

**CITY OF PROSPECT HEIGHTS
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
FEBRUARY 23, 2015**

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 5:35 p.m. by Chairperson Wojnarski.

The following Commissioners were present when the roll was called: C. Gaudins, M. Jendreas, D. Sievertson, and Chairperson A. Wojnarski.

Commissioner A. Debicki was absent, Commissioner K. Spiegelhalter arrived at 5:46 p.m., and Commissioner E. Madden arrived at 6:20 p.m.

Also present was City Liaison S. Cutaia and Park District Liaison K. Nowicki.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Sievertson moved, seconded by Commissioner Gaudins, to approve the January 26, 2015 Minutes as submitted. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS

Slough – Work days have been successful. The stump grinder has been repaired.

Chairman Wojnarski said she received an email from a representative at Levi Strauss Company regarding volunteer opportunities for about 20 people from their Chicago regional sales office, on May 8th or 9th. They are very interested in supporting local Chicagoland organizations in water conservation, and it is a large initiative for the company. Chairman Wojnarski is in contact with them and trying to work out details for a work day at the slough.

Mr. Cutaia said the Beet Juice Program is continuing.

Warning signs, which caution people about “hot embers” and “herbicide” have been received. Work is continuing by a restoration ecologist on permanent signage.

A landscape plan for the slough will not be available until April. The plug order will arrive in May. There are approximately 6,000 plugs designated for the slough and 1,000 for the prairie. There was a discussion on plug planting, but final details are not yet available regarding size of plugs, volunteer base, and watering.

The Finance Department has only paid three invoices totaling \$6,878.00 out of the \$20,000 grant, and the budget year is coming to a close. City Liaison Cutaia and Chairperson Wojnarski will check on purchase orders and invoices.

The MWRD/Willow Road project is continuing. Public meetings are anticipated to be held within the next two months. Preliminary Engineering will be done in May and the next step will be final design and construction. Design should take 6 to 8 months and construction will probably begin in 2017. Many agencies are involved including IDNR, Army Corps, MWRD, County, North Cook Soil and Water, and City of Prospect Heights; therefore, many permits will need to be obtained along with signed Intergovernmental Agreements. Funding is available through the General Stormwater Tax Levy and also bonds which were recently sold by MWRD. A small percentage of the project will be paid by the City of Prospect Heights plus additional monies for anything extra that they request, such as a bike path, sidewalks, etc.

Prairie –

100 seed packets were dropped off at City Hall and picked up by residents. The ComEd Lease Agreement is not yet available.

NEW BUSINESS

Com Ed Grant - There was discussion about previous communications as to whether the Park District could partner with the City of Prospect Heights on a Com Ed/Openlands Grant which was due for submission by March 6th, since the City of Prospect Heights was the lead agency on the last grant. This grant would involve the slough in Prospect Heights, and the remnant prairie and sedge meadow located in the Village of Wheeling. Park District Liaison Kathy Nowicki said she spoke with her staff and they feel funding is not available for the matching grant portion because of other projects the Park District must complete this year. Also, she did not think it would meet with Board approval because the property is in Wheeling.

Kathy suggested making the year 2015 into a “path for education”, since Chairperson Wojnarski has already arranged for 7 different nature classes through the Park District, and a Green Infrastructure program at the Library. Another year will also give time for the slough and prairie to mature so people can see some progress by the Commission and matching funding provided by the City and Park District for the last grant.

Commissioner Jendreas and City Liaison Cutaia exited the meeting at 6:27 p.m.

Cook County Forest Preserve – No further information available.

Outreach Plan – Commissioner Spiegelhalter asked about the possibility of printing Journals for distribution. Commissioner Sievertson said that it is now possible and will provide instruction.

NRC Journal – Commissioner Sievertson is working on the March edition of the Journal. Lead stories are the Nature Classes offered through the Park District this summer and Green

Infrastructure programming at the Library. Kathy Nowicki showed the preliminary program page before it goes for printing and offered to add the PHNRC logo and mission statement.

Library Program – Jeff Mengler will provide a program entitled “Green Infrastructure Solutions to Flooding and Water Pollution at the Library on Thursday, March 12th at 7 pm. Commissioner Madden will do a press release pending Library approval to promote the program. The Commission will also try to advertise through PH Enews, Facebook and the Prospect Heights Local cable channel.

Work Day Policy – The last workday was very cold with temperatures in the single digits. Despite the frigid temps, the workday was a great success and the campfire kept seven volunteers very comfortable and warm. Policy was discussed about canceling workdays to make sure that safety is prioritized. It was agreed that that are variable conditions to consider such as wind speed and wind chill, temperature, humidity and access to the worksite. It was agreed that each workday needs to be considered on an individual basis and workday notices will be sent out the morning of. Workdays will also be shortened or canceled on the spot if conditions change or are in any way a threat to the safety of volunteers.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by:

Marcia Jendreas, Secretary

Agnes Wojnarski, Chairperson