

Natural Resources Commission Minutes

July 20, 2017

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, Dan McDermott (via conference call), Kate Winsor, John Murphy, and NOHOA Liaison Diane Gorder. City Council Liaison Marty Long arrived at 7:35pm.

Absent: None.

Staff: City Administrator Mike Robertson, Administrative Clerk Kathy Laur, Recording Secretary Gretchen Needham.

Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Murphy moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner White seconded.

Motion approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes:

Liaison Gorder moved to approve the June 2017 minutes. Commissioner Winsor seconded.

Motion approved unanimously.

Conservation Award Committee Report

Clerk Laur provided samples of award certificates, and there was a discussion of the wording and designs. Clerk Laur will bring another round of design drafts to the next meeting.

Tick Task Force

Administrator Robertson said there will probably be another organized brush pick up in the fall. Commissioner Winsor mentioned that contractors doing work in the City should alert their workers to check for ticks.

Complaints have been coming in about aggressive turkeys. Commissioner Winsor suggested data be collected on how many turkeys are in North Oaks and what population is healthy to maintain. Administrator Robertson said he'd asked that question of the DNR and they really didn't have an answer. He said the Council will decide whether to remove any turkeys.

NRC will make an appearance at Farm Fest on September 10.

Kate Winsor's Report

Weed of the month for August is common burdock; an article has been submitted to the North Oaks News.

Half-Year Budget Report

Administrator Robertson reviewed the budget. \$6500 is available for the NRC and only a few hundred dollars have been spent so far for tree seedlings.

Discussion of Water Quality

The City Council asked the NRC to review water quality in North Oaks. Council Liaison Long said that VLAWMO will begin a campaign encouraging people to plant buffer strips along shorelines. Robertson said he would ask VLAWMO whether water quality has improved in North Oaks over the last few years.

Discussion of Goats

Administrator Robertson had a resident call about permission to have goats on their property to manage invasive weeds. He said he would treat the goats as a temporary contractor not as a farm animal. Council asked the NRC's opinion on this interpretation. Commissioner McDermott asked if there were any liability issues if the goats get ill or die while in North Oaks; Robertson did not think this would be a problem. Others noted that the DNR has encouraged the use of goats.

City Update

Administrator Robertson said the Hot Dog with a Deputy event was a great success. The Ramsey County Sheriff's department would love to collaborate with further cities to draw more people. As an example the City of Vadnais Heights held an ice cream social in conjunction with their Deputy event. On a less positive note, there has been an uptick in car break-ins, package thefts, and trespassing. Gates and/or cameras at the entrances are being discussed.

NOHOA/NEST Update

Commissioner Gorder talked about the phenology workshop that took place on July 19; the presentation was recorded and it will be available on CD, NRC's Facebook page, NOHOA's website, and on Channel 16. A follow-up workshop will be planned.

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is a growing concern and articles about this will be in August's North Oaks News. It costs \$8 per inch diameter of the tree to inject an ash tree with insecticide.

Purple loosestrife could be inventoried; beetles that attack the plants are available at a cost of \$500. Commissioner suggested the NRC, City, and North Oaks Company all chip in funds for something like this.

Other Business:

None

Adjournment:

Commissioner Gorder made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Long seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting ended at 8:30pm.

Next Meeting: August 17, 2017