

North Oaks Natural Resources Commission
NRC Meeting Minutes
Virtual Meeting
March 19, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hawkins called the meeting of March 19, 2020, to order at 7:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

NRC members participated **by telephone or other electronic means** pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13D.021. Residents can view the meeting on our cable access channel and through the website portal just like other public meetings.

Present: Present: Chair Andrew Hawkins, Vice Chair Kate Winsor, Commissioners Bob Larson, Damien LePoutre, and David White; City Council Liaison Council Member Katy Ross
Staff Present: Recording Secretary Gretchen Needham and City Administrator Kevin Kress
Others Present: Videographer – Maureen Anderson.
A quorum was declared present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Larson, seconded by Winsor, to approve the agenda as submitted.
MOTION carried unanimously by roll call.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES

MOTION by Larson, seconded by LePoutre, to approve the minutes as submitted.
MOTION carried unanimously by roll call.

NEW BUSINESS

1. EAB Report from City Forester Mark Rehder

- In terms of emerald ash borer, proactively removing trees will continue, and treatment is an option for some trees if some residents are interested. The southern part of North Oaks, (Robb Farm around Gilfillan Lake over to the entrance, Evergreen Lane and Evergreen Road, and the bottom of Pleasant Lake) has the most ash trees; another dense ash tree area is near Nord Circle. Forester Rehder is drafting a letter that can be sent to residents in those areas to make them aware of EAB treatment and tree removal efforts in the City.
- Commissioner LePoutre mentioned that treatment efforts are more effective in the first and second year of infection; he would recommend that inspections focus on these early years of EAB infestation.
- Vice Chair Winsor suggested that the average cost of treatment be mentioned in the letter to residents. Forester Rehder said that the price depends on the diameter of the tree (perhaps \$80 for an average-sized tree). An injection in the trunk of the tree is the recommended action for EAB treatment. Retreatment would need to be done every two years.
- Liaison Ross is aware of some trees costing hundreds of dollars to treat.
- Some trees were taken down by the pump house and near Robb Farm Road a few years ago. Administrator Kress asked if other communities provide financial assistance to residents for ash

tree treatment and/or removal, and Forester Rehder does not know of any; he feels the money is better spent by the City toward inspections and reforestation.

- Vice Chair Winsor mentioned replanting help by Tree Trust as a possibility for the City to look into.
- Forester Rehder will have a draft of the letter for residents at next month's NRC meeting for review.

2. Review of Natural Resource Commission Ordinance and Resolution

- Staff and the City Attorney reviewed the existing resolution and decided it should instead be an ordinance; term limits, as they are presently outlined, are difficult to tract. The proposed ordinance lists a purpose for the NRC (which is open for comments and change), how many members, voting rights, and term limits.
- Chair Hawkins suggested the mission statement that was adopted last July by the NRC be worked into the ordinance language.
- Vice Chair Winsor thought it best for the NRC to recommend who should be Chair and Vice Chair to the Council; Administrator Kress concurred. Member LePoutre was also in agreement with those positions being appointed internally within the NRC.
- Member LePoutre suggested the ordinance be thought of in terms of NOHOA and NEST so they work in harmony.
- Chair Hawkins would like to have the NOHOA Liaison role spelled out in the ordinance.

MOTION by White, seconded by Winsor, to send the ordinance, amended as discussed to the Council, for approval.

MOTION carried unanimously by roll call.

3. Discussion on Tree Preservation Ordinance

- Liaison Ross gave context to the tree ordinance efforts of the past, mentioning that there was some push back from residents concerned that it was too restrictive.
- Member LePoutre suggested now may be a good time to reconsider such an ordinance, especially in light of the East Oaks development and the clear cutting that has happened at some properties when preparing a lot for a new home. Vice Chair Winsor said the main impetus for the NRC's earlier attempt to draft this ordinance was to prevent clear cutting.
- Chair Hawkins would like to hold a public hearing at a future NRC meeting to garner public input. Administrator Kress agrees, but given the difficulty of meeting publicly at the moment due to the pandemic, that aspect may have to be postponed.
- A subcommittee will be formed to formalize language for a tree ordinance; Member LePoutre was interested in being considered for the subcommittee.

MOTION by Hawkins, seconded by White, to create a subcommittee chaired by Member LePoutre to investigate and draft a tree ordinance.

MOTION carried unanimously by roll call.

4. Review Draft Coyote Management Plan

MOTION by Hawkins, seconded by LePoutre, to table the Coyote Management Plan until the next meeting.

MOTION carried unanimously by roll call.

5. Review of NRC Vacancies and Process for Filing

This process was approved by the City Council in January of this year. There are currently two openings of the seven on the NRC. The application for the NRC position is posted to the City website, and will also be published in both the Shoreview Press and the North Oaks News.

- Chair Hawkins asked if NOHOA might be willing to post the opening on their e-blast, and Administrator Kress said he would find out.

6. Updates

- Movie Night Update: The movie on Mar. 4 had about 40 people in attendance; the boy scouts handed out seeds, and some seeds were leftover and can be used at future event. The City cost for this event was \$252. Movie night could become an annual event.
- Website Updates: The City's website information about NRC is now consistent.
- VLAWMO Sedimentary Updates: \$2000 from the City has been requested for this study. Administrator Kress can provide reading material to the Commission on this topic if they would like it.

7. Discussion on Earth Day Activities

People will be encouraged, mostly through the North Oaks News, to do clean ups. Earth Day is Apr. 18.

8. Discussion on Table Activities for Garden Club Spring Plant Sale

Member Larson has information that can be given out at the Spring Plant Sale, including seedlings, tattoos, and seed bombs. Vice Chair Winsor volunteered to secure a table for the NRC at the event (providing it takes place).

TICK TASK FORCE REPORT

Member White mentioned that the Polco survey is still open for the Tick Task Force Survey. Vice Chair Winsor wanted to make sure that treatment for ticks is in line with Pollinator Resolution; Forester Rehder will look into that.

KATE WINSOR'S REPORT

Vice Chair Winsor submitted an article to the North Oaks News about "lawns to legumes," promoting pollinator friendly habitats.

CITY UPDATE

Administrator Kress and City Staff have been very busy keeping on top of City business while working remotely during the COVID-19 crisis. At their last meeting, Council reviewed the Seventh Amendment of the PDA; the Council passed a resolution that 174 units and 5.73 commercial acreage are left for North Oaks Company to develop.

NOHOA/NEST REPORT

No report from Forester Rehder

MISCELLANEOUS

The next meeting of the Natural Resources Commission is scheduled for Thursday, April 16, 2020.

ADJOURN:

MOTION by Hawkins, seconded by White, to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 p.m.

MOTION carried unanimously by roll call.

Kevin Kress, City Administrator

Chair, Andrew Hawkins

Date approved _____