

**CITY OF PROSPECT HEIGHTS
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
AUGUST 25, 2014**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Natural Resources Commission was held in the lower level Conference Room of City Hall, 8 N. Elmhurst Road, Prospect Heights, Illinois.

The meeting was called to order at 5:40 p.m. by Chairperson Wojnarski.

The following Commissioners were present when the roll was called: A. Debicki, K. Spiegelhalter, E. Madden, M. Jendreas, and Chairperson A. Wojnarski.

Also present was City Liaison S. Cutaia.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Debicki moved, seconded by Commissioner Madden, to approve the June 23, 2014 and July 28, 2014 Minutes as submitted. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS

Open Lands Com Ed Grant – Planning, timeline and implementation were reviewed.

Slough – Water quality and sediment are a big concern and outside agencies will be contacted for their opinions. Commissioner Spiegelhalter will talk to specialists on wetlands and also specialists who are knowledgeable of the possibility of erosion because of buckthorn removal. A letter will be drafted to residents, who live around the Slough, about the importance of using natural fertilizers because of run-off directly into the Slough. The idea of salting less in the winter or using a different product was brought up. City Liaison Cutaia said Public Works only salts corners and he will research the idea of using other materials.

City Liaison Cutaia shared an email report he received from Jeff Mengler, Senior Project Scientist of Hey and Associates, Inc. He and Mr. Mengler met at the Slough, the week prior, to discuss conditions of the Slough. Basically, Mr. Mengler said that for the short-term, he would simply monitor the conditions and gather more information such as pond depth, and list of the vegetation growing in the water. He advised that his company could prepare a management plan, on a time and materials basis, for about \$2,000.00. Commissioners were disappointed they were not advised of the meeting and had many additional questions since there is a two-fold concern: water quality and cause of sediment.

Chairperson Wojnarski said that plug planting will be done in the spring and the plan is to put low growing plants, such as sedges, in the areas along the Slough in front of residences, and taller plants in between the houses, so the views of the Slough are not blocked.

City Liaison Cutaia asked why there are so many high cut buckthorn stumps, and he was informed that Public Works was supposed to cut them, but they have not done so as yet. Mr. Cutaia said that Acting Administrator Balling gave the okay for volunteers, after signing a waiver, to use power equipment such as chainsaws. To keep other volunteers safe, this equipment should be used before the Work Days begin or on another day.

Since there was a discrepancy of property ownership, Mr. Cutaia said he marked off Hillside Avenue so it would be apparent which area of the Slough belonged to Park District, and which area to the City of Prospect Heights.

Regarding open burning during work days, or the possibility of having a large bonfire, Deputy Fire Chief Jones said he will help obtain any necessary permits.

Prairie – The Access Agreement has not been located by the Park District. A Com Ed representative will be contacted to see if a copy can be obtained from them. This Agreement is needed before herbiciding can be done, and before seeds can be collected from the remnant prairie. Sarah Race, from Com Ed, will erect informational signs along the proposed and the remnant prairies.

Five acres will be herbicided within the next few weeks and the Park District has offered to mow once or twice in the spring, at a height of 3 to 4 inches.

CMAAP Comprehensive Land Use Plan – City Representative Cutaia reported that the Plan was on the September 8th Board Meeting agenda for 1st Reading.

Chicago Wilderness GIS Task Force/Mapping – City GIS Files are being transferred to the Task Force.

Chairperson Wojnarski called for a break at 6:30 p.m. to attend the City Council Meeting, to observe the recognition of Commissioner Madden's son receiving his Eagle Scout status. She called the meeting back to order at 6:50 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

Future Grant – Chairperson Wojnarski suggested applying for the \$5,000.00 Forestry Grant for School Street Park. Buckthorn would be removed and 30 native trees would be planted as part of an educational tool for children. All Commissioners were in favor of the idea and Chairperson Wojnarski will discuss it further with Park District Director Nowicki.

Board of Commissioners – It was discussed, and all Commissioners were in agreement, that Commissioner Jendreas will assume the position of Secretary and Commissioner Spiegelhalter will be the Outreach Coordinator.

There are spots for two additional Commissioners and letters of intent were received from Colleen Graudins and Dana Sievertson. Everyone was in agreement of sending a letter of recommendation to the City Council asking that Colleen and Dana be appointed to the Commission.

Partnerships – The joint program on Natives/Invasives will be held September 9, 2014 from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. at the Prospect Heights Library.

Cook County Forest Preserve (CCFP) – Chairperson Wojnarski said she will attend meetings with the Forest Preserve and try to enlarge our volunteer network. The CCFP is trying to expand their plantings.

Commissioner Spiegelhalter suggested the idea of having a Native Plant Sale in the spring, possibly together with the Garden Club when their sale is held. We can even solicit residents for a donation to purchase plants to be planted at the Slough. Commissioners were in favor of the ideas.

Internet Page/Website Design – A resident Dana Sievertson has offered his services to create a website at no cost to the Commission. Everyone thought it was a wonderful idea and all were in favor of moving forward. Acting Asst. City Administrator Pete Deol will be contacted to see if it's possible for Chairperson Wojnarski to obtain a City email address, so she doesn't have to use her personal one.

Also, Mr. Sievertson has drafted a sign (copy attached to these minutes), which he could have made at a cost of approximately \$18.00 each, and he would place these at several different spots around the Slough. Commissioners were all in favor of moving forward.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by:

Marcia Jendreas, Secretary

Agnes Wojnarski, Chairperson