



The Eagle Scout Project at Tully Park involves an Eagle Scout (Hans) that is interested in constructing the meditation garden in the northwest section of the park. The Friends of Tully Park are awaiting the Eagle Scout’s plans.

Prospect Heights Public Library/Park District Events

Nature Speaks Program

On January 20, 2022 from 1:30-3:00 p.m. Central Time, Dr. Alice Bell will provide a Zoom presentation on “Our Biggest Experiment – The Epic History of the Climate Crisis.” Traversing science, politics, and technology, Our Biggest Experiment shines a spotlight on the little-known scientists who sounded the alarm to reveal the history behind the defining story of our age: the climate crisis.

Dr. Bell is a resident of the United Kingdom. Due to the time difference and the number of Zoom presentations that Dr. Bell currently conducts, she politely declined enjoying a virtual lunch/dinner with us. However, the possibility exists that we may reschedule a virtual lunch/dinner with her this summer.

Dana reported that David Schwaegler will provide a Bluff Spring Fen Zoom presentation on April 21, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. Central Time. Dana is creating the Nature Speaks webpage on David Schwaegler. Also, Dana noted that David is an expert photograph and storyteller.

Seth attended the Glencoe Public Library January 12<sup>th</sup> virtual program entitled “Climate Change and the North Shore” and found it to be very educational and informational. Seth stated the presentation was excellent and said the slides and video are available. Therefore, below is the following information:

To view the recording of the program, follow this link to the Glencoe Public Library’s YouTube Channel:	<a href="https://youtu.be/Xakb9ADRXYw">https://youtu.be/Xakb9ADRXYw</a>
To view the presentation slides of Dr. Wuebble and John Andersen, follow this link:	<a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qf0R2M_incaASkJgiX9vtjtj10XzZY_M/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qf0R2M_incaASkJgiX9vtjtj10XzZY_M/view?usp=sharing</a>
To view the full Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2021 Report, summaries, FAQs, and other learning tools, go to this link:	<a href="https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/">https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/</a>

Ed requested of Dana that when he is collecting material from future speakers to request from the beginning photos of the highest resolution. Photos may be reduced but are a challenge to enlarge. The press asks for such photos on occasion.

### Osprey Nesting Platform (Slough)

Dana contacted Joe Wade for an update on this objective, but current information is unavailable. Joe has been working with ComEd and trying to make it happen.

This concept is driven by the City, and the location of the proposed Osprey Nesting Platform at the Slough is Prospect Heights Park District property.

### Slough Boardwalk Project and Funding

#### Project

Dana reported that the Board Walk has been installed. Final leveling of the Board Walk will occur in the spring after the boards have experienced winter and frost expansion and heaving.

#### Plantings

We have 1.5 years to concentrate on flora and forbs. We will push back the rest of the cattails near the Board Walk and install warrior sedges, flora and forbs, and signage.

Eradication of all the cattails is impossible. We are leaving certain sections that are isolated and clearing other sections. An island of cattails in the center will remain. The cattails afford a structure even if they are invasive by providing refuge and habitat for wild animals, such as muskrats.

Cattails in between the water and the cleared area will be removed, and it will come back right before where the platform is located, a one-acre area of cattails. We will reclaim this area with warrior sedges and forbs where they will survive. Two other areas to clear of cattails is (1) by the benches and the overlook up to the water (SST) and (2) the area just off Hillside that we started clearing about three years' ago.

Agnes mentioned that burr reed was located in the cattails. This plant has the same structure and function as cattails but is non-invasive.

#### Funding

Dana said the total Slough Boardwalk Project is \$12,000. To date, we have spent about \$8,000 in materials. Therefore, the remaining \$4,000 will be spent on plants, benches, and signage. We have 1.5 years left of this Project and providing quality restoration will determine how the money is spent.

No concept in place yet for the Signage. However, the Signage will reflect on the history of the area, the funding source, the Eagle Scout Project, the efforts of the Project, birds and wildlife, and information on wetland plants, flora, and fauna signage will be located by the benches. Cost: \$2,500

Jill inquired if signage alerting the public that the boards can become slippery when wet, especially when wet leaves are on the Board Walk, would be posted. Dana responded that whatever caution warning signs are presented would be discussed first with the Park District's insurance provider.

Ed Madden suggested asking the insurance provider what makes sense to ensure a good fit or make sense with the area and then proceed.

### Grand Opening

Ed Madden suggested a Grand Opening or ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Board Walk in the Spring. It could be a formal event. We would invite the mayor, elected officials and other key players.

### Prospect Heights Park District and Budget/Funding Status

Agnes spoke with Christina Ferraro, Prospect Heights Park District Executive Director, about one month ago. Agnes did not know the final amount nor did she have an update. The Park District has budgeted for an intern and the summer Nature Camp. Therefore, Agnes will contact Christina and advise Commissioners of an Update via e:mail message.

Dana noted that Annette Curtis, current Superintendent of Finance and Planning for the Prospect Heights Park District, is now employed with the Des Plaines Park District. Dana said we do not know her replacement.

### Pollinator Park Project

Dana said a Purchase Order for aquatics was just issued for about \$600 with Expense Restoration Nursery. The plants will be delivered in late spring.

Dana provided Commissioners with the Hillcrest Lake/Pollinator Park Ecological Management Schedule 2022. The work scheduled for 2022 was noted and included mention of aquatic species installation:

- Continue to prepare turf grass for Riparian buffers
- Finish creating the walking trails
- Continued planting and seeding of native plugs and seed
- Install Signage
- Install landscape stone benches
- Install aquatic species at the original shoreline restoration
- Install first year section of native shoreline restoration
- Continued maintenance
  - Prescribed burns in the fall 2022
  - Manage invasive plants
  - Manage aesthetics

Dana summarized this in the Management Plan: Planting aquatics – 280 plants representing eight different species. Agnes and Dana personally contributed to the order to purchase another 90 plants.

Dana will be visiting Schwake Stone, the leading supplier of quality stone products for the Chicagoland Area, to look at granite boulders. We would be purchasing three (3), 30" x 30" granite boulders to utilize in lieu of benches at Pollinator Park. The boulders would be delivered in the winter when the ground is frozen to minimize soil disturbance in Pollinator Park.

There will be no benches around the Lake. Instead stumps and boulders will be utilized. Dana mentioned that the Public Works Department is not in favor of benches because of maintenance issues, ADA compliance rules and the public abusing benches.

John said we should have a well-conceived plan for the landscaping of Pollinator Park to dictate optimal placement and aesthetics of log stumps and stones for benches. We must look at the areas, conditions, and flow of public usage, such as walking, parking of cars, access to the Lake, etc. Pollinator Park is located from Willow to Owens Street. Therefore, available Commissioners will meet after the workday on Sunday, January 16 at Hillcrest Lake to make an assessment.

Dana provided maps of the Slough and Hillcrest Lake depicting the following:

- Proposed MWRD Road Construction Project: Willow Road and Owen Court
- Shoreline Restoration Project: The West and North banks of Hillcrest Lake, including highlighting the Shoreline Restoration Test Plot (northwest corner of the Lake).
- Plantings A & B and Seedling 1 & 4: Hillcrest Drive near Willow Road
- Pollinator Park from East Willow Road North on Hillcrest Drive to Owen Court
- Restoration Areas of the Shoreline and Section measurements from Mild to Severe to Restored.

Dana reported that the funding for the Pollinator Park Project has been completed. Therefore, Dana will be composing a Grant Review and progress report for ComEd, which must be completed six months after the Project end or by June 2022. Additionally, the Grant paid for work to date and has expired; however, we will always be maintaining and developing the area.

#### Shoreline Restoration Project 2022

Dana reported that the Grant for the Pollinator Park Project was a certain amount of money. There are no more Grants for this Project. However, there is a Grant for purchase of coconut rolls for the Shoreline Restoration Project, which is a City Project, and funding is outside of our regular operating budget.

The Grant for the Shoreline Restoration Project does not include funding for benches. The funding will cover purchase of coconut rolls, blankets, seeds, and other materials. The management of funding is clearly defined.

The Shoreline Restoration Project will be a six-year City Project and will begin in 2022 as soon as warm weather returns.

### Path Maintenance at Worksite

Agnes said that path maintenance is year-round, but a particular need in the spring and fall, at a time when we do not have the extra helping hands of our summer interns. September is a particular time when we need to maintain all paths and trails.

Agnes said Seth performed preemptive work at the Nature Preserve, which is a huge help. Dana expressed appreciation to Seth's hard work in getting the Nature Preserve paths into shape.

### Prescribed Burns and Continued Discussion

Agnes reported that spring burns begin in March, and since we were unable to burn in the fall, we have a lot to accomplish in March.

Fall burns were prohibited due to ground cover that remained green and a lot of precipitation. A few days occurred that would have been ideal for a burn; however, Agnes was unavailable.

Dana spoke with Aaron Feggstad, Senior Ecologist, Environmental Services at Stantec, on plans to brush cut the Remnant Sedge Meadow from Camp McDonald Road north to Old Willow Road. Having this accomplished in the winter will allow for herbiciding emerging invasives, such as Teasel, in the Spring. Dana will advise when the work is approved and then scheduled.

Dana inquired of the ComEd Seeded Prairie conversion. The Prairie was not burned in the spring or fall of 2021. ComEd wants to burn the prairie in the spring, but if conditions are not right, should they mow? Mowing in the fall of 2021 provided huge dividends because the prairie could not be burned.

Agnes said that it is different to mow the prairie in the fall because vegetation is standing tall. However, in the springtime after the snow, all plants are lying down, making it easy to mow. Therefore, we will wait to see what conditions are like in the spring.

Dana's concern is to have information for ComEd in enough time as they consider their programming options.

### Seed/Greenhouse Program

Agnes reported that all collected seed has been planted in pots and tucked away for the winter and awaiting installation in the Greenhouse in March. Mesh netting was placed on top of each seedling tray for protection. We are growing a lot of plants and different species! It is very exciting. Next, preparation work for the Greenhouse will begin.

The Greenhouse was totally restored at the end of the fall season. The temporary Greenhouse will be installed in April, and a new cover will be utilized.

Also, we have seed that needs to be distribution, but need the right conditions. We cannot seed on frozen ground. The snow must be melting, melted or just before a snow fall to ensure the seed stays in place.

## NEW BUSINESS

### Gift Donation

The PHNRC received a gift donation from the Hyndman Family of \$3,000. Therefore, Commissioners discussed how best to utilize this wonderful, thoughtful gift:

1. Planting a native Plum Grove that parallels Elmhurst Road. The type of Plum trees to plan would be *Prunus Americana* and purchased from Possibility Place. The cost is \$16.95 per each five-gallon container (tree). With 300 feet of frontage, we would need to purchase 100 containers providing one plant for every three feet of frontage and very effectively create the buffer that residents have requested to shield the Slough from Elmhurst Road. The Plum Grove would also provide fruit for residents to enjoy when walking on Elmhurst Road, as well as fruit for birds, wildlife, and insects.

The buffer would be a very beautiful addition in the spring and a Slough feature, too.

The total purchase cost would be \$1,695 and leave \$1,305 of the gift amount for another project.

Recommendation: Name the Plum Grove after the donor: Hyndman Plum Grove.

Discussion: Is a Plum Grove a good buffer? It will become a good thicket but controlled. The Remnant Sedge Meadow has a thicket of Plum Trees along the railroad tracks. The trees bloom a pretty white flower in the spring, which would become a feature of the Slough. Pete Hahn researched a Plum Grove, and said the trees grow to 15' in height and 15' in width. Pete suggested placing Swamp White Oak on the two ends of the Plum Grove. Swamp White Oaks hold their leaves longer to provide a winter screen. The Morton Arboretum will be providing 15 swamp white oaks and planting them around the Slough. Two are bald cypress and eight Swamp white oaks. Restriction of being 20 feet off Elmhurst Road.

2. Purchase of Education outreach materials. Succession planning is large part of our existence. Locating our successors, future interns, and raising environmental awareness of the community are very important objectives and goals. One idea is to invest all or part of the funding into education in the form of educational materials from the University of Illinois, the Leopold Foundation, and other resources.

The materials could be utilized as giveaways at events, during service days, in the classroom or be used as teaching materials. Opportunities exists to purchase a large quantity at an inexpensive cost.

For example: Dana purchased materials over Christmas to give to children. They are like flash cards but on a ring, laminated and portable to take out in the wild. The cards are on birds, reptiles, amphibians, etc. They are of minimal cost. John offered an idea to produce a vehicle to get the word out to the schools, which would assist us with succession planning as students mature and start thinking and planning for their further education and a career.

Discussion: John suggested producing a mailer to the community and residents of Prospect Heights because not everyone visits our website. John mentioned the Elm Leaf (the Public Library's newsletter), the Hose Line (Fire Department), and other city publications where he learns more of these realms than he is not normally tuned into. Our mailer could be similar in design to our Resources Journal and provide information on who we are, what we do, and our efforts with the local schools.

The printing cost is minimal, but it must be produced. Information from the Park District does not mention their natural areas and walking paths. We could dedicate the flyer on our various sites, their location, what is there, information on buckthorn, etc. Postage is more than the printing.

We inquired of the City's bulk mailing rate. Peter Falcone said the City's Quarterly (printed) newsletter is eight pages, produced at a cost of \$2,000 and a postage cost of \$1,200 (bulk mailing rate). It is delivered to every Prospect Heights address.

Ed cautioned that mailers have a limited shelf life. Residents receive so many of these things, and they land in drawers, backpacks or simply thrown away. Ed does not feel a flyer is as beneficial as we would think. Could we have a page in the City's Quarterly newsletter or appear in the newsletter once or twice a year?

Peter Falcone said that although we are a Commission of the city, we do not qualify for space in the newsletter because we are not elected officials. However, we can always send an informational piece to Peter, and he will make space for us in the newsletter, about half page. Further, Peter offered to discuss long-term of how the NRC may be better publicized or advertised in the future. However, to be a staple in the city newsletter is not possible. Peter also encouraged us to provide an article on the Slough Boardwalk.

3. Upgrade and renew our work signage, parade materials, event signage, and public relations materials.
4. Invest in a project that would create nature opportunities on the east side of Prospect Heights. Suggestions of naturalized areas, educational events and Community Days were discussed.

Discussion: Dana spoke with Marcia Jendreas, who works with the Police Department, and learned that the property on the east side of town is part of several communities in terms of who owns what: Prospect Heights, Mount Prospect, Wheeling, Northbrook, River Trails, Prospect Heights Park District, and the Chicago Executive Airport. The park that we considered on the east side of town belongs to Mount Prospect, so any possibility must be discussed with Mount Prospect. The City of Prospect Heights owns the apartment buildings. There is not a lot of real estate.

Marcia suggested Commissioners speaking with Alderman Dolick of Ward 5 for ideas on what type of event or events or feasible projects. It is a worthwhile cause. We are concerned with ecological justice and equality, and it is lacking. Therefore, it is an area where we feel we could make a difference.

The donation is subject to our budget expenditure; therefore, we must expend the funds by April.

Seth suggested purchasing a Brush Hog.

Dana said we could do Ideas 1, 2 and 3. A discussion should ensue to cover how, what and when and plan a budget. The Plum Grove will be the number one concern. Dana will provide a menu and costs for consideration.

Dana inquired of Peter Falcone of how the cost of the Prairie Restoration in Progress (four corrugated signs) were paid. Peter said the costs were split between the Park District and the city. Peter said the prairie is park district leased property and not city property.

Agnes said the cost of signs could be part of our regular operating budget.

John said felt strongly that our banner must be upgraded and be more visual. Dana said a cloth banner is reusable and fits on a frame to be pulled up to 6 feet in height and 3 feet in width. Dana will put costs together for further discussion. Ed said that banner would serve the purpose of more exposure of our Commission to the community.

#### 2022 Budget

Peter Falcone recommended when configuring our 2022 budget to consider a separate line item for Promotional Items.

We do not yet have an accounting for Park District funding; however, they typically allocate between \$5,000 and \$6,000.

#### Treasurer's Report

John provided a current budget received from Peter Falcone to Commissioners prior to the meeting.

We have a balance of about \$3,600, three thousand of which is the Gift. Therefore, we have about \$600 to spend before the end of April 2022.

Expenses for the bottom-line net are \$357, if we purchase the granite boulders.

#### City Civic Meetings and PHNRC Representation

Jill highlighted notes from the following November and December City Council and PHPD Board meetings:

City of Prospect Heights City Council Workshop Meeting of November 8, 2022:

**DISCUSSION TOPICS FOR THIS WORKSHOP MEETING:**

City Administrator Wade said that the City is waiting for engineering information on the lake water. Mayor Pro Tem Dolick asked if the City is planning on conducting another water survey. Assistant City Administrator Falcone replied that he has conducted two in the last six years, and that it was vital that the Council carefully formulate the questions in the survey. He noted that the questions must be informational, and not give the appearance of advocating water. Alderman Morgan-Adams said that the first survey had questions that were Alderman Morgan-Adams – said that the first survey was contentious, but the second one was worded much better. Treasurer Tibbits noted that every survey will motivate some residents to accuse the City of advocacy. He believed that it was best to have a survey that allowed residents to rank their opinions on water.

**Council directed Staff to set up a water survey.**

City of Prospect Heights City Council Meeting of December 13, 2022:

Resolution: Designating American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds to be used for the Arlington Countryside Storm Water Management Project: The City of Prospect Heights received an allotment of \$2,161,976.84 from the ARPA. At the Sept 27, 2021, City Council Regular Meeting, the City Council voted to utilize a portion of the ARPA funds for the fabrication and delivery of a storm water pumping station for the Arlington Countryside Storm Water Management Project. The resolution passed memorializing the designation of all remaining ARPA funds to be used for the Project and to provide a reporting mechanism to Federal authorities.

Resolution: Agreement to Provide the City of Prospect Heights Participation in the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Flood Prone Property Acquisition Program for the Purchase of 214 South Wheeling Road: The City has submitted an application for program participation for 214 South Wheeling Road. This property has experienced five flooding events from Tully Creek resulting in structural damage. The property is adjacent to Tully Park. Tully Park has very limited access; therefore, it has been a long-time goal of the Prospect Heights Park District to develop a more visible and accessible entryway to the park. The purchase of 214 South Wheeling Road presents an opportunity to access and expand Tully Park. Therefore, the PHPD provided a letter of intent for the transfer of the property to the Park District and reimbursement of costs.

This Project offers benefits to our community:

- Provide compensation and relief to the homeowner who has suffered repetitive losses.
- Provides a visible and accessible public access point to Tully Park.
- Provides additional park land.

MWRD requires the structures of the property to be removed and places a deed restriction to ensure perpetual open-space use and maintenance of the property.

The City is the participatory applicant; therefore, the City responsibilities involved the management of the acquisition process including to acquire two appraisals, utilize an agent or third party to make a purchase offer, coordinate and manage closing for the accepted offer, and seek reimbursement from the MWRD (no more than 96% of the offer price), and coordinate structure demolition and property restoration.

The PHPD provided a letter of intent to acquire the property from the City, maintain MWRD requirements and reimburse the City for associated expenses. The City Engineer estimates associated costs to be approximately \$45,000. In the event of additional costs, the Park District will be notified.

Staff recommended approval of this resolution, and after a roll-call vote, it was approved.

Prospect Heights Park District Board of Directors Meeting of November 16, 2021:

Approval of Letter of Intent for MWR Flood Prone Property Acquisition: A motion was made by Commissioner Kirste and seconded by Commissioner Messer to authorize the Board President to sign a letter of intent to the City of Prospect Heights for the Park District to reimburse the City for costs not to exceed \$50,000.00 in exchange for the property deed, ensuring perpetual public ownership and maintaining the property as open space and authorize the Executive Director to execute the intergovernmental agreement and all documents in furtherance of the transfer. The motion carried by roll call vote. The motion was approved. (Page 11 of the Civic Community notes has the actual Letter of Intent posted.)

Prospect Heights Park District Board of Directors Meeting of December 14, 2021:

Following is a summary of the Proposed 2022 as presented by Annette Curtis, Superintendent of Finance and Planning, and provided by Christina Ferraro to Jill Moskal on January 3, 2022:

Final approval of the 2022 Budget will occur at the January 25, 2022 Board Meeting. A summary of the proposed 2022 budget:

- 2022 estimated surplus of \$547,793
- Consolidated revenue for the fiscal year end 2022 is \$8,239,634
- Consolidated expenditures for the fiscal year 2022 are \$6,120,041
- Capital 2022 expenditures are estimated to be \$1,571,800
- Tax support for the FY2022 represents 37% of total revenues
- 2022 GO Limited Tax Park Bond proceeds are utilized for GL Refunding Park Bonds 2014B principal and interest payment and capital.

• Transfers are budgeted from Corporate to Park Capital to support tree management and Golf to Golf Capital to support expenditures and fund balance.

The proposed FY2022 budget addresses the required increase in minimum wage to \$12 per hour. The budget includes up to 3% merit-based increase for all full-time employees.

Staffing changes include:

- Changing the contractual events coordinator at Golf Course to full-time position

The current Supt of Finance and Planning is now Supt of Finance HR and IT;

- hiring a full-time HR/ Payroll Coordinator
- bringing some marketing duties in house, combining with current inhouse duties to create a full-time position

The proposed FY2022 budget includes changes to the cost of health benefits; PPO decreased by 1.0%, while the HMO increased by 4.9%, as well as a change in the number of eligible employees. Property and casualty insurance is decreasing by 10.37%, this includes a multiprogram discount of \$3,290.

IMRF the District's contribution rate increased to 8.94% from 8.80% in 2021, the number of eligible employees fluctuate from year to year, current budget includes 28 employees.

#### Proactive Nature Management Plans

Dana provided Commissioners with one management plan entitled Hillcrest Lake/Pollinator Park Ecological Management Schedule 2022 (four pages). The management plan includes a site description, work performed to date, and work scheduled for 2022. Specific activities are noted that favor a particular site.

Each of our sites will have a management plan to reflect information from each of the sites, time of the year and structure a full year of where to be when and program the conditions. The plan outlines all tasks.

Management Plans provide a timeline per year and sync to our budget.

#### Announcements to the Public

Our community is enjoying the natural areas of Prospect Heights, which is wonderful. However, the Commission respectfully requests that the natural areas are left as they are found or even cleaner, if necessary. The frozen wetlands of Prospect Heights have become a go-to destination for winter fun, and on any given day, scores of people come out to enjoy a good skate, a hockey game, or hike the frozen trails at the Slough and Hillcrest Lake.

Unfortunately, an increase in people abandoning items when their fun is over has increased. Hockey nets, coolers, a large Bar-B-Que grill, broken hockey sticks, water bottles, and a shopping cart were recently left behind. We respectfully ask visitors to the City's winter wonderland to please take anything you brought out to the ice back with you when you are done.

Also, Dana cautioned that the water depth of the Slough and Hillcrest Lake is very shallow, and underneath the water is two to three feet of muck. Therefore, when the ice melts, anything going through the ice will be stuck in the muck and unable to be removed.

Thank you!

#### Visitors' Comments

No visitors were present to comment.

OTHER BUSINESS

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission is February 10, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. Central Time.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business to come before the meeting. Therefore, the meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Jill E. Moskal, CPS  
PHNRC Commissioner and Recording Secretary