud. **Student Members:** Morrighan Hayes, Callie Ramirez, Deetya Solanki.

City Staff Present: Marcelline D'Argento, Jim Keegan, Heather McGuire, AJ Reineking.

Visitors Present: Gary Swick, John Rabchuk.

Mr. Swick, representing Friends of the Fox River, and Mr. Rabchuk, of the River Corridor Foundation, introduced themselves to all present.

Chair. Nagy introduced Ms. McGuire, City Administrator, and Mr. Keegan, Chief of Police, to all present, and stated they were in attendance at the request of the Mayor to gain a better understanding of the NRC's activities and initiatives. Other members of City staff may be in attendance at future NRC meetings.

4. Minutes Review and Approval

Motion to approve and place into the public record the minutes of the June 8, 2023 Natural Resources Commission [NRC] meeting. Motion by Comm. Haggas, second by Comm. Johnson to approve the minutes. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 7:02 p.m.

5. Old Business

A. Consideration for Committee Reorganizations

Chair. Nagy requested that each Commissioner select at least two committees from the list of [restructured] standing committees on which they would prefer to serve. Commissioners will email City staff with their selections. The committees may have three or more members, and meet if an agenda is published in advance, as required by the Illinois Open Meetings Act [OMA]. Chair. Nagy noted the committees could plan to meet immediately following regular monthly NRC meetings when an agenda and meeting materials are already posted in accordance with the

OMA. A copy of the restructured standing committees is attached to and made a part of these minutes.

6. New Business

A. Fox River Clean-Up

Comm. Goudreau reported on the pre-event meeting she attended in July for “It’s Our Fox River Day” [IOFRD] scheduled for Saturday, September 16th. Comm. Goudreau introduced Gary Swick of Friends of the Fox River. Mr. Swick explained the IOFRD initially focused on watershed clean-up, and has evolved into a community-wide celebration. The event in September will include a river clean-up, poetry reading, and fund-raising for Friends of the Fox by participating breweries and other businesses.

B. Scarecrow Weekend

Comm. Myers reported the display window at City Hall is not available to publicize World Migratory Bird Day [WMBD] on October 14th, and suggested having the NRC participate in Scarecrow Weekend in October to promote awareness of WMBD and other NRC initiatives. The NRC will contact other like-minded organizations to determine if a shared booth at Scarecrow Weekend might be a possibility.

C. Construction Planting Ordinance

Chair. Nagy noted although the City established a list of do-not-plant trees several years ago, certain types of unfavorable trees are still being planted. He requested clarification regarding the process and standards for tree planting by builders. Mr. Reineking reported he discussed this issue with the City’s Planning Department, and explained with single lot infill new construction tree preservation, rather than a landscape plan, is required, however, home builders of large developments are required to submit a landscape plan to the City. Comm Provencher noted other municipalities require a permit to plant trees in the parkway, which is a way to control what types of trees are planted in the parkways. City staff will explore how plantings in the parkway could be defined for infill construction.

D. Promote Pear Tree Replacements

Chair. Nagy reported there is a need to promote the replacement of Pear trees throughout the City. The NRC agreed education is key and City staff suggested an article in The Den may be helpful.

7. Committee Reports

A. Education Committee

Comm. Myers proposed having St. Charles pursue designation as a Bird City, similar to the City’s Tree City USA community designation. Comm. Myers reported the criteria to become a Bird City have already been met by the NRC and St. Charles Park District through their regular activities and initiatives. The Audubon Council of Illinois also fulfills some of the criteria for communities’ Bird City designations. City staff will draft the required Bird City Resolution and Proclamation. The NRC agreed to go forward to pursue Bird City community designation. Comm. Myers volunteered to present the proposal to City Council. A copy of the Bird City criteria is attached to and made a part of these minutes.

B. Langum Woods Clean-Up Committee

None.

C. Community Sustainability Committee

Comm. Goudreau requested volunteers for the November 4th Pumpkin Smash.

D. Single-Use Bags Committee

Chair. Nagy requested status from City staff on this issue. Ms. McGuire reported when the NRC is ready to present the single-use bag proposal to City Council, the item would be placed on the agenda.

E. Greenest Region Compact Committee

None.

F. Urban Forestry Management Plan Review Committee

None.

8. Communications – Public Services Division Tree Activity Reports

Motion to approve and place on file the Public Services Division tree activity reports for June and July 2023. Motion by Comm. Myers, second by Comm. Galante to approve the reports. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 8:01 p.m.

9. Public Comment

Mr. Rabchuk was in attendance to share information with the NRC regarding proposed improvements along a section of the Fox River. The proposals will be presented to City Council by the River Corridor Foundation. Mr. Rabchuk discussed concept plans for the proposed improvements which include erosion control, greenspace, improved access to the river, a plaza, benches, a floating dock and other amenities.

10. Additional Items

A. Commissioners

Chair. Nagy announced Student Member, Jared Parks, was resigning from the NRC to attend college out of state this fall. All present acknowledged Mr. Parks and thanked him for his service to the NRC and the community.

Comm. Goudreau noted this Saturday, August 12th is the Park District's Rusty Rodeo event, and October 4th is Walk to School Day.

Comm. Myers reported some of the storm drain markers placed by the NRC about three years ago are deteriorating and may need to be replaced.

B. City Staff

Ms. D'Argento reported the communications manager is completing work on the City's policy for social media, and by the next NRC meeting in September there will be an active Instagram account for the NRC.

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion by Comm. Provencher, second by Comm. Haggas to adjourn the meeting. Voice vote: unanimous; nays – none. Motion carried at 8:18 p.m.

DRAFT

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
Proposed Standing Committees

- Education and Outreach
 - Social Media
 - Current Education Committee Duties

- Engagement
 - Current Community Sustainability Committee Duties (pumpkin smash, oil recycling, rain barrel sale)
 - Current Langum Woods Committee (this may transition to Education and Outreach after this year after the woods is cleaned-up)
 - Event Planning (Arbor Day, workshops, river clean-up, etc.)

- Advisory
 - Current Greenest Region Compact Committee
 - Periodic review of Urban Forestry Management Plan [UFMP] and Tree and Shrub Ordinance

Ad-Hoc Committees

- Single-Use Plastic Bags
- UFMP Updates

Bird City Community Designation Objectives

1. Bird City Resolution – city staff
2. Bird City Proclamation – city staff
3. Three Actions from Habitat Category
 - i. **Completed** 1.1.4. Demonstrate that your community has been awarded Tree City USA status (**25 years as a Tree City USA community documented**).
 - ii. 1.2.2. Demonstrate how a public golf course is managed to benefit birds – Comm. Otto will provide designation of Pottawatomie Park golf course.
 - iii. 1.2.4 Provide evidence (official designation of natural areas, easements, etc.) that existing bird habitat within community limits has legal protection (Ferson Creek Fenn, Norris Woods, Hickory Knolls) – Comm. Otto will provide.
4. Both actions from 3.1
 - i. 3.1.1 Adopt a proclamation to recognize World Migratory Bird Day [WMBD] – write after city council agrees to support Bird City designation.
 - ii. **Completed** 3.1.2 Hold a public event to celebrate WMBD - proposed for 10/12/23 and included with the programs done in the spring (**lights were out at city hall on 05/13/23 from 7 pm to 10 pm and additional dates and times will be scheduled**).
5. At least three more actions from any of the categories Habitat, Threats to Birds, Education and Engagement and Sustainability.
 - i. **Completed** 1.1.3 Demonstrate that your community understands the critical ecological role of pollinators by documenting substantial effort to promote pollinator health

such as participation in the Illinois Monarch Project (pollinator garden at city hall and Mayors Monarch Pledge project city has participated in since 2018).

- ii. **Completed by Audubon** 1.6.1 Document the establishment of a program to promote the conservation of a species of birds, such as Chimney Swifts through public education, preservation of nesting locations or constructing nest sites (Swift towers, no capping of Swanson Pool chimney due to Swifts).
- iii. **Completed by Audubon** 3.6.1 Demonstrate that your community is represented in at least one citizen science bird monitoring program such as the Christmas Bird Count, Great Backyard Bird Count, Swift Night Out (we participate in Christmas Bird Count, Great Backyard Bird Count, Spring Bird Count Swift Night Out).

Items to Do Before We Submit for Bird City Designation

1. Request City Council's approval - Comm. Myers will present to the Council.
2. Include a narrative statement for each action, and where appropriate, documentation and photos to support the narrative.
3. Provide any additional required information and have a municipal employee or elected official sign and date the application.
4. Initiate payment (\$200) once application has been confirmed as received (instructions for payment will be provided them).

Note: World Migratory Bird Day Proclamation and a summary of events must be submitted annually.