

Lycee Francais de Chicago

No new information was available to report per Dana.

Wheeling High School Program

Seth Marcus stated that PHNRC will be giving an introductory lecture at Wheeling High School on the PHNRC and what we do the morning of March 4, 2020. PHNRC participants should arrive by 8:30 a.m. for the 30-minute talk and then lead into how we will work with them. PHNRC will be working with the High School class on their program to assist them with planting the courtyard at the High School. The size of the plot is undetermined.

Seth confirmed that the program is actively ongoing, and the High School class received funding, which will include costs for growing seedlings, signage, etc. Further details have not stipulated.

Prospect Heights Public Library/Park District Program

1) Nature Speaks Program

The April 22, 2020 spring speaker is tentatively confirmed with Midwest Grows Green. The main presenter and author of the Save Parks Program (Ryan Anderson) is taking a six-month sabbatical. They are looking to hire his replacement. The replacement can provide the presentation on Natural Lawn Care, but Dana would prefer Ryan Anderson. We could wait until he returns and schedule this presentation for the summer or fall.

Izabella Redlinski, Conservation Ecologist at the Keller Science Action Center, The Field Museum, can provide a talk on restoration and climate change.

Ms. Redlinski works with the greater Chicago Wilderness on conserving high quality remnant habitats and species that reside within them, as well as bringing back the health and resilience to those areas that have been heavily affected by urban sprawl and industrial development. Izabella focuses on restoration efforts, what is nature in an urban setting, what specific techniques can be utilized to pre-adapt conservation efforts to climate change and what collective and individual actions we can take to ameliorate the effects of it.

Dana is in contact with Izabella to understand what the program will be.

Terri Campbell, Adult Program Coordinator at the Prospect Heights Public Library, suggested Glen Adelson, Associate Professor of Environmental Studies at Lake Forest College. Dr. Adelson's interests are Interdisciplinary Approaches to Environmental Studies, Conservation Biology and Restoration Ecology, Conceptualizing Biodiversity, and Literature and the Environment. Dr. Adelson holds a Ph.D. in Organismic and Evolutionary Biology from Harvard University.

Dr. Adelson has created two presentations: (1) The World Wildflower Tour: The Astonishing Beauty and Wisdom of Wildflowers and (2) The Astonishing Beauty and Wisdom of Wildflowers in Illinois.

Dr. Adelson could make a presentation on April 22 (Earth Day) or in June, too, with a presentation geared toward the season in bloom.

Dr. Adelson's stipend is higher than what the Library pays, but the PHPL is willing to find a way to fund the rest.

Dana will provide links with Dr. Adelson's background and information on his presentation. Commissioners will communicate via e:mail to plan soon.

After a brief discussion, Commissioners felt Izabella Redlinski could present on April 22, 2020 and Dr. Adelson would be the summer or June presenter.

2) Fly A Kite Day – April 11, 2020 (Prospect Heights Park District)

Dana provided Commissioners with a visual on how the kite for the April 11, 2020 event of Fly A Kite Day is designed. The kite is red with four logos in white, one of the four logos being PHNRC. The design last year had three logos stacked in the center, but this year with four logos, they are separately depicted in a square.

3) Midwest Grows Green – Ryan Anderson

This topic was covered this evening during the discussion on the Nature Speaks Program.

4) New Summer Programs for the Park District

No ideas were suggested for new Summer Park District Programs; therefore, we will simply participate in 10th Week Camp in August. The Bird Walks will be held in May and September 2020.

Seed/Greenhouse Program

Agnes reported that all collected seeds are potted in trays. The trays will be placed in the Main Greenhouse on February 28.

The application for a variance is for a second Greenhouse that would be utilized less than 60 days each year. All protocol has been followed, and a Public Hearing is scheduled on February 27 at 7:00 p.m. for presentation and decision. If approved, an ordinance will be on record, so only need to file a permit every year and state dates of use. The second Greenhouse would have to be put up and taken down every year.

NEW BUSINESS

Peggy A. Montes Unsung Heroine Award

An annual event in observance of Women's History Month, Cook County presents the Unsung Heroine Award to 18 women, one from each district of Cook County and one county-wide, whose contributions to their communities, families and professional endeavors have been so vital but seldom recognized. This award, consistent with the purpose of Women's History Month, is

designed to recover and tell the story of the powerful impact women have had throughout history on the development of our social, cultural, economic and political institutions. In this spirit, the County honors these remarkable women to bring their stories to light, to thank them and to celebrate the achievement of the many women through the history of Cook County whom they represent.

This year the Peggy Montes Unsung Heroine Award will be held on March 5, 2020 at the Chicago Cultural Center from 8:00 to 10:30 a.m. The Women's Commission, Cook County Board of Commissioners, and Cook County Board President, Toni Preckwinkle, will be honoring Agnes J. Wojnarski, MD, as well as 17 other Unsung Heroine's throughout Cook County.

Agnes Wojnarski, Chairperson of the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission, was nominated by Mayor Helmer and Isabella Redlinski for this award.

Commissioners are bursting with pride and gave Agnes a round of applause at their meeting.

Management Plan Protocol - North Slough and Hillcrest Lake

Dana reiterated that removal of invasive buckthorn at Hillcrest Lake has begun. Removal of a large portion of buckthorn was accomplished at a very productive workday on February 9, 2020 and without incident. It feels good to be refreshing this area.

John mentioned that the northwest corner of Hillcrest Lake is critical because of the amount of erosion.

Before planting in May, we will review the Plan and plot or map where prairie plants and native trees will be planted. We will also ensure pathways are user-friendly to the residents.

Commissioners discussed inviting residents to review the planting on-site, especially the shoreline, during one of our workdays. Jill suggested conducting the resident meeting during Earth Week or the week of April 20, 2020. PHNRC has a scheduled volunteer workday on Sunday, April 19, 2020.

Agnes will send shoreline planting information to Commissioners outlining ideas, requirements, species, mapping, etc., that Agnes obtained from the Chicago Botanic Gardens website. Agnes also noted that she has acquired the warrior sedges.

The PHNRC will mail a postcard via direct mail to all Hillcrest Lake residents with complete information.

ComEd Update

Dana reported that a meeting with Sara Race, Senior Program Manager, Environ at Commonwealth Edison is scheduled on April 29, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. The meeting will be conducted by walking several of our project sites.

We are unsure where we would go from there, but we will not hesitate to ask for funding for extra signage or help from the ComEd crew to remove brush from our sites. Boardwalks fall under a Grant, but we could ask if covered by funding.

Prospect Heights Park District Decision on Funding

Agnes stated that the Prospect Heights Park District Board has approved our request for funding of \$6,500! This is truly wonderful and very appreciated.

The funding will be coordinated between the City intergovernmental agreement so we may work on the property. Some things we may purchase through the City or through the Park District. The amount funded includes a paid summer intern position.

PHNRC Treasurer Report

John Kamysz distributed to Commissioners an updated NRC Revenue/Expenses sheet covering the period through January 6, 2020. Our funds are the same as last month or \$1,691.55. These funds are available until May 1, 2020; therefore, Dana and Agnes prepared a detailed list of necessary items to purchase to effectively accomplish our work and tasks on our sites. Commissioners reviewed and approved the purchases.

One of the purchases is heavy-duty gauge galvanized garden stakes, which are “U” shaped and reusable. This type of stake ensures plantings are permanent along a shoreline and not washed away with the first heavy rainfall.

Peter Falcone received a copy of the list detailing quantity and type of item to purchase plus a link providing complete details, including a photo, of each intended purchase.

Comprehensive Equipment List and 2020-2021 Budget

This document outlines what we need from the next budget. If the City approves the budget, funds for employment of two summer interns will be possible and \$1,500 for supplies for the summer months. Power equipment is a necessity, as well as soil and Greenhouse supplies.

City Budget Presentation 2020

Dana reported that our proposed budget of \$5,500 has been provided to Joe Wade and Peter Falcone. Our budget will be presented to City Council on either March 9 or March 23, 2020.

Earth Day (April 22, 2020) and Earth Week Activities

Our plans for Earth Week are as follows: Volunteer Workday on April 19; activities, such as site tours, starting on April 19 through the weekend; the Nature Speaks Program Speaker on April 22, 2020 (Earth Day); and meeting with Hillcrest Lake residents on Friday evening, April 24, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

Dana encouraged Commissioners to offer any other suggested activities.

City Civic Meetings and PHNRC Representation Reporting

Ad Hoc Willow Road Project Committee (Hillcrest Lake)

The Ad Hoc Willow Road Project Committee last met on January 8, 2020. The City's website does not indicate when the next meeting will be held.

McDonald Creek Commission Meeting

The McDonald Creek Commission meeting of January 28, 2020 was cancelled. The next MCC meeting is not reported on the City's website; however, if scheduled, it would be held on Tuesday evening, February 25, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

John mentioned that a lot of downed trees are in the creek, particularly at Heron Pond, and are near obstructing water flow, if more debris appears, blockages will appear. Agnes will forward information to Commissioners on the MWRD Hotline website, which also has great information for the public.

Peter Falcone instructed us to inform Mark Roscoe of Public Works. If it is ours, we'll fix it. If not, the MWRD will be involved.

Prospect Heights Park District Board of Directors

Jill reported that the March PHPD Board of Directors' Meeting has been rescheduled from March 24, 2020 to March 31, 2020.

Proactive Nature Management Plans

Peter Hahn felt a Slough and Hillcrest Survey should be performed to monitor these areas. Peter felt a comprehensive study should be performed every five years. This would be like the Hey Report or accomplished by the IDNR. Peter felt it was very important to compare, monitor and address any problems.

Peter said we need to know what's going on. Constant monitoring should be done at least every three to five years. The Hey report of 2015 is a baseline, not an in-depth report.

So much is going on at Hillcrest Lake and the Slough, (i.e., fish, aquatic plants, insects, composition of the water, etc.). We know land-wise (Wellness Action Plan in our 2016 Strategic Plan) but not water quality or silt. We need good hard data to proceed. We do not know what is in the Lake and Slough.

Additionally, Peter said proactive nature management plans is a massive topic. There is a topic of trees especially old, heritage type trees. Does the City have any tree ordinances?

Agnes offered that we could conduct macro-invertebrate and water quality testing on our own and monitor the plants and insects in the creek. Amphibians are a good gauge of the health of the area. Seth already conducts Butterfly monitoring, and we have the Bird monitoring, so Dana suggested we could do a more concerted effort in monitoring of how the paradigm is shifting.

Studies are expensive. However, could the IDNR conduct a study on a regular basis? Is it appropriate to have the City ask the IDNR? IDNR conducted the previous study at no charge. The Hey Report was expensive, and Peter Falcone cautioned that the City is cutting budgets.

Monitoring and establishing a baseline requires a lot of expertise and requires trapping, netting, keeping data, etc. However, tangible data is necessary, and IDNR has a baseline fish study.

Peter strongly felt that something must be established and not wait for a problem to arise. Things change quickly.

Peter Falcone suggested we comprise our thoughts and e:mail to Peter and Joe Wade.

On another topic, Dana said there is the possibility of looking at a tree ordinance. PHPD does have a tree ordinance and are working on a tree survey. but the City does not have a tree ordinance. Therefore, perhaps the PHRNC could start looking into establishing a tree ordinance to protect the 200-year old tree in Prospect Heights.

Glenview and North Shore Towns have extensive tree ordinances. We could view and possibly modify for our town and propose to City Council. Peter said the ordinance would have to be championed by bureaucracy.

Peter Falcone suggested we research this topic, review sample ordinances and then contact our Aldermen.

Dana is almost finished in updating our Master Plan for all our sites. Dana will then forward to Commissioners to review the work schedule for the year. We can also build into the Master Plan a monitoring process for the sites, and a matrix would be developed on how we do it (what we propose to accomplish versus reality).

Announcements to the Public

Jill mentioned an article in The Daily Herald of February 2, 2020 by Bev Krams through the Master Gardener Answer Desk, University of Illinois Extension. The University of Illinois and the Forest Preserve District of Cook County have teamed for a program entitled Conservation@Home that recognizes yards, schools and organizations that integrate sustainable practices contributing to clean water, rich soil and ecosystems that support people and wildlife. For more details, visit extension.illinois.edu/cook/conservationhome.

Seth mentioned that a way to be good to our environment is to be conscious of our use of plastic. Fresh Thyme sells bamboo toothbrushes that are manufactured from yogurt containers. Plant-based and biodegradable. Get in the habit of these things we can be better in protecting our environment.

Visitor's Comments

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Prospect Heights Natural Resources Commission is scheduled for Thursday, March 12, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in City Hall Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business to come before the meeting. Therefore, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Jill E. Moskal, CPS
PHNRC Commissioner and Recording Secretary