

Natural Resource Commission Minutes

March 16, 2017

7:00 PM

Call to Order:

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

Roll Call:

Present: Chair Bob Larson and Commissioners Kate Winsor, David White, John Murphy, Dan McDermott, City Council Liaison Marty Long and NOHOA Liaison Diane Gorder.

Absent: None.

Staff: City Administrator Mike Robertson and Administrative Assistant Mary Belden.

Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Murphy moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner McDermott seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes:

Commissioner Murphy moved to approve the February 16, 2017 minutes. Commissioner White seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Stewardship Award Report

Chair Larson reported that a meeting of the Stewardship Award sub-committee was held last week. The committee came up with 8 conservation award topics which were: wetland conservation, water conservation, woodland management, wildlife management, prairie management, pollinator gardens, invasive species control, and tick habitat control.

Administrator Robertson suggested adding shoreland conservation and Commissioner Winsor suggested changing wetland conservation to wetland management.

There was discussion about who the members of the award selection committee would be. It was decided that it would be made up of the NRC commissioners. NOHOA liaison Gorder thought she should not be part of the selection committee as NOHOA might be among the award nominees. Commissioners agreed to call it the Conservation Award. The NRC will investigate any nominees and make a recommendation to the City Council.

It was agreed that any property in North Oaks, whether residential, commercial or institutional would be eligible for the award. There was discussion about how to recognize the winners. Robertson suggested a framed certificate. Chair Larson also suggested a sign or post that the homeowner could stake on the property to show others in the community what they have done towards conservation. Councilmember Long agreed and said that the goal of the award should be to encourage conservation actions and provide examples that other residents could see.

The evaluation criteria were discussed and Councilmember Long suggested adding a compliance component to the list. Chair Larson stated that he would like to implement this program by May. Robertson stated he could have something back to the NRC by the next meeting and believes they are moving in the right direction. There was some discussion about how many awards to grant a year. There was also discussion about getting regular space in the North Oak News for NRC articles. The sub-committee will meet again on April 4 at 4:00 p.m.

Tick Task Force Report

Commissioner White reported on the previous meeting. He stated that they are trying to increase the number of responses to the survey which currently sits at 150. The survey will be open until the end of March to give people more time to respond. Commissioner Murphy suggested sending the survey to some of the clubs in North Oaks such as the social and garden clubs to get more responses. The task force would like to discuss the results of the survey at a community meeting in May and are trying to get Dave Neitzel from the Minnesota Department of Health to speak at the meeting.

Deer Management Report

Administrator Robertson reported 126 deer have been removed to date; 80 by trapping and 46 by sharp shooting. This is an increase of 25% over last year. Councilmember Long would like to increase the sharp shooters total next year and would like to investigate more shooting sites if homeowners are willing and have the right property for sharp shooting.

Kate Winsor Report

Commissioner Winsor reported that she submitted 3 articles for next month's North Oaks News. The first article will be Weed of the Month on Japanese Barberry and its connection with Lyme's disease; the second on pollinators; and the third on Earth Day on April 22. She also reported that Water Day is on April 19 at the capitol and there will be a rally in the rotunda at 1:30 p.m.

City Update

Administrator Robertson reported about the Youth Involvement initiative and stated that he has spoken to the White Bear Lake superintendent about looking for interested students. He has not heard back from Totino-Grace, Mounds Park Academy or Cretin-Derham Hall. Commissioner Murphy suggested he contact St. Thomas Academy and Minnehaha Academy. Councilmember Long suggested Hill Murray and St. Paul Academy as well.

NOHOA Update

NOHOA Liaison Gorder stated that the educational seminar on shoreland stewardship has been pushed to May. She also reported on the DNR licensing and training. She stated that Steve Woods, Executive Director of the Fresh Water Society recently spoke at the Shoreview Community Center. Robertson will check into putting the talk on the community channel. She said they are working with an Eagle Scout who will take on the bat houses project and that the Merry Hill Park restoration/burn will be in April.

Other Business:

Councilmember Long reported that the DNR fishing survey will be held again this year. Chair Larson read a thank you card he received from the Nelsons thanking the commissioners for addressing their concerns about beaver trapping.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Murphy made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner White seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting ended at 8:38 p.m.

Next Meeting: April 20, 2017