

Minutes of the Ecological Advocacy Committee (EAC) Meeting on June 21, 2021

Committee Members Present:

Emily Alderton
Lindsay Chadderton
Charlene Allison Rountree
Steve Sass
Andy Schnabel

Others Present:

Garry Harrington – VPA, Rum Village Park Property Manager
John Martinez - VPA, Director of Facilities & Grounds
Matthew Moyers - VPA, Partnerships, Community and Standards Coordinator
Hannah Teshka – VPA, Pinhook Center Manager

I. Call to order – Steve Sass 8:32 am

II. Approval of minutes

The minutes from the May 27, 2021, EAC meeting were approved. Minutes will be submitted to VPA secretary and then will appear on the city's website as official minutes.

III. Old Business

A. Canada Geese - Executive Director of VPA, Aaron Perri, has expressed interest in recommendations from EAC regarding control of Canada goose populations with an overall goal of lowering densities to levels tolerable by the public and VPA maintenance personnel. The nuisance wildlife subcommittee working on the nuisance wildlife management plan (since previous meeting, this has been renamed the wildlife coexistence plan) has explored multiple sources of information on this topic, and EAC engaged in an extensive discussion of possible remedies. The current wildlife plan includes a table of possible methods for reducing goose densities, to which the committee suggested adding egg addling/oiling and culling, but EAC could not identify a method that seemed appropriate or financially feasible for all VPA areas. Executive Director Perri would like recommendations as soon as possible, and EAC discussed whether this portion of the coexistence plan should be submitted separately to Executive Director Perri or whether the committee should push to complete the entire document for submission in August/September. Matt Moyers suggested that EAC should still plan for completion of a draft coexistence plan by August, but to be sure that it has a clear list of procedural steps for goose management.

IV. New Business

Abbreviated NRMP Guidelines - Matt Moyers requested that EAC produce a 5-page executive summary of the Natural Resources Management Plan. That executive summary should include action steps. The goal is to make the NRMP more broadly accessible to more agencies and departments.

V. VPA and City Updates

A. Update on feral cat problem at 35th St. Wetlands - EAC contacted Meow Mission about cat boxes in or near the Wetlands. A Meow Mission representative denied that there were any boxes on VPA properties, but photo documentation from EAC Chair Steve Sass suggested otherwise. No comment yet from Meow Mission.

B. Homeless person at O'Brien Park - John Martinez outlined VPA procedures for contacting such persons and asking to them leave. Mr. Martinez emphasized that if members of the general public see homeless persons encamped on VPA properties, they are advised to contact VPA.

C. Herbicide treatments at Frederickson Prairie - An extensive patch of weedy plants at Frederickson Prairie was observed to have been killed by herbicide treatment. Inquiries suggested that this was not the work of VPA, the Boy Scouts, or developers of nearby condominiums.

VI. Miscellaneous

A. Native seedlings for Howard Park - About 20 flats of seedlings grown at IU South Bend were ready for transplant. EAC briefly discussed setting a date for that event.

Next meeting: August 2, 2021

Meeting adjourned at 10:18 am

Minutes submitted by Andy Schnabel, EAC Secretary 2021

APPROVED

Minutes approved 8/2/2021