

CITY OF PROSPECT HEIGHTS
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
May 9, 2024

Present: Pete Hahn Jill Moskal
 John Kamysz Dana Sievertson
 Ed Madden Agnes Wojnarski
 Seth Marcus

Guest: Peter Falcone, Assistant City Administrator

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. The majority of Commissioners were present except John Kamysz. However, a quorum was present.

Meeting Minutes of the Special Board Meeting of April 11, 2024

The minutes of the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission Special Board Meeting of April 11, 2024 were reviewed. No changes or corrections were noted. Therefore, the meeting minutes of April 11, 2024 were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Volunteer Workdays

The volunteer workday of April 14, 2024 was held at the Slough where Maple Lane turns into Marion for brush and spring cleanup. This is a slightly neglected area where volunteers will create habitat piles from an amazing number of downed trees, creating stacks of free firewood, and relining the walking trails. Hillside Avenue working from Olive and Hillside side north to Marion for invasive brush roundup.

The volunteer workday of April 28, 2024 was cancelled due to the amount of rain recently received. Activity under these conditions would cause soil disturbance. Therefore, a special volunteer workday was rescheduled to May 5 to harvest invasive garlic mustard. Heron Pond is overrun with garlic mustard!

The volunteer workday of May 12, 2024 was held at the Slough on Hillside Avenue near Zeke's Trail to plant new additions to the riparian buffer system, remove buckthorn resprouts, and remove invasive garlic mustard.

Volunteer workdays continue to be heavily attended. To date, volunteer work hours are 1,064 hours of labor.

Prospect Heights Public Library/Park District Events

Nature Speaks Program

The PHNRC presented Ten Years of Restoration in Prospect Heights for the Nature Speaks Program of April 25, 2024. An attendee at this presentation attended a workday and a Transplanting Wednesday session.

In attendance for this presentation was Beth Cornew, District Director of the Cook County Government. Ms. Cornew presented the PHNRC with a Resolution of the Board of Commissioners Cook County, Illinois, dated April 18, 2024. The Resolution recognized the PHNRC's mission of eliminating invasive species and returning open spaces in Prospect Heights, Illinois to natural splendor or prairie; restoring wildlife habitat and biodiversity; and maintaining a historically important wetland known as the Slough. These efforts assist with flood water retention, erosion control and benefit air quality. The Resolution also recognized one of the educational components of our mission known as the Nature Speaks Program, which is managed in conjunction with the Prospect Heights Public Library. The Resolution also recognized our dedicated volunteers without whom we could not provide Prospect Heights residents with an opportunity to enjoy beautiful and inspiring nature.

The Resolution was signed by Scott R. Britton, Commissioner, 14th District, and Toni Preckwinkle, President, Cook County Board of Commissioners.

Dana and Agnes have been attending a Pollinator Certification class and have spoken to a few people of their interest in being a speaker for a future Nature Speaks Program.

Dana has met with Joe Magnelli, the new Adult Programming and Outreach Coordinator for the Prospect Heights Public Library and established a rapport.

The first Spring Bird Walk was held on Saturday, May 4. The next scheduled Spring Bird Walk is Saturday, May 18, starting at 8:00 a.m. and led by Cyndi Lubecki.

Projects – Update/Status

ComEd Seeded Prairie

Dana Sievertson visited the ComEd Seeded Prairie on May 9, 2024. Dana was unable to review the entire area because the mowed turfgrass trails were standing water. The prairie, however, was bone dry! Also, the Red Wing Blackbirds were attacking, and it was raining.

Dana said you can truly tell that the prairie was not burned last year; therefore, Dana wishes to lobby our new ComEd representative and see what we may do to have a prescribed burn performed annually or, at a minimum, provide us with permission to do so. The Callery Pear trees are back in force and are becoming a feature on the west end.

Agnes suggested to Dana to speak with Mark Grassi and inquire if the Park District would consider removing the five source trees in the parkway on the east side. Dana observed groups of plant species forming in the areas where they are quite comfortable growing.

Biodiversity at the ComEd Seeded Prairie is increasing but it will be much easier to access in late summer.

Dana believes this is the year to upgrade the quadrant sampling and compare it to previous results. Dana also believes we should start to receive some effects of the Tall Golden Rod studies performed by Jess Weiss.

Dana reported a contingency of Eurasian grasses to managed.

In summary, the ComEd Seeded Prairie gets better every year!

Heron Pond

A special PHNRC volunteer workday was held at Heron Pond on May 5, 2024 to harvest invasive garlic mustard. Volunteers located seven new oak trees. John complimented volunteers on the great clean-up of tons of garlic mustard! Also, Agnes accomplished a wide area of herbiciding. The trail path was also trimmed.

Buckthorn resprouts are present on the east end and must be eliminated.

Nature Preserve (Gary Morava)

Pete Hahn visited the Nature Preserve on May 2 and applied herbicide to unwanted invasive plants on May 6, 2024. Pete reported that the walking paths need wood chips only in certain areas. The paths require trim work and log border work. The steppingstones in McDonald Creek need work, again, because they are settling and need to be adjusted. Debris and kids playing in the area have caused water flow issues at the steppingstones.

Erosion is approaching closer to the wood stairs.

Pete observed that the Nature Preserve was clean with no trash issues. Many native plants are beginning to bloom.

A new maple tree was planted, and a bench has been added near the middle of the Nature Preserve on the south side by the tennis courts.

In summary, Pete stated the Nature Preserve looks fine but just requires some work to dress things up. Pete provided photos with his Monitoring Report.

Pollinator Park and Shoreline Restoration Project

John reported that everything is coming in nicely. John has mowed the paths.

John has observed many nesting ducks and geese. John reported that dog waste pick-up has resurfaced.

John reported that Dana and he have outlined this year's Shoreline Restoration Project, and it will be the northeast end by Owen Court. However, the Lake's water depth is deep, and the drop off in this area is severe. Therefore, we must wait for the water to recede before starting work.

Remnant Prairie (Wheeling)

No Monitoring Report for May was provided.

Remnant Sedge Meadow

Jill reported on the following pertaining to the Remnant Sedge Meadow:

Earth Day Workday: The Sierra Club Northwest Cook County Chapter and PHNRC held an Earth Day Workday on Saturday, April 20, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. followed by lunch, provided by the Sierra Club, followed by comments from State politicians.

About 80% of woody invasives were removed from half of the North section of the Remnant Sedge Meadow. (Refer to the April 2024 issue of the Journal for a complete article on this successful and productive workday.

After the workday, Agnes and Eric, a former summer intern, herbicided the area cleared of buckthorn and woody species (6 hours of labor). Pete Hahn and Agnes continued the herbicide regimen on April 24, 2024.

NOTE: The Remnant Sedge Meadow has been the PHNRC's major seed source for the past 10 years for our restoration sites.

Invasives growing at the Remnant Sedge Meadow are:

Buckthorne*	Phragmites	Teasel**
Callery Pear Trees*	Reed Canary Grass (wet areas)	Thistle*
Dogwood*	Siberian Elm Trees	

* Not much remaining

** Herbicided in June 2020

Native plants/trees present at the Remnant Sedge Meadow are:

American Blue Vervain (*Verbena hastata*)
American Vetch (*Vicia americana*, a perennial forb)
Butterweed (also known as cressleaf groundsel and yellowtop; native but aggressive)
Daisy Fleabane (*Erigeron annuus*)
Dogbane (*Apocynum cannabinum*)
Horse Tail (also known as Puzzle Grass)
Monarda (Bee Balm)
Native Wild Strawberry
Nodding Wild Onion (*Allium cernuum*)
Sawtooth Sunflower (*Helianthus grosseserratus*)
Staghorn Sumac Tree (west of the bike trail)
Swamp Milkweed
Tufted Loosestrife (*Lysimachia thyrsiflora*)
Yellow Loosestrife (*Lysimachia vulgaris*)
Yellow St. John's Wort (non-native)

Rushes present at the Remnant Sedge Meadow:

- Dudley's Rush
- Nodding Bull Rush
- Spike Rush

Sedges present at the Remnant Sedge Meadow:

- American Water Harehound (*Lycopus americanus*)
- Brown Fox Sedge
- Crested Sedge (*Carex cristatella*)
- Eleocharis (plants in the sedge family, Cyperaceae)
- Tussock Sedge (*Carex stricta*)
- Wild Mint (*Mentha arvensis*)
- Woolly Sedge (*Carex pellita*)

Sightings and "music" at the Remnant Sedge Meadow:

- American Toad
- Chorus Frogs
- Crayfish holes (in the ground)
- Garter Snake
- Monarch Butterfly

The sedges will flower in about one month (estimated: June).

Saint Alphonsus

Ed Madden reported that the prairie at St. Al's is going well overall with a good amount of standing water that was present on May 8, 2024. Ed Madden provided images with his Monitoring Report.

Ed said the early growth looks all the same from a distance to his untrained eyes. However, the prairie diversity is best discerned up close.

Warning: Ed stated that a somewhat deep depression on the north end of the prairie in the turf grass next to the parking lot's south entrance is present. It is hidden by its grass height and is exactly even with the surrounding turf. Unfortunately, Ed took a bad fall hitting the asphalt of the driveway.

Slough, The

Agnes Wojnarski reported that the Slough is looking better and better with each year.

This year's workdays centered on buckthorn removal have been very effective. The prescribed burn was the most important of which you can see the positive effects. Many species of birds and pollinators are present, and plants are blossoming. The Wild Geraniums are spectacular! It seems like more and more visitors are walking the trails.

The Boardwalk needs to be readjusted when drier weather conditions prevail. Dana and Agnes performed a temporary fix near the Izaak Walton Pavilion where the Boardwalk was the most unsteady.

Invasive Garlic Mustard is scattered throughout the area. The High School Interns and Agnes pulled about two lawn bags worth of invasive garlic mustard, but there is probably just as much left to remove.

Agnes estimates that the Cattails had a 50% die-off after the Davey Tree treatment from the fall of 2023.

Riparian buffers along Hillside will be planted and maintenance for Zeke's Trail are scheduled.

Agnes herbicided the Thistle in front of the Izaak Walton sign. Further Thistle control around the Slough is planned in the next couple of weeks.

Tully Park

Wendy Dewar arranged a Friends of the Tully Park Workday on February 10, 2024 (Saturday) at 10:00 am to clean-up fallen branches, cut buckthorn and design a small trail around the park.

Plants in the small trail have been flagged and are slowly being transplanted to other areas of the park.

A controlled prescribed burn was performed by the PHNRC at Tully Park on February 25, 2024 between 2:00 and 4:00 pm.

Christina Ferraro, Executive Director of the PHPL, is awaiting receipt of the Plat of Survey at 214 Wheeling Road. Upon receipt, she will arrange a meeting with Tully Park Residents to obtain their concept, ideas, and desires for the proper use of this property.

Tully Park is beginning to bloom. Golden Alexanders bloomed first then Purple Spider Wort, along with Golden Rod and Buckthorn.

Seed/Greenhouse Program

Agnes reported that 17,000 seedlings have been transplanted, and we have many plants, including second year plants, which will be planted over the next two weeks. The amount of rain received has helped with plant growth. Another 2,000 seedlings will be transplanted. The Greenhouse is empty of seedlings, which normally does not occur until around May 15, but the weather has been warm.

Education Updates

Wheeling High School: Classes and Visit

Agnes reported that a 35-minute in-class presentation for the Wheeling High School Environmental Science Class (STEM) will not be held this school season.

Agnes reported that two groups of STEM students will be participating in a tour of the Slough on May 15, 2024 from 9:00-10:30 a.m. with their teacher and sponsor, Mediha Abat.

MacArthur Middle School

Agnes reported that no educational programs are currently planned.

District 214 Micro-Internships

The District 214 Micro-Internships for the spring season concluded on May 8, 2024. Students have been pleased with the program.

The District 214's request to create a videotape of the Micro-Internship Program is still pending.

Summer Internship Program 2024

Dana reported that we have hired Norah Polonsky as a 2024 summer intern. Norah was interviewed on May 8, 2024.

Norah is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science with a Minor in English at Ithaca College. Norah describes herself as a hardworking, self-starting, and high achieving student athlete with a strong work ethic. Norah is seeking a position that combines her passion for the earth's natural resources, collecting and analyzing data of environmental conditions, and being able to write and speak on each matter to sustain our planet for generations to come. Norah residents in Chicago.

Another candidate, Jess Gruettner, will be interviewed on Friday, May 10, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. Another candidate, Emma Tokarczyk, will be interviewed on Saturday, May 11, 2024 at 2:30p.m.

The applications received for the Summer Internship Program have been exciting.

The summer interns will start on June 3, 2024 (Monday).

CONTINUOUS REPORTING

ComEd/Green Regions Grant Application

Dana recently completed and submitted the ComEd/Green Regions Grant Application. Response to our application will be received in late June when ComEd will make the presentation on who receives the Grant. The area in consideration for utilization of this funding is the area between the Police and Fire Stations on Camp McDonald Road.

Eagle Scout Project

Dana reported that the Grant has room for incorporating an Eagle Scout Project. If we receive the Grant, the first thing to accomplish is seeking an Eagle Scout. Dana will speak with Mark Roscoe on lining up all the areas, suggested projects for the areas, and approval for the final selections to make it official before handing it off to the Eagle Scout.

Ed felt that if the Commission is providing funding, we should be particular about what we choose. Everything is relative to what can be accomplished and within potential restrictions.

Seth inquired if Zeke's Trail maintenance is a possible Eagle Scout Project. Eagle Scout projects area designed for leadership responsibilities and take several months to complete. The Eagle Scout is to assist with and have input on the idea, planning, permission, and funding. The PHNRC provides assistance and leadership.

Adopt-A-Trail Update

Dana is currently creating maps that depict the sections that are available for path maintenance. One general map will show all the areas where work is present and individual areas to show trails and sections of trails, availability, and who is responsible for path maintenance.

The May edition of the *Journal* will provide a major presentation and, hopefully, encourage more candidates to sign up. John, Dana, Jill, Mary and Spencer have claimed parts of various sites.

NRC 2023-2024 Budget

John reported that the NRC 2023-2024 Budget has concluded as of April 30, 2024. However, we transferred donation funds to the Grant proposal.

NRC 2024-2025 Budget

John provided Commissioners with a copy of the NRC 2024-2025 Budget, dated May 1, 2024. Revenue funding provided by the City of Prospect Heights is \$13,544.00. Funding provided by the Prospect Heights Park District is not yet reported. We are awaiting the numbers.

Funding of \$6,000 from the Capital Budget is provided for the third year in 2024 of the six-year Shoreline Restoration Project.

First Responder Park Funds include a donation of \$4,000; the transfer of 2023 donations of \$6,000 total; and anticipated Grant funding of \$10,000. The match of \$10,000 includes \$7,000 from the NRC and the City of Prospect Heights contribution of \$3,000 for the Grant.

If we do not get the Grant, what happens? We would probably proceed but in a smaller capacity. Dana said we would defer to Mark Roscoe, Peter Falcone, and the city and inquire how they would like to proceed.

City Civic Meetings and PHNRC Representation

[City Council Regular Meeting – April 8, 2024](#)

Mayor Patrick Ludvigsen was on vacation; therefore, Alderman Matthew Dolick presided as Acting Mayor.

FY2024-2025 CITY OF PROSPECT HEIGHTS BUDGET

The FY 2024-2025 City of Prospect Heights Budgets are finalized and will be approved at the meeting of April 24, 2024. No action was taken during the April 8 City Council Meeting.

STAFF, ELECTED OFFICIALS AND COMMISSION REPORTS

None provided.

[City Council Budget Hearing – April 24, 2024](#)

4. MOTION TO OPEN PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING THE FY2024-25 BUDGET

5. MAYOR'S STATEMENT:

- a. Purpose of the Public Hearing is receiving comments from the public on the proposed Budget.
- b. Budget was prepared in tentative form and made conveniently available to the public for at least 10 days prior to tonight's hearing.
- c. Notice of the hearing was published in the Daily Herald on April 11th
- d. The tentative Budget includes information about the City's anticipated receipts and expenditures for this fiscal year.

There was no Public Comment on the FY 2024-2025 Budget.

The Budget Hearing closed.

City Council Regular Meeting – April 24, 2024

8. OLD BUSINESS

- A. O-24-07** Staff Memo and Ordinance Amending Title 1 of City Code and Adopting the Pay Plan (Compensation of Officers, Employee Salaries and Pay Plan) (*2nd Reading*)
Action Requested: (Motion, Second, Roll Call Vote)
- B. O-24-08** Staff Memo and Ordinance Adopting the FY2024-25 Budget for the City of Prospect Heights (*2nd Reading*)
Action Requested: (Motion, Second, Roll Call Vote)

The FY 2024-25 Budget for the City of Prospect Heights was approved.

10. STAFF, ELECTED OFFICIALS, AND COMMISSION REPORTS

- A.** March Financial Report Presented by Assistant Finance Director Bob Tannehill

Assistant Finance Director, Bob Tannehill, provided the March financial report. Mr. Tannehill said we are close to the end of the year (Month 11). Eighty-six percent (86%) of the budget consists of Revenues, and about 60% of the budget consists of expenses. Revenues and expenditures are consistent with the budget. We are somewhat over in the revenue accounts, like the interest in the banks.

Joe Wade, City Administrator, mentioned the Earth Day Sierra Club Workday at the Remnant Sedge Meadow of April 20, 2024 and expressed his appreciation to the PHNRC for managing the event.

Next Meeting: The next scheduled City Council Regular Meeting is scheduled for May 13, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in City Hall Chambers.

Prospect Heights Park District – Board Meeting of April 23, 2024

From the minutes of the Prospect Heights Park District Special Board Meeting of April 16, 2024:

Future Planning Discussion facilitated by Jan Peterson Hincapie

The conversation centered around the future of the Park District, including strategies for planning and financing. There was discussion regarding the need for long-term planning, the importance of considering the District's mission and vision, and the potential for generating revenue through selling land or leasing facilities. They also addressed maintenance and upgrades of the Park District, including the condition of the pool and slide, the need for a new roof and mechanicals at the recreation center, potentially new irrigation system at golf course and the potential for a referendum. Additionally, there was discussion regarding the financial and operational challenges facing the pool, including high maintenance costs, low attendance, and the need for a feasible funding plan. Finally, there was discussion regarding the challenges of managing and funding aging facilities, including maintenance and repair issues, declining pool pass sales and increased daily pool admission, and community engagement.

There was discussion surrounding the potential to sell property. Generally, park districts are discouraged from selling green space because it contradicts the core purpose. However, there might be cases where selling land is necessary due to financial constraints, changing community needs, etc. At this time there does not seem to be interest in selling the golf course, but the sale of Muir Park has potential. Staff will investigate the legal considerations and must engage the community in this decision.

There was discussion surrounding a referendum for the recreation center. In November 2022, the question on the ballot was for the Park District to spend \$30 million on the pool, recreation center, playground, courts and develop the site. If the project is scaled back to \$20 million the project would have less of a walking track, less rooms for dance and exercise, only one room for early childhood and there would still be the expense of the administration building.

There was discussion surrounding closing the pool, as it loses \$125,000 a year, and replacing it with a splash pad. There are concerns with finding alternatives for summer camp as some register since they can use the pool 5 days a week. Other concerns about busing campers to other pools and putting agreements in place with other park districts. Staff will investigate the cost to construct a splash pad, the cost to finance such a project and put together a timeline to illustrate when the pool closes for the season, the time to construct a splash pad and the timing to reopening of the amenity.

COOK COUNTY PAID LEAVE ORDINANCE: The Cook County board unanimously approved the amendment to the Paid Leave ordinance which delays the enactment date for Park District and School Districts until January 1, 2025. This does afford the district the opportunity to educate residents, fiscally plan for paid time off, and implement operational changes required to implement new workplace policies. Many Cook Commissioners pledged to work with park district directors as the rules of the ordinance are crafted and later adopted.

Christina Ferraro explained the costs involved for the Park District to comply with the Cook County Paid Leave Ordinance. Selling land, such as Muir Park (5.0 acres), which would be a public process, may be considered. Walnut Woods was last mentioned as a possible land sale; however, do not know how usable the land is because it is located in a Flood Way.

Christina said the Park District is losing \$12,000 per week with the pool; the expense of building Pickle Ball Courts; and repair or replacement of the HVAC and roof.

These concerns will be a continuous Agenda item in the meetings going forward.

April 23, 2024

To: Christina Ferraro, Executive Director
From: Ray Doerner, Superintendent of Recreation
Re: April 2024 Board Report

ARTWALK

The award-winning ArtWalk will return to Izaak Walton Park this spring and summer. This year's theme is "Bug Art". Sculpture, objects, assemblies, paintings, or drawings are welcome. The use of recycled materials and found objects is encouraged. As in previous years, we thank the tireless work of artists Kate Tully and Mara Lovisetto who put in many hours of love and sweat into this event.



Next Meeting: The next regularly scheduled Prospect Heights Park District Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 28, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at the Gary Morava Recreation Center in Prospect Hts., IL.

Plan Zoning Board of Appeals – Meeting of April 25, 2024

I was unable to attend the PZBA April 25, 2024 meeting in person but reviewed the meeting Agenda and listened to portions of the meeting recording.

Opening of Meeting

Maciej Kempa, Chairperson, reminded members to provide Staff with their observations and what they have gained from previous meetings regarding the establishment of a chicken ordinance. Staff must provide a Report to the PZBA. The timeframe was 60 days from the February PZBA meeting.

VIII. Communications

- 1. 2024 Official Zoning Map of the City of Prospect Heights**
 - 2. Contractor Fraud Announcement.**
 - 3. Cook County Economic Statement Interest reminder**
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Dan Peterson, Director of Building and Development, reiterated that driveway replacement and expansion require a permit. Guidelines are available on the Building Department webpage of the City of Prospect Heights' website.

Dan reiterated that if residents view out of state contractor trucks in their neighborhood to contact the Police Department. The Police will approach and inquire about why they are here.

For any questions or concerns, contact the Building Department at (847) 398-6970, Extension 211.

Next Meeting: The next scheduled meeting of the Plan/Zoning Board of Appeals is Wednesday, May 22, 2024 (Wednesday) at 7:00 p.m.

Friends of the PHNRC

The PHNRC has been considering establishing a 501(c)3. One of our largest concerns is if we establish a 501(c)3, we may be considered a self-funding Commission. Therefore, could funding cease from the city and Park District? If so, the NRC must ensure they have funding to cover our operational expenses. We would then opt out of not creating a 501(c)3.

Dana said that Peter Falcone suggested placing an intergovernmental agreement with the Park District and city who would contribute a fixed amount to the 501(c)3. The 501(c)3 would then be the mechanism for paying all our operational expenses. The Park District and the city would contribute anywhere from \$5,000 to \$15,000. However, we must be aware that what can be given can be halted. Ed said this is a reality either way.

Any advantage to the city for a donation to the 501(c)3 instead of funding? Peter said the city would be out of the procurement business. No extra step would be needed in purchasing our supplies, which currently slows down the process. With the establishment of a 501(c)3, we would purchase our supplies at will. Note: A 501(c)3 does not pay taxes.

Dana inquired if it is a benefit tax-wise to the city to donate to the Friends of the PHNRC 501(c)3? Peter said no, it would be like the city donating to another charity, such as a veteran's group.

Peter stated that we should include in the intergovernmental agreement language that the 501(c)3 is its own entity, and the PHNRC is completing the work. The city and Park District would have input because the NRC's sites or work is conducted on park district and city properties.

The 501(c)3 would be in charge of the funds and has more discretion on what to do with it. You do not have to spend the money in one year. Private donations are tax deductible, and we can solicit funds. The city is tax-exempt.

Agnes inquired of the Interns. Currently, our Interns are employed by the city. Peter said the PHNRC is an umbrella of the city; therefore, the Interns would still be considered employees of the city. The 501(c)3 would be the funding arm of the PHNRC.

Peter said to create or form the 501(c)3 first and then the intergovernmental agreement. Also, the PHNRC Commissioners can be members of both the PHNRC and the 501(c)3. A conflict of interest does not exist. However, Peter recommended having other people along with us on the 501(c)3 board.

Dana said Joe had represented that the City Attorney may be able to help us with this. Peter said there would be a charge for his services.

MacArthur Middle School and Tree Initiative Program

Pete Hahn provided an update on a Tree Initiative Program with MacArthur Middle School.

Pete said a meeting should be held in either June or July with interested parties involved with this initiative and get the project going.

Pete said the Openlands TreeKeepers Chapter will donate the trees to District 23.

Living Green Expo (Grace Lutheran Church, Mount Prospect) – June 8, 2024

Jill reported that she has confirmed PHNRC representation at the Living Green Expo on June 8, 2024 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Prospect Heights Community Days – June 1, 2024

The PHNRC will be represented at the Prospect Heights Community Days on June 1, 2024. Dana and Jill will manage the PHNRC table. The coordinator is Marcia Gendras.

Independence Day Parade – July 6, 2024

Currently, the Prospect Heights Independence Day Parade is scheduled for Saturday, July 6, 2024.

John has submitted an application for the PHNRC to participate in the Arlington Heights Independence Day Parade on Thursday, July 4, 2024. John is awaiting confirmation.

John has started planning our participation in both the July 4 and July 6 parades and speaking with people involved in the construction. Things will ramp up a few weeks before producing our display, construction of which is held at John's house. Also, will have a display of large puppets created by Heather. We will reuse a lot of things from last year, including the same trailer, and have additions.

We are mirroring the theme of the Sunflower Group Art Display this year - BUGS. We will have at least four Giant Ants walking down the street and will include the large Monarch Butterfly and Giant Caterpillar from 2023.

Concerns were raised on the organization of the Prospect Heights Independence Day parade. Our participation involves walkers. Walkers tend to set the pace but the cars leading in front of the parade causes a separation. It is not confluent. The lead people in the parade should have someone on foot, which could hold back the people driving cars from going too fast.

A large gap always occurs. The parade should be tight and as one unit.

We usually have two runners with our group to keep our group together.

NEW INITIATIVES

Hillcrest Lake Shoreline Restoration Project 2024

Dana and John met a few days ago to define the 2024 Project Area: Northeast finger of Hillcrest Lake about 45 feet from Owen Court and heading 100 feet to the south towards John's house. The northeast corner has everything flowing to it. Therefore, the water is more active.

The current water level is high, so it is deceiving on what to plan for. Also, this area has a couple of spots with two to three feet of eroded shoreline left then the road starts. Therefore, we need to bring it into the lake, filled and heavily vegetated, to reclaim the area and have a buffer to the road. This is a tall task.

Dana has held preliminary talks with Dan at Hanes regarding core logs. The largest is 20" diameter. Currently, we do not know the actual water level. If most of the core log remains in water, we may have trouble vegetating the area with plants. Therefore, Dan suggested placing a stone tow down first then place the core logs on top. The final decision is dependent and driven by the realistic water level, which Dana and John will assess next week when conditions are somewhat drier.

Dana said we would, most likely, utilize the 20" diameter core logs. The order time is two to three weeks. Receipt would be from Hanes' North Carolina plant; therefore, additional shipping charges will be levied.

Dana said Dan suggested photographing the area utilizing rulers, thereby providing Dan with a view of the area's conditions and assisting him in making a better recommendation.

John stated that a short, deep drop off is present and will require more fill in this section. Dana said that a finer erosion blanket to stabilize plants is also a necessity.

Ed inquired of the timing of our Project with the reconstruction of Willow Road. Could any materials left from the reconstruction be recycled by us and used as fill? Peter said no, all materials and leftover material is owned by the Contractor.

Peter said a start date for the Willow Road Reconstruction Project is not determined. Discussions are being held about possible new changes. The city prefers starting in the fall. The road must settle because of the underlying ground. Cook County is driving the project.

Agnes inquired if our Project 2024 site is far enough away from the reconstruction. Yes. John said a large buffer of cattails are present in that corner. The big rock located on the shoreline is the visual point of where our Project 2024 site begins. Everything west of the rock is where we would start.

John stated that no matter where we start our Shoreline 2024 Project, the height of the lake water is a determinant. Therefore, it might be best to let the water recede before proceeding. However, Agnes said that the plants cannot wait forever. John said we may need more aquatic plants for this section.

Dana and John feel a volunteer workday requiring people in the water must be scheduled to clear the shoreline and remove everything out. Trees or shrubs can stay. Sandbar Willow Trees may also stay.

Seth broached the topic of how crayfish, clams, snails, etc. may stabilize a shoreline. What is the normal native ecosystem for Hillcrest Lake? Could introducing clams, for instance, be a substantial part of our shoreline stabilization effort? It all depends on the species and population level. To utilize clams means to seed and vet the clams. John said freshwater clam research would need to be conducted. John sees them mostly in moving water. We can keep an open mind but cannot currently count on it.

John mentioned that it is the time of year for outdoor games. John retrieves hundreds of baseballs, softballs, and tennis balls from the creek. Are they all from foul balls? John wondered if someone could be responsible at all the games to retrieve the foul balls and ensure they remain out of the creek and not clogging the creek. Dana suggested talking with the park district on this matter.

NEW BUSINESS

Announcements to the Public

None.

Visitors' Comments

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission is July 11, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. Central Time in City Hall Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business to come before the meeting. Therefore, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Jill E. Moskal, CPS
PHNRC Commissioner and Recording Secretary