

North Oaks Natural Resources Commission
NRC Meeting Minutes
Virtual Meeting via Teleconference or Electronic Means Only
September 17, 2020 at 7 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hawkins called the meeting of September 17, 2020, to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

NRC members participated **by telephone or other electronic means** pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13D.021.

Present: Present: Chair Andrew Hawkins, Vice Chair Kate Winsor, Commissioners Bob Larson, Damien LePoutre, and David White; City Council Liaison Council Member Kara Ries; NOHOA Liaison Patricia Orud; City Forester Mark Rehder; Guest Speaker Wes Saunders-Pearce
Staff Present: Recording Secretary Gretchen Needham and City Administrator Kevin Kress
A quorum was declared present.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Larson, seconded by White, to approve the agenda as submitted.

MOTION carried unanimously by roll call.

4. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES

MOTION by Winsor, seconded by Hawkins, to approve the minutes with the following corrections: Under 6C, "Pollinator Resolution Report," the language needs to be fixed to reflect that it is the Pollinator Resolution Report; 7B, Community Outreach, language should be changed to "an article about Common Burdock was submitted to the North Oaks News as suggested by resident Joan Brainard;" 6B: word is "role", not "roll." MOTION carried unanimously by roll call.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

6. NEW BUSINESS

6A. Presentation by Wes Saunders-Pearce: Quantifying and Comparing the Resiliency of Stormwater

- How can a municipality manage rainwater as a resource for its community? We know precipitation is increasing; how can we do more than simply divert rainwater? An alternative to the traditional approach is to create a corridor for stormwater management above ground versus containment and diversion underground, for example. Hidden Falls Headwaters, a project at the old Ford plant site in downtown St. Paul, was used as a model. Five broad assessment themes (stormwater management, restoration, life cycle costs, sustainability, and community benefits) were examined. A software tool can be used to capture the costs and value benefits of a specific project; a cost and benefit summary can be calculated. Social and environmental impacts can be monetized.

6B. Discussion on pesticides/insect control

- How can we best manage and live with insects in North Oaks in an environmentally friendly way? Vice Chair Winsor lead a discussion about concerns of broad pesticide use in our community. Pollinator and non-target species can be negatively effected by spraying a yard with mosquito repelling chemicals. Education of the public should be the first step. Commissioner White asked if there was an ordinance already in place in North Oaks to cover this subject. City Administrator Kress doesn't know of any current ordinance; Liaison Orud mentioned that the Tick Task Force has a position on spraying for ticks. She suggested approaching NOHOA to join in the education campaign and to then suggest limitations to the chemical applications, and reaching out to the Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization (VLAWMO) for their assistance, as well. Chair Winsor suggested a subcommittee to investigate the matter and promote education in the community.

MOTION by White, seconded by Hawkins, to create a subcommittee, led by Chair Winsor, to investigate insecticide/pesticide use in North Oaks and create an education campaign for best practices for environmentally friendly insecticide/pesticide use in North Oaks.

MOTION carried unanimously by roll call.

6C. Follow up—Goose Population Management

- Mark Rehder spoke with Scott Nolan, who works with the MN DNR, about best practices for managing the goose population. First steps are to demonstrate where the issue is; a survey can be conducted (how many nests/eggs); receiving calls from residents and documentation complaints; establishing whether or not there is a problem. Lethal methods can also be used with state and federal permits, and that would require a public hearing. Two homes that had registered complaints were contacted by Forester Rehder with ideas for how to discourage geese from habituating on their property. Liaison Orud said NOHOA is gathering data on the impact of geese on the beach and surrounding areas at Pleasant Lake. Vice Chair Winsor recommended that the previous meeting minutes were checked to make sure homeowners were given what the NRC said they would; Chair Hawkins will work with Administrator Kress offline to check the minutes.

The issue has been tabled.

6D. Discussion on conservation award submission

- The proposed award recipient's lot was discussed. A site visit will be conducted by Chair Hawkins and Commissioner Lepoutre.

7. COMMISSIONER / STAFF REPORTS

7A. Tick Task Force Report: David White

- Commissioner White will have a report at the next NRC meeting.

7B. Community Outreach: Winsor Report

- Nick Voss of VLAWMO would like to do a follow-up survey on the movie night.
- The pollinator conservation award winner award will be submitted to the North Oaks News.

7C. NOHOA/ NEST Report: Patricia Orud

- Last month was Water Quality Month. Dawn Tanner of VLAWMO said the water quality is quite good in North Oaks.

7D. City Forester Report: Mark Rehder

- The weed harvesting in Pleasant Lake took place in August. About 50 acres were covered. Curly leaf pondweed is the weed that was most targeted for removal.
- Oak wilt is being watched and sick trees are being marked. The emerald ash borer letter is getting good results from residents contacting the Forester. Burr oak blight is a condition people should be aware of; Forester Rehder is going to send an article to the North Oaks News about this.
- The oriental bittersweet project has gone well; more funds may be available for next year.
- An invasive species inventory will be ready in October.

7E. VLAWMO Tech. Report

- Commissioner Larson spoke about the recent VLAWMO meeting where they discussed a stewardship program for children, a proposed carp reduction project for Pleasant Lake, and cost analysis of their organization.

7F. City Report

- Council approved the new fire station land purchase. The 2021 budget levy was approved. The new website is being worked on.

Commissioner Lepoutre asked if the NRC could be helpful in the current development process going through the Planning Commission and City Council. The NRC has not been officially asked to weigh in on environmental questions related to the development. Chair Hawkins reached out to Planning Commission Chair Azman a few months ago but has not yet received a response.

8. NEXT MEETING: Thursday, October 15, 2020 at 7 p.m. through Virtual Means

ADJOURN:

MOTION by Larson, seconded by White, to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 p.m.

MOTION carried unanimously by roll call.

Kevin Kress

Kevin Kress, City Administrator

Andrew Hawkins

Chair, Andrew Hawkins

Date approved October 15, 2020