

CITY OF PROSPECT HEIGHTS
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
August 11, 2022

Present: Agnes Wojnarski, Chairperson Seth Marcus
 Peter Hahn Jill E. Moskal, Recording Secretary
 John Kamysz Dana Sievertson
 Ed Madden

Guest: Peter Falcone, Assistant City Administrator

NOTE: Meeting held virtually via Zoom. Meeting ID: 893 2675 6414

OPENING ITEMS

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Central Time by Agnes Wojnarski.

Roll Call

Roll Call proceeded. All Commissioners were present; therefore, a quorum was present.

Meeting Minutes of Regular Meeting of July 14, 2022

The minutes of the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission Board Meeting of July 14, 2022, were reviewed. No changes or corrections were noted. Therefore, the meeting minutes of July 14, 2022 were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Volunteer Workdays

Our volunteer workday planned for July 24, 2022 at the ComEd Seeded prairie was cancelled. On Friday and Saturday, July 22 and 23, 2.5" of rain fell, and the July 24 weather forecast included the threat of ongoing thunderstorms. Therefore, it was impossible to conduct a productive workday with everything super wet, super heavy, and close to impossible to clip Canada Goldenrod. A make-up workday was held on July 31 where volunteers planted aquatic plants in the Shoreline Restoration Area of Hillcrest Lake.

Our volunteer workday planned for August 7, 2022 at Pollinator Park was cancelled due to too much water. Rain was forecasted past 2:00 pm. Planting the plants remains a critical need.

A make-up volunteer workday is planned for August 14, 2022 at Hillcrest Lake to plant the new section of the shoreline restoration and finishing the deck with prairie species at the first planting. Dana will drill holes for the plantings and redistribute soil by the coconut rolls. Further, plants on the shoreline will be watered, including an Oak Tree planting.

Our regularly scheduled workday for Sunday, August 21 will be conducted at the Slough where the sedges may be easily planted within dry conditions by the Boardwalk.

2022 Interns

Our summer internship will close for the season on Wednesday, August 10, 2022 where the traditional prairie visits will take place at the Nachusa Grasslands and Bluff Spring Fen. Lunch is included for our farewell day with Evie and Eric. All Commissioners are invited to attend.

Our 2022 summer interns, Evie and Eric, are extraordinary people. The whole time they worked for us they were never on their iPhones, had a voracious appetite for information and knowledge, and cleaned up after the workday. Evie and Eric simply wanted to complete the work at our work sites. They were a real pleasure and leave a huge void.

The educational component of the internship is unparalleled, providing a tremendous amount of information and a teaching technique that keeps our interns interested, involved, and educated. Our sincere appreciation to Agnes and Dana for their dedication.

Prospect Heights Public Library/Park District Events

Nature Speaks Program

The Fall Nature Speaks Program will be conducted on October 20, 2022 from 7:00 – 8:30 pm via a zoom presentation by Dan Jaffe Wilder on “Kill Your Lawn.” In his presentation, Dan Jaffe Wilder will talk about the various options available from whole lawn replacement to strategies for reducing inputs and increasing ecological value.”

Dan Jaffe Wilder is an ecologist, horticulturist and botanist with over 15 years’ experience working with native plants and their associated ecology. His work has ranged from classrooms to nurseries to botanical gardens to wildlife refuges specializing in native plant ecology, propagation, wildlife habitat construction and native edible landscapes.

Dan is currently the Director of Applied Ecology for the Norcross Wildlife Foundation whose mission is to protect, enhance and expand wildlife through conservation, education and support. A prolific photographer and author, Dan’s book “Native Plants for New England Gardens” was released in 2018.

Dana spoke with Kevin Grevenau, a friend of John’s, to present on hydrology and the water shed. Kevin is a Dam Engineer with the Federal Government and can educate us on water flow and how it works. Dana sent Kevin dates, and we are awaiting his decision.

The third Nature Speaks Program slot may be filled with a presentation by the beekeeper, Grace Hart, Aveole Urban Beekeeper.

Fall Bird Walks

The Fall Bird Walks are scheduled for Saturday, September 17 from 7:30-9:30 a.m. and October 8, 2022. The Bird Walks will be conducted by Mary Lou Mellon of the Bird Conservation Network. The first Fall Bird Walk will kick-off Illinois Prairie Week.

Prospect Heights Park District Summer Camp

PHNRC conducted Summer Camp on Tuesday, August 9 in the morning. Commissioners said it was fun to see the kids, who were a bundle of energy with short attention spans but well behaved. The kids were definitely interested in the Skins and Skulls station and the Creek Observations.

The length of the Summer Camp (three hours) was sufficient. Many kids were engaged in the first half and did not want to go to the next station. The Nature Walk showed the children's knowledge of Monarch Butterflies and mentioned that their mom or Dad or family had Milkweed growing in their garden at home or raising butterflies.

For Summer Camp 2023, the PHNRC must meet with the Park District to craft a plan for organized group size at each station and starting in a timely fashion. Also, meeting with the Camp Counselors either the day before or of the Summer Camp to review the plan is necessary.

District 214: Buffalo Grove Prairie Update

The Buffalo Grove Prairie is looking great. The students are engaged, tracking watering, and the completed crabgrass treatment worked well. When the students return for the 2022-2023 school year, another planting will be conducted. The students are excited about their prairie project.

Slough Boardwalk Project

The current Google Map that Agnes snagged and sent with a recent Monitoring Report shows a little sign next to the Izaak Walton Pavilion that states: "Busier than usual." Also, you can clearly see the two sections of the Boardwalk and where we beat back the cattails, opening a clear line of sight and an area to plant warrior sedges.

This is the last year of the Grant with a report due on December 31, 2022. Finishing touches to the project include planting the sedges, remove cattails where we want to reclaim planting areas and signage.

A company resource called Blue Raven offers a mount to place over a pole allowing placement of a sign in a preferred location and at any angle. It allows us to use the existing poles.

The budget has \$2,031.31 remaining, which will cover signage and other incidentals.

Status of the Plum Trees: Pete Hahn reported that two weeks' ago, the Plum Trees were dry. However, since then, we have experienced good rainfall.

The Plum Trees look very good with only two or three that have been set back. However, they will make it and are starting to sprout from the bottom. One Plum Tree had three plumbs. The Plum Trees must be kept moist and mulched. These are key actions for the first year. The trees will be watered late on Sunday because the van is needed to transport plants to the worksite for the volunteer workday.

Plum Trees planted in shade do better than those trees planted in full sun.

Pete trimmed back Virginia Creeper, buckthorn resprouts and poison ivy from the base of the trees. This maintenance must be done or else the trees will be lost.

Much appreciation to Pete Hahn for caring for the Plum Trees.

Pollinator Park Update and Shoreline Restoration Project

John reported that all previously planted areas are doing wonderfully! Beautiful pleasure to walk through it. A lot of traffic is seen on the grass trails. Doing great!

Preparation of the shoreline area on the west side of the Lake has begun. A tremendous amount of back-breaking work was accomplished by Dana, Seth, Bruce Haer (a volunteer), and the interns. Volunteer workdays accomplished planting half of the tiers, and remaining areas will soon be planted.

Considering the restoration was done under water with a lot of rain inhibited it, it is holding together and looking good. A nice new section of the shoreline has come together.

Dana commented that the pilot program was installed on dry land. All other areas are under water. Therefore, Dana recommends starting with a 16" core log and not a 12" core log. The first base line is bigger, taller and provides more stability. The Lake has been low all summer long, and the one week we start doing the restoration it rains placing everything is under water. A 16" core log will get us out a bit further, which other areas need where it is thin and not much to work with. The north corner has 2' of land and then road. We must add real estate in this area.

Path Maintenance at Worksite

The Slough Boardwalk and the rest of the Slough paths are almost constantly overgrown and a bit difficult to walk through. These areas need to be cut back to allow easy passage. Once the big projects are done – Shoreline Restoration and planting in the Board Walk area – the Wednesday retiree group will clear the trails. There is too much to currently accomplish at the worksites.

The Heron Pond path is in the same condition. One must beat the growth to get through. All plantings are high and over one's head. The path needs attention at a future volunteer workday. We must concentrate on Heron Pond because we have had limited work at Heron Pond.

Seth inquired of a tool that is similar to a lawn mower as opposed to a string trimmer. It would be faster. Is there a suitable machine? John mentioned a battery-powered hedge trimmer, which can be effectively used as you walk along one foot off the Board Walk, moving from side to side. However, what is growing through the Board Walk requires a string trimmer for a close trim. Peter uses a hand hedge trimmer.

Seed/Greenhouse Program

Agnes reported that Transplanting Wednesdays has concluded, and we will concentrate on seed collection. Transplanting plants from the summer trays must be accomplished, but not many are remaining. We have a lot of plants!

Seed Giveaways

The River Trails Park District was very appreciative to receive 100 Prairie in a Packet envelopes for their seed giveaway. Their event is scheduled for next week, and they have 100 seed packets to give away. It was nice we could help them out.

Illinois Prairie Week (September 19 – 23, 2022)

An e:News Blast will be produced with an outline of events and maps for Illinois Prairie Week activities and run from Sept 17 to Sept 21.

Sept 17 (Saturday) Fall Bird Walk – Mary Lou Mellon, Bird Conservation Network
7:30-9:30 a.m.

Sept 21 (Wednesday) History of the ComEd Seeded Prairie – Dana and Agnes
9:00-10:30 a.m. The presentation will center on how it was created, the pitfalls, great results and unexpected outcomes.

Sept 21 (Wednesday) Special Seed Collection Wednesday at the ComEd Seeded Prairie
5:30 p.m. to Dusk

Sept 24 (Saturday) Pop Up Art Sale at Izaak Walton Pavilion – Sunflower Group with
10:00am – 4:00 pm assistance from the PHNRC

The History of the Slough will be presented via a Tour on September 14 starting 5:30 p.m.

MacArthur Middle School Prairie

Agnes will meet with the Principal of MacArthur Middle School and Stephanie Ritter, Science Teacher, on August 12, 2022 at 9:00 am for 30 minutes. This is a preliminary meeting to discuss the possibility of creating a prairie on school grounds and, if so, where it would be created.

NEW BUSINESS

Note of Appreciation

Sincere appreciation to Patrick Colvin who, two to three weeks' ago, started the video tours. The Slough has been videotaped and sent out to review. Very cool!

Seed Collection Wednesdays

Seed Collection Wednesdays will begin on August 24 and run through October 26, 2022 or into early November from 5:00 or 5:30 p.m. until dusk.

Prescribed Burns

Dana has contacted Floyd McKinney to submit a new burn permit which, when approved, will be effective for one year. Next meeting, Dana will speak about burns, where to burn, what and why.

Treasurer's Report

John Kamysz provided Commissioners with an updated copy of our City of Prospect Heights FY2022-23 NRC Budget, which was supplied by Peter Falcone and includes the Capital Budget for shoreline restoration. John stated that Dana has held discussions with the Park District about corrections to our budget for Pollinator Park.

Current funding is at \$20,185; supply expenses are at \$4,131 plus change.

In viewing the Intern expense, the interns worked 400 hours and not 408 hours. The Social Security and Medicare contributions were added to the Intern expenses, similar to adding their salary to our budget. It does not appear that Social Security and Medicare expenses were subtracted from Intern pay.

Peter Falcone's records show that the Interns worked 408 hours in 10 weeks. Were they paid for July 4? Peter will check. Agnes said the interns started on a Wednesday and ended their internship on a Wednesday. Also, they should not be paid for July 4.

Peter Falcone explained that Social Security and Medicare is added to the gross wages. For 408 hours at \$15.00 per hour wage, 7.65% that the city pays for Social Security and Medicare must be added. The interns are considered city employees; therefore, they receive this benefit, which is a city cost.

For the 2023 budget, we must factor the interns hourly wage and the Social Security and Medicare amount that the city incurs and pays. These two benefits and costs are not deducted from the intern's paycheck. The city's cost for the interns' Social Security and Medicare was \$468.18.

Dana said going forward, we will need to consider an hourly wage of \$16.00 for the interns for regular pay and the city's Social Security and Medicare contributions. This is a true cost to the city. We are short \$2,000. We also went from \$11 to \$15 per hour per intern.

Peter suggested speaking with Joe Wade to see if the city would consider donating the cost differential. Peter explained that this practice has been since the beginning, and he is positive it was in our budget last year.

John said that our Net Revenue is down to almost \$2,900. We were expecting it to be around \$4,000 without the Social Security and Medicare benefits/cost. Peter may find one day of wages for each intern credited to us if they were paid on July 4.

Shoreline Project Budget: We are in the hole. We spent the \$6,000 plus a bit more. When requested funding and received funding for this project, no allowance for increased prices, inflation and supply chain problems was planned. Since then, prices have risen, so things cost more.

Is there any flexibility with the budgeted number for the Shoreline Project? If over \$1,000, any flexibility for distribution of funds? Peter said we requested \$36,000 over 6 years so \$6,000 per year, and this was budgeted for the capital plan. John stated we are compiling the remaining figures, and there was extra money on equipment to finish the job.

Peter said we are treated like a department even though we are not a department; therefore, we are provided leeway. Peter will see if the Council may front \$1,000 from the capital budget. Peter needs the final figures on how much we are over budget.

John said some years will cost more; some less due to the size of the shoreline that is restored each year. This year the desperate side of the shoreline was restored, which is larger than other portions of the shoreline. However, if we spend less than \$6,000, we will not get the extra funds back.

Dana said when we started planning the project budget, he approached Hayes and asked for a price estimate for 6 years plus add 10% every single year to the cost of the year before. If look at 5 years, more than 10% than started out. In two years, ready to order materials, and they are already at year 2 level re: cost increase. We had the mega transport problem of \$1,700 plus 20% price increase on materials. Don't know how to predict it. Don't know the cost of materials next year; will have to receive a fresh quote.

When we start planning for the next phase, go back and get new quotes. The budgeted amount of \$6,000 may not be adequate; maybe \$7,500. You may go over the \$36,000, which the Council would have to approve the overage.

Commissioners' Site Reports

ComEd Seeded Prairie (Dana Sievertson)

Dana provided the Stantec :Prairie Standardization Plan for ComEd Landholdings, Appendix A 2021 on the ComEd Seeded Prairie as received by Sara Race on August 8, 2022. The report is in

depth and amazing! The woody species mention is Callery Pear infestation we had until this spring when Stantec mowed them and the interns herbicided. This year's report will be published at the end of this year. With the Callery Pears eliminated and the increase of natives and pollinators, the scores can only be higher. We will receive the reports going forward.

The prairie continues to mature with the far west end leading the way. On a recent visit, we saw two Teasel plants. That was it. We are still heavy with Canada Goldenrod in areas. The workday we planned to clip the Canada Goldenrod was rained out. Therefore, Dana recommends that we get in as soon as the shoreline restoration is complete and clip. Our last clip fest was two years ago and really impacted the makeup of the prairie

The Sienna has come and gone, and it was a beautiful show and an amazing attractor of native bombus. In a week the show will be stellar with all the asters kicking in. Butterflies are everywhere, and the red wing blackbirds are gone for the season.

We still have far too many Eurasian grasses. We need to do all the lobbying we can to get the ComEd Seeded Prairie burned this year and seed with native grasses. I would also like to see the start of the development in the triangle area at Elmhurst Road. It should be as nice as the Izaak Walton sign area.

Heron Pond (John Kamysz)

John reported that the Herod Pond trails were very overgrown. Most grasses tower over your head with a mix of natives and invasive species. The peninsula is essentially impassable aside from our trail, which needs manicuring.

Hillcrest Lake/Pollinator Park Project

John reported that our planted prairies are thriving this year, looking beautiful and strong.

The Shoreline Restoration Project went quickly with the relentless pounding of Dana, Seth, our interns and volunteer crew. Nice work to all!

The Lake water rose, again, to the first level, but is receding. We will need to plant the second half and herbicide areas above.

Nature Preserve (Gary Morava) (Pete Hahn)

Pete reported that the Nature Preserve is looking good. The trails are trimmed neatly and are being maintained.

The steppingstones have been leveled, thanks to the interns and Dana.

Pete noted more tree branches are down, and several trees need to be either removed or trimmed.

In summary, the Nature Preserve is a good place to walk and observe nature.

Remnant Prairie (Seth Marcus)

Seth inquired of the detailed report that ComEd produced for the ComEd Seeded Prairie and whether it could have included the Remnant Prairie and Remnant Sedge Meadow. The Report for the Seeded Prairie was prepared by request from Sara Race and was created on the day of the media event and will be released later this year. ComEd has been reporting on the Seeded Prairie since we started the project.

Dana will ask Sara for the cost of including reporting on the Remnant Prairie and Remnant Sedge Meadow. Dana said ComEd has ownership of the land and a physical investment in the Seeded Prairie. Seth felt perhaps involving them, increasing their awareness of, improving the site, and tying it in the Remnant Prairie when reporting on the Seeded Prairie may peak ComEd's interest, too.

Agnes said the Remnant Prairie was assessed ecologically at the very beginning and was graded as a D Prairie. Therefore, to conduct a full assessment may not be of value. The report carries a cost. If we slowly interest them in our restoration work and have an onsite evaluation to see our progress, there are steps toward this goal. The Seeded Prairie is a greater investment because it is a success, has community involvement, the grant, etc.

Agnes said ComEd is aware of all three of the sites, and it is not in great shape; therefore, maintaining a degraded prairie is not feasible. It has always been our plan to improve all three sites, but time and resources are lacking. We must prioritize the level of work to be accomplished at all our sites.

Agnes said ComEd utilizes a grading scale as a guideline. They, too, have limited resources. If we were to pour all our resources into it and bump the grade to a B or C Grade Prairie, perhaps they may step forward.

Agnes said that ComEd has brush cut the Remnant Prairie twice but never brush cut the Sedge Meadow. We could request ComEd to burn the Remnant Prairie and cut woody vegetation at the Remnant Sedge Meadow. However, we must follow-up with herbicide or the work is for naught.

Dana said there are too many invasives and not enough days and resources to accomplish all that is necessary. However, the big projects are in hand and winding down; therefore, we will soon return to a more normal workflow. It is unprecedented to have received four Grants and back-to-back and to have performed on all of them. We are doing a good job, but until we digest this, we cannot see it happening until next year.

Agnes said we will step back on the plants. We have picked up the main gist of it, but it also diverted our time from managing invasives. Invasive control is always a No. 1 Priority. Our basic invasives control is Peter! He's the guy with the license and backpack. We must do more of the April and May sessions by addressing the invasives when they are just starting to sprout. We need people who are trained and licensed, and we need time.

Remnant Sedge Meadow (Jill Moskal)

The Remnant Sedge Meadow has 15 diverse types of sedges (Carex), such as Bulrush, Soft-Stemmed Bulrush, Dark Green Bullrush and Nodding Bulrush. Dudley's Rush and Spike Rush are present. Unfortunately, we cannot confirm the quantity of sedge growing and/or available for seed due to current weather conditions, timing, Red-Winged Blackbird presence and late in the season.

As mentioned last time, plenty of invasive wood species, like Dogwood, and invasives, such as Queen Ann's Lace, are present.

The interns spent a weekday workday at the Sedge Meadow herbiciding Teasel, Canada Thistle, and a few woody species.

Saint Alphonsus (Ed Madden)

Ed reported that there was not much to report out of the ordinary at the St. Alphonsus prairie as it continues to do well with its visually pleasing flowering plants gently swaying back and forth in the cool afternoon breeze.

Slough (Agnes Wojnarski)

The Slough looks great in some places and quite messy in others (especially along Hillside Ave). I think we should herbicide certain very bad areas overrun by invasives and seed in the fall/winter. Other areas along Hillside should maybe get a nice planting next spring/summer.

The area cleared from cattails by the boardwalk looks great. Sedges are really coming in, as well as some new additions such as chair makers rush and the swamp mallow.

The trails are getting heavy use and many new people comment about finding a great treasure they didn't know was here.

Tully Park (Wendy Dewar)

The meditation garden has been planted with 19 flowering plum trees and various grasses, such as woodland fescue, several woodland ryes and common wood reed. The short path and bench area have been mulched. Wendy is appreciative of the Park District for providing mulch and for Mary Ellen and Rod Siemens for spreading it. The bench is in progress.

Currently blooming are monarda, Joe Pye weed, fleabane, boneset, golden rod (some good and some of the bad), thimble flowers, obedient plant, cardinal flower, tall blue bell flower, tall coreopsis, purple cone flower, iron weed, Wintermint, and lots of Brown-eyed Susan. Sadly, Wendy has seen only one monarch to date. Milk weed has not bloomed, but Wendy has seen no evidence of monarchs munching the leaves.

Also, Tully Park has snapping turtle eggs buried on the far side by the home of Mary Ellen and Rod Siemens. Wendy has flagged the area and placed the table over it. The eggs should hatch mid-August.

Efforts are continuous to cut and poison buckthorn when the weather allows. The hot temperatures have prevented a lot of this as the herbicide cannot be used with hot temperatures.

City Civic Meetings and PHNRC Representation

Jill highlighted notes from the following July 2022 City Council and PHPD Board meetings:

City Council Hybrid Workshop Meeting – July 11, 2022

STAFF, ELECTED OFFICIALS, AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Elected Officials and staff commented positively on the Independence Day parade. Special appreciation was given to the Police Department, Public Works Department and Fire District for their and participation, as well as the Lions Club for helping to handle traffic. St. Alphonsus and District 23 for providing the staging and completion areas for the parade; and all of the participants.

City Council Regular Hybrid Meeting – July 25, 2022

The Arlington Countryside Sewer Storm Water Project has made good strides forward. Pipes have been laid from the creek to Rand Road. An additional steel casing has been installed under Rand Road with 2,600 feet of pipe installed to date. Next phase is laying pipe down Forest Avenue to complete about 1700 feet of the Project. Excavation on Forest Avenue for the lift station has begun. The project is on track.

Mark Roscoe, Public Works, stated that the NRC has been working on the Shoreline Stabilization Project on Hillcrest Lake. The objective is to work on the Project Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Shoreline restoration by Hill Court was completed last year and has made a huge difference. Mark said this is a great project.

Next Meetings: A City Council Workshop Meeting will not be held on Monday, August 8, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. The City Council Regular Meeting will be held Monday, August 22, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

Prospect Heights Park District – Board Meeting of July 26, 2022

I was unable to attend the July 26 PHPD Board Meeting. Therefore, the information presented is directly from the Board materials packet.

During the June 28 PHPD Board Meeting, a discussion was held regarding the **potential referendum** and its tax impact to residents. Therefore, Frank Parisi of Williams Architects and Bob Lewis, PMA Financial, attended the July 26 PHPD Board Meeting.

OFFICIAL BALLOT PROPOSITION TO ISSUE \$30,000,000 PARK BONDS
(INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS: Mark a cross (X) in the space opposite the word indicating the way you desire to vote.) Shall the Prospect Heights Park District, Cook County, Illinois, improve, equip and maintain facilities at Lions Park, including replacing the recreation center and the

outdoor swimming pool, reconfiguring tennis courts for tennis, pickleball and basketball and replacing the playground, improve, equip and maintain other parks and park facilities and issue its bonds to the amount of \$30,000,000 for the purpose of paying the costs thereof? YES NO (Back of Paper Ballot) OFFICIAL BALLOT Official ballot for voting on the proposition to issue Park Bonds of the Prospect Heights Park District, Cook County, Illinois, at the general election held on November 8, 2022

A PHPD Board Member Parks Tour via bus is planned for September 2022 and starting at 5:00 p.m. on the given date.

214 Wheeling Road/Tully Park Update: The appraisal of the property has been completed. The intergovernmental agreement will be developed soon, and demolition should occur next year.

BEEHIVE INSTALLATION: ComEd had two honeybee hive installations on July 14th behind Country Garden Park, near the “ComEd Prairie”. This is part of their initiative to host hives below their transmission lines to raise awareness about the urgent need to promote pollinator populations and their contributions to the ecosystem. ComEd will have beehives maintained by a professional beekeeper, ensuring the health of the colonies, and collecting the honey that will later be donated to a local food pantry for families in need. The two queen bees will reign the prairie and are expected to lay up to 2,000 eggs per day. In 2021, the ComEd Des Plaines bees produced enough honey for 120 jars of honey that ComEd donated to the Self-Help Closet & Pantry of Des Plaines. Interpretive signage will be installed soon. There will be construction fencing around them for protection.



(Beehives pictured on July 14, 2022)

IZAAK WALTON PARK: Shelter repairs are finished: tuckpointing, roof repairs and staining of the pavilion ceiling.

TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN: Christina Ferraro reported that in September 2020, the Park Board authorized staff to complete the application for an inventory of our park trees and a plan to manage these trees.

In January 2021, the Park Board accepted the \$11,375, reimbursable 50/50 matching grant. This is an USDA Forest Service and IDNR Urban and Community Forestry Core Grant. As part of the match requirement, staff requested a plan to plant trees. Staff also worked with The Morton Arboretum to draft a Tree Preservation Ordinance which was approved by the board on February 22, 2022. The ordinance is posted on the Park District website Parks page. This grant allowed staff to create an awareness that trees are important and there is a reasonable amount of room in our parks for future tree planting. We learned about our current tree population and its condition. The tree inventory and assessment indicated 29% of the inventoried trees require removal and it should be closer to 3-5%. We are now using the ESRI app to manage the tree inventory. With the tree management plan, we now have an outline to manage trees over the next 10 years and intend to fund trees up to \$30,000 annually initially. With so much natural and unmanaged areas on Park District properties, we received a proposed stewardship plan to help manage tree removals. It also created a tree pruning cycle, a goal to increase the number of trees in parks, and the opportunity to evaluate internal policies and procedures regarding tree removals, planting, pruning, preserving, protecting and how to manage trees during construction.

As of July 2021, we now have a memorandum of understanding with the Openlands TreeKeepers Chapter. We will soon update our current Tree for Life Program literature. Staff Recommendation Staff is requesting acceptance of the tree management plan.

Next Meeting: The next scheduled PHPD Board Meeting is Tuesday, August 23, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the Gary Morava Recreation Center on Camp McDonald Road in Prospect Heights, IL.

Announcements to the Public

None.

Visitors' Comments

No visitors were present.

OTHER BUSINESS

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission is September 8, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. Central Time.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business to come before the meeting. Therefore, the meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Jill E. Moskal, CPS
PHNRC Commissioner and Recording Secretary