

Natural Resource Commission Minutes
January 21, 2016
7:00 PM

Call to Order:

Chair Larson called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

Roll Call:

Present: Chair Bob Larson and Commissioners David White, Kate Winsor, Darrell Turnock and Councilmember Marty Long.

Absent: Commissioners John Murphy and Diane Gorder.

Staff: City Administrator Mike Robertson and Secretary Linda Hanson.

Approval of Agenda:

With an addition to discuss the Tick Task Force Meeting, Commissioner Turnock moved to approve the Agenda. Councilmember Long seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes:

With a correction of spelling, Councilmember Long moved to approve the December 17, 2015 minutes. With a second from Commissioner White, the motion carried unanimously.

Deer Management Update:

Councilmember Long reported that they met with the deer trapping contractor Laughlin to review all the sites where residents had requested to have a trap. One thing Laughlin recommended was to start earlier in the year so next year the City hopes to begin closer to November 1st. The City has also hired the USDA to shoot deer on the farm site. Their truck is clearly marked and they use thermal imaging on their vehicle to locate deer. Officially the deer removal runs until April 1st but usually is over by mid-March. This is a controlled deer management program. The intent is to cut down on the incidences of Lyme disease as well as over browsing and starvation of deer when too many exist. The deer killed are taken to the DNR where they are processed for food shelves.

Water Resources Best Practices:

Chair Larson submitted a proposed Best Practices document to protect and maintain water resources. This document comes from the MN Rural Water Association, which he feels is probably closer to North Oaks in usage patterns than a metro organization. The NRC will also be working with the VLAWMO on watershed management and the DNR on additional best practices to follow. As more information is gathered this initial document will be amended. Commissioner White expressed an interest in finding out what condition the water that is used by the City residents is in when it reaches the aquifer.

Commissioner White moved to approve the Best Practices to Protect and Maintain Water Resources document with a second from Commissioner Turnock. The motion carried unanimously.

Other Business:

Commissioner David White has been attending the Tick Task Force meetings. He stated that the task force has 18 members with Doctor Brooke Moore serving as the Chair. Councilmember Kingston serves as Council liaison. The task force plans to educate the homeowners, work on encouraging the City to enforce ordinances against feeding the animals and surveying the residents about the incidences of tick borne illnesses.

David Neitzel from the MN Department of Health did a survey in North Oaks in 1997. Over 700 residents responded at that time. The Task Force is going to do another survey so that the results can be compared to 1997. A student from the University of MN working with the Department of Health is currently doing research for North Oaks. The NRC should get copies of the report and surveys.

The first priority of the task force was to increase the removal done by the deer management program. Deer are not the only carrier of Lyme Disease. Field mice can also carry it. Brush removal is encouraged because that provides spaces for small rodents to nest. The Tick Task Force meets the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm in the Community Room at 100 Village Center Drive. Residents are welcome to come to the meeting.

Commissioner Kate Winsor will continue to create articles for the North Oaks News. Also, an article not done by Ms. Winsor on "Who is visiting your yard?" will appear in the next issue.

Next Meeting: February 18, 2016.

Adjournment:

Councilmember Long made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. Commissioner Winsor seconded the motion which carried unanimously.