

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST  
DEER MANAGEMENT AD HOC COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, January 19, 2021**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Deer Management Ad Hoc Committee was held on Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room of Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue – River Forest, IL.

**1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Chairperson Tom Cargie, Laurie Gillard, John Roeger (*arrived 7:47pm*), Joel Lueking, Julie Armstrong, Dawn Mizgala, Marta Kozbur, Ingrid Liu, John Flynn (*arrived 8:13pm*), Katharine Christmas, Dan Hollenbach, Cathleen Hughes, Ron Lemar, Annette Madden

Absent: None

Also Present: Management Analyst Sara Phyfer

Ms. Gillard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lueking, to discuss the draft community-based deer management plan prior to the vote on the recommendation to cull deer.

Roll call:

Ayes: Chairperson Tom Cargie, Laurie Gillard, Joel Lueking, Julie Armstrong, Dawn Mizgala, Marta Kozbur, Ingrid Liu, Katharine Christmas, Dan Hollenbach, Cathleen Hughes, Ron Lemar, Annette Madden

Absent: John Roeger, John Flynn

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jeannine Turner 428 S. Maple, Oak Park. Ms. Turner expressed her support for the deer of Thatcher Woods and stated she hoped another strategy other than eliminating the deer could be found, and that the deer and residents could coexist.

Ms. Hughes stated the program would not be eradicating deer and that it was population management.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Gillard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lemar, to approve the December 15, 2021 meeting minutes.

Roll call:

Ayes: Chairperson Tom Cargie, Laurie Gillard, Joel Lueking, Julie Armstrong, Dawn Mizgala, Marta Kozbur, Ingrid Liu, Katharine Christmas, Dan Hollenbach, Cathleen Hughes, Ron Lemar, Annette Madden  
Absent: John Roeger, John Flynn  
Nays: None  
Motion Passes.

**4. REPORTS FROM SUBCOMMITTEES**

None.

**5. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

*New Business items were heard out of order.*

c. Discussion of Draft Committee Report and Additional Recommendations

Ms. Gillard [presented](#) a draft report of recommendations for a community-based deer management plan. She noted she used templates and the resources on Cornell University's website. She stated the Committee collected excellent data from its survey and they have a responsibility to the community to respond to the comments. She reviewed the plan and highlighted creating a permanent committee with a third-party wildlife biologist and having a line-item in the Village budget. She noted the plan would include: a definition of the problem, realistic and achievable goals, measurable objectives, recommended management actions and considerations, a plan for monitoring progress, and a plan for public engagement. She also discussed the need for a budget, timetable, and list of responsibilities. Ms. Gillard stated it is critical to have community buy in and a plan for public engagement. She also highlighted the need to respond to what they have been asked to consider in the survey comments.

Ms. Hughes stated that the Committee stated that the Forest Preserves is not the Village's land and that it comes down to an animal rights issue. She stated the Village tried to take on this issue after receiving complaints and that the Forest Preserves is not acting.

In response to a question from Ms. Hughes, Chairperson Cargie stated his understanding is that the Forest Preserves uses inferential data to determine the condition of the habitat and does not take a count of deer.

Mr. Lemar expressed concern that the same arguments were being made over and over and there was no basis for them. He stated the deer are living in terrible conditions and noted the property damage occurring.

Chairperson Cargie reiterated that the Forest Preserves assesses their land to determine the need for culling so that the land the deer live on is sustained. He stated the agency responsible for maintaining the herd is not and that it is incumbent on the Village to protect residents' property.

Mr. Lueking summarized an email from Chris Anchor of the Forest Preserves, noting the size Thatcher Woods is too small for the number of deer. He expressed the need to be honest with the community that serious overpopulation exists.

Ms. Liu expressed support for Ms. Gillard's information and stated there needs to be a more organized and long-term committee to carry forward.

In response to comments from Committee members, Chairperson Cargie stated the IGA is five one-year contracts, which would include assessments to establish justification each year for culling. He stated once the Committee makes its report to the Board, their responsibility ends.

Ms. Gillard stated it is more than whether or not to cull, and she reiterated the need to address concerns about other things brought up in the survey responses.

In response to a comment about deer migration, Chairperson Cargie and Mr. Lueking noted that Tim Preuss of the IDNR stated deer stay in their habitat and there is very little migration.

Mr. Hollenbach stated the Committee has done its due diligence and gotten expert recommendations. He stated that the people who are affected and have issues indicated on the survey they want action. He urged that the Committee is ready to make a decision.

Ms. Armstrong stated the reality is a life or death situation for wildlife and that she does not believe the Committee has proven that if the Village culls, residents' issues would be resolved. She questioned the statement that deer do not migrate.

Ms. Hughes emphasized that the program is population management, not eradication, and that the Committee is considering animal rights over residents' enjoyment of their properties.

Ms. Kozbur stated that the Committee needs to be accountable for its decision. She noted a discontinued tree program and stated spending money to shoot deer does not sit well with her.

Mr. Lueking stated he thinks a long-term plan and committee would be great but that they need to be realistic about the problem the Village is facing right now.

In response to a question about the report, Chairperson Cargie stated that he and Management Analyst Phyfer would draft it and have the Committee weigh in, and that dissenting reports would be allowed.

b. Vote on Adding Questionnaire Results to Deer Management Committee Page

Ms. Gillard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hollenbach, to add the questionnaire results to the Deer Management Committee page.

Roll call:

Ayes: Chairperson Tom Cargie, Laurie Gillard, John Roeger, Joel Lueking, Julie Armstrong, Dawn Mizgala, Marta Kozbur, Ingrid Liu, John Flynn, Katharine Christmas, Dan Hollenbach, Cathleen Hughes, Ron Lemar, Annette Madden

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

a. Vote on Recommendation to Cull Deer

Mr. Flynn made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lemar, to make a recommendation to the Village Board of Trustees to cull deer.

In response to a question from Ms. Christmas about his vote, Chairperson Cargie stated the Committee and the Village Board are two separate bodies and noted he is able to vote as a member of the Committee and separately as a Village Trustee. Management Analyst Phyfer stated the Village Attorney would be asked to opine on this question.

There was a brief discussion about using the term “control” instead and it was determined to leave it as cull.

Mr. Hollenbach stated it was important to say that this does not stop any efforts from pursuing education efforts and encouraged that be pursued.

Mr. Roeger stated the data and expertise shared is the reason for his vote and it is not because he was biased.

Ms. Hughes stated her vote is not based on what she personally feels or thinks and that it is based on the knowledge she has learned throughout the process and what she knew the Village to have represented in the survey.

Roll call:

Ayes: Chairperson Tom Cargie, John Roeger, Joel Lueking, Dawn Mizgala, John Flynn, Dan Hollenbach, Cathleen Hughes, Ron Lemar

Absent: None

Nays: Annette Madden, Ingrid Liu, Katharine Christmas, Laurie Gillard, Julie Armstrong, Marta Kozbur

Motion Passes.

Committee members expressed concern about the process and allegations of bias. Members acknowledged the amount of work they have done, and they briefly discussed next steps.

Chairperson Cargie noted the Committee's final meeting will be to finalize its report and stated anyone who wants to write their own is entitled to. He stated they would get materials to members by the 23<sup>rd</sup> for their review.

- a. Discussion of Cornell University/The Nature Conservancy Materials

*This item was discussed as part of Ms. Gillard's presentation.*

## **7. NEXT MEETING**

The Committee members came to a consensus to hold the next meeting on March 9, 2021 at 7:30p.m.

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Hollenbach made a motion, seconded by Ms. Mizgala, to adjourn the Deer Management Ad Hoc Committee meeting at 9:18p.m.

Roll call:

Ayes: Chairperson Tom Cargie, Laurie Gillard, John Roeger, Joel Lueking, Julie Armstrong, Dawn Mizgala, Marta Kozbur, Ingrid Liu, John Flynn, Katharine Christmas, Dan Hollenbach, Cathleen Hughes, Ron Lemar, Annette Madden

Absent: None

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

---

Sara Phyfer, Secretary