

Natural Resources Commission Minutes
January 17, 2019
7:00 P.M.

Call to Order:

Chair Bob Larson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Chair Bob Larson, Vice Chair Kate Winsor, Commissioners David White, Damien Lepoutre and Dan McDermott via teleconference.

Absent: City Council Liaison Mayor Gregg Nelson and NOHOA Liaison Diane Gorder.

Staff: City Administrator Mike Robertson and Recording Secretary Debbie Breen.

Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Winsor moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner White seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes:

Commissioner Winsor moved to approve the October 18, 2018 minutes. Commissioner White seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Coyotes

Administrator Robertson stated the topic of too many coyotes in the area was brought up with much discussion on the NOHOA Facebook page and was put on the agenda for the last Council meeting. Four people spoke at the Council meeting, some pro coexisting with coyotes and some against. Robertson said he thought there were 3 kinds of coyotes: 1) those that keep to themselves, 2) those who aren't afraid of people but aren't aggressive, and 3) those aggressively stalking pets regardless of the presence of people. Any reports from the aggressive category, we would dispatch an officer to try to dispose of it. Officer Burrell has not been able to remove any aggressive coyotes at this point.

The City has had reports of general coyote sightings from multiple parts of North Oaks. There has also been report of a wolf around the Brainerd Way cul-de-sac. We've called the DNR but they have not come out to look. The Council has asked the City Administrator to find a local wildlife expert to come in and advise the City on coyotes. Commissioner Winsor will call Wildlife Services at University of Minnesota to see if she can find someone who can help.

Commissioner Lepoutre asked for clarification on dog ordinances. Robertson said the City receives many more complaints about dogs than coyotes. Commissioner Lepoutre brought up the amount of dog droppings on the paths around Black Lake, and wondered if we could have people at the trails on a weekend to remind people to leash and pick up after pets. Robertson said that would take volunteers. Commission Winsor mentioned that some of the droppings appear to be coyote which we can't control.

Tick Task Force Report

Chair Larson reported that the Tick Task Force (TTF) discussed the new Polco survey tool and how it would verify eligibility based on voter registration records. The next meeting will be on April 12th.

Kate Winsor's Report

The January issue of North Oaks news featured an article on making 2019 a green year. For the February issue, she has submitted an article originally written by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture about invasive species. In the spring she will rerun information about Conservation award to gain additional interest. Commissioner Lepoutre said White Bear Lake press had contacted him about our buckthorn removal efforts and they might feature it in an upcoming issue.

City Update—Administrator Robertson

- Only a few deer have been taken this week after a week and a half of the deer traps being out. There were very few signs of deer after the last snow. Two years ago 133 deer were taken, last year only 41 and the way it's going we may be lucky to have 40 this year. Commissioner White asked what the optimal deer population is for our area. Robertson stated that it's about 8 per square mile. Right now the density seems that it might be below that number.
- The Pleasant Lake Aquatic Plant delineation report from Steve McComas was included with the NRC meeting packet. The City is speaking with NOHOA to see if willing to contribute to weed removal.
- Commissioner McDermott asked if any potential future cameras at the entrances would be maintained by City or NOHOA. Robertson stated that anything under City control would be public record so if cameras were ever installed they would be owned by NOHOA.
- Commissioner White asked if the grant has been approved or responded to regarding oriental bittersweet. Robertson indicated that no response has been received yet.

NOHOA/NEST Update

- Chair Larson mentioned that a stakeholder meeting about Charley, Deep and Pleasant Lakes has been scheduled for March with VLAMO, St. Paul Regional Water Department, NRC, NOHOA and the City of North Oaks, to discuss ways to protect our water resources. He is very encouraged by the participation of all these groups together and the positive impact it could have working together.

Other Business

Administrator Robertson presented a summary of the December Planning Commission public hearing on the North Oaks Company plans for the new developments on the east side of North Oaks.

- The Nord piece is just north of North Deep Lake Road and is proposed to be 10 large lots.
- Just south of Osprey Court cul-de-sac is proposed to be 4 villa lots.

- About 600 feet south of there is proposed to be an event center that would be privately owned and host 400 people. The event center would have its own entrance off Centerville.
- A mixture of Villa homes is proposed further south on Centerville with an entrance that lines up with current 3 way stop at County Road H2.
- South of that would be road that connects into central North Oaks with a mixture of uses. A 120 condominium units are proposed along with a retail/office building at Centerville Road. Further west along the road is proposed a number of ½ acre lots with homes oriented toward the various vistas provided by Black Lake and the Conservation Area.
- There were a variety of questions and concerns brought up by the Planning Commission and the residents who attended the hearing. Staff will address those concerns at the next Planning Commission meeting which is Thursday, February 28, 2019.
- Commissioner Lepoutre and Larson mentioned that their neighbors have met to discuss the new proposed developments. Commissioner White wanted to make sure there were enough polishing ponds to keep Black Lake pristine and clear.
- Commissioner Lepoutre asked about the 35E interchange. Administrator Robertson stated that proposal is not connected to the proposed North Oaks Company development project, but there is a request for federal money to add two legs to the 35E/County Road J interchange. The existing four way stop intersection of Centerville Road and County Road J would become a roundabout if that federal money is granted.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Winsor made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner White seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting ended at 8:01 p.m.

Next NRC Meeting is Thursday, February 21, 2019