

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
DEER MANAGEMENT AD HOC COMMITTEE
Tuesday, December 15, 2020**

A regular meeting of the Village of River Forest Deer Management Ad Hoc Committee was held on Tuesday, December 15, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room of Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue – River Forest, IL.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:34p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Chairperson Tom Cargie, Laurie Gillard, John Roeger, Joel Lueking, Julie Armstrong (*left the meeting at 8:45*), Dawn Mizgala, Marta Kozbur, Ingrid Liu, John Flynn, Katharine Christmas, Dan Hollenbach, Cathleen Hughes, Ron Lemar

Absent: Annette Madden

Also Present: Management Analyst Sara Phyfer

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Hollenbach made a motion, seconded by Ms. Mizgala. to approve the November 17, 2020 meeting minutes.

Roll call:

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

Absent: Annette Madden

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

4. REPORTS FROM SUBCOMMITTEES

Chairperson Cargie thanked everyone for their continued work.

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. Discussion of Questionnaire Findings

The Committee discussed the questionnaire findings and the need for additional solutions for residents, including community education and garden/planting recommendations and resources. There was a concern that a community forum piece outlined in the Committee's resolution had gone unfilled. Ms. Gillard offered to research and draft alternatives to culling to provide a thorough report for the community.

Mr. Lueking summarized a conversation he had with Chris Anker from the Cook County Forest Preserves regarding the condition of Thatcher Woods. He reported that Mr. Anker stated there are too many deer for the woods to support and a detailed research project is not necessary and that the browse line is well defined. He defined the browse line as 4-6ft off the forest floor that is gone because the deer have eaten the vegetation. Regarding migration, Mr. Lueking reported that Mr. Anker stated deer typically stay in their own forest area and that research has not shown that more deer would fill in if some deer in Thatcher Woods were to be culled. Mr. Lueking stated this is consistent with his own work in the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Ms. Christmas stated she had another conversation with Tim Preuss of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and suggested it would be helpful to get these individuals on a call. She reported that Mr. Preuss stated there could be no culling this winter because the Forest Preserves has not done the research and that he had not heard of a municipality taking on the whole cost of the program. She stated she felt more conversation was needed with the Forest Preserves regarding their role and asked how the Village would rate success with a culling program.

Chairperson Cargie stated his understanding was that Mr. Preuss was prepared to issue the permit last year, and that the knowledge of the Forest Preserves' employees is known but not documented.

The Committee discussed getting to a decision point of action and needing more community education on the issue. The Committee also discussed the concern that many respondents who have a problem are looking for action to be taken.

Mr. Hollenbach asked the members to vote on whether they thought there was a deer problem, and Chairperson Cargie stated he counted 7 yes votes and 5 no votes. Members discussed needing a public forum prior to culling and that just because people have an issue with deer, that does not mean culling is the answer. Some members expressed concern about the overpopulation of deer and how to come to a solution for residents.

Chairperson Cargie clarified that a Forest Preserves "survey" is not a headcount of deer but a documentation on the IDNR permit of the condition of the habitat.

There was more discussion about educational options as interim steps prior to culling, including a possible matching garden program, addressing traffic issues, and suggesting another survey next year. Ms. Gillard and Ms. Christmas volunteered to research and prepare educational materials. There was also discussion that the other option the Committee has is

to make a recommendation to address the deer population by entering into a culling program.

Chairperson Cargie clarified that the language in the contract is for up to 50 tags and the opportunity to reassess after a year.

The Committee continued to discuss alternative solutions and whether to make a recommendation to cull.

In response to a question about the safety of culling in a residential area, Chairperson Cargie noted there is an indemnification clause outlined within the contract and the language was approved by the Village's attorney.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Discussion of Final Committee Report and Next Steps

After more discussion about the Committee's next steps, Chairperson Cargie stated Ms. Phyfer would put together a draft report for the Committee's review. He stated he anticipated two more meeting, with the final meeting being the recommendation on culling and finalizing the report.

b. Discussion of Deer Management Information for Village Website

The Committee did not discuss this item.

7. NEXT MEETING

The Committee members came to a consensus to hold the next meeting on January 19, 2021 at 7:30p.m.

Mr. Lueking volunteered to invite a representative from the Forest Preserves and Chairperson Cargie stated he would reach out to Mr. Preuss.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Lemar made a motion, seconded by Ms. Hughes, to adjourn the Deer Management Ad Hoc Committee meeting at 9:28p.m.

Roll call:

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

Absent: Julie Armstrong, Annette Madden, John Flynn

Nays: None

Motion Passes.

Sara Phyfer, Secretary