

**Natural Resources Commission**  
**November 21, 2019**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**1. Call to Order**

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

**2. Roll Call**

Present were Chair Bob Larson, Commissioners Dan McDermott, Andrew Hawkins, David White, Damien LePoutre, and Mayor Gregg Nelson

Staff: Recording Secretary Debbie Breen.

Absent: Commissioner Kate Winsor, NOHOA Representative Diane Gorder, City Administrator Mike Robertson.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

David White suggested adding to the agenda the discussion of whether the Natural Resource Commission is subject to open meeting law regulations & if so, what are the guidelines for this. Mayor Nelson confirmed that that the NRC is subject to open meeting law, and suggested they reach out to the League of MN as a free resource for any questions or clarification needed.

**4. Approval of October 17, 2019 Meeting minutes**

Commissioner LePoutre clarified his statement from the prior minutes. He suggested that the NRC begin the process to manage the deer budget, and investigate additional options than just annual removal. Possibly incorporate in some years a deer study or aerial count. Mayor Nelson recommended that the NRC come up with proposal and general plan to bring to Council. David White mentioned he didn't think there had been a count in several years.

**Commissioner Hawkins motioned to approve the Minutes as amended, with  
Commissioner McDermott as second. Motion unanimously approved.**

**5. Coyote management plan**

City staff Gretchen Needham is currently working on the draft version of the plan. It will be sent to Commissioners in advance of the next NRC meeting for review.

**6. Oriental Bittersweet Removal**

Per City Administrator Robertson's staff notes, work on removal had to be postponed due to cold temperatures. The State grant has been extended to next summer 2020 for completion. Paperwork will be submitted by City Administrator Kevin Kress at that time.

## **7. Update on Septic Ordinance Committee**

Commissioner Hawkins attended the kick off Septic committee meeting along with 8 other people. They solidified the mission of the Committee, and talked about what the different types of systems were and how they worked. Also discussed concerns about cesspools and other systems that may be non-compliant and brainstormed about ways to address them. All participants agreed that: Septic systems are a major cost and a major consideration to homeowner, and the need to be respectful and give them time to remedy. In addition to drafting an Ordinance, they would also like to look at options if there are ways to be funded. There next follow up meeting is Tuesday, December 17 at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Nelson inquired as to who was on the Committee. Commissioner Hawkins mentioned that Councilmember Kara Ries, Gretchen Needham, Jack Anderson, Marc Owens-Kurtz, Franny Skanser-Lewis, Joe Jesmer and Gilroy Hartley were in attendance at the first meeting. It is open to all residents.

Commissioner McDermott asked if enforcement will be included in the discussion, and Commissioner Hawkins indicated yes. The over goal is to protect the quality of the groundwater and wells in our communities.

Commissioner White asked what other communities have had to address this issue. Commissioner Hawkins indicated that individuals within committee will do research to inquire with other similar communities how they are managing this topic. Commissioner McDermott inquired whether well testing is a requirement in North Oaks. It was mentioned that there is no North Oaks requirement for well testing, however there is a well and septic requirement for distance of separation.

## **8. Review of Stormwater Management Plan**

The VLAWMO comments to the North Oaks 2019 Water Plan was included in the meeting packet and reviewed by the Commissioners. Commissioner LePoutre was sensitive to the areas around Black Lake and the information regarding this area. Chair Larson indicated that VLAWMO is very in tune with water needs of the surrounding communities. Commissioners Hawkins indicated that the VLAWMO comments were very thorough and didn't see further follow up required at this time.

## **9. Tick Task Force**

There has been no meeting since October, and the next meeting not yet scheduled. Commissioner White will follow up for the next date. If the NRC is to take lead in Deer Management, they would need to work with the Tick Task force to work together to ensure they are in agreement with the plan. Commissioner White mentioned that a deer survey may be pertinent at this time. The DNR is interested in managing wildlife, Tick Force has different priorities. He indicated 9 deer per square mile is overall goal as manageable in

past. Mayor Nelson indicated that \$55,000 was budgeted for 2019, with \$7,500 spent last year on Deer management. The 2020 budget is \$25,000. Mayor Nelson indicated that it's been a while since a survey has been done. He also mentioned that the City may have concerns if survey shows less deer than accurate, because that may cause us to lose the ability to receive a DNR permit. Mayor Nelson indicated Administrator Kress may have thoughts on deer management. The Metro Archer group is currently used by Ramsey County for bow hunting on their public lands. It was thought that our original Countryman deeds may prohibit hunting on North Oaks land.

#### **10. Kate Winsor's report:**

- She has submitted an article to North Oaks news with reminder on proper height for backyard bird feeders to prevent deer from feeding on the seed.
- Northeast Metro Climate Action is hosting an event at the Shoreview Library on Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. called "Birds and Climate Change".
- VLAMO is interested in showing a film in North Oaks called "Hometown Habitat: Stories of Bringing Nature Home". It's a 90 minute environmental documentary.

**Commissioner Hawkins made a motion to have VLAWMO bring the film to show in North Oaks. Mayor Nelson seconded and all were in favor.**

#### **11. Metropolitan Mosquito Control District Report**

A report was submitted by the Metropolitan Mosquito Control District (MMCD). Highlights include for North Oaks: 528 larval sites inspected, larval treatment of 1,395.66 acres, and 1018 catch basin treatments, with the parks regularly treated. Commissioner Hawkins indicated he believes North Oaks does Helicopter drop of pellets of spores of bacteria that flow in marsh. Larvae eat them which kill mosquitos. They do not spray. The pellets are less harmful to other species.

#### **12. City Update**

Administrator Robertson's staff memo reported on the topics covered in the meeting and thanked Commissioners for their volunteer service to the community over the years. The new City Administrator Kevin Kress will begin December 2, 2019.

13. NO NOHOA / NEST update.

14. No Other New Business

15. Next Meeting will be December 19, 2019.

**A motion to adjourn at 8:05 p.m. made by Mayor Nelson, Commissioner McDermott seconded, with all in favor.**