

## **Minutes of the Ecological Advocacy Committee (EAC) Meeting on September 13, 2021**

### **Committee Members Present:**

Emily Alderton  
Lindsay Chadderton  
Allison Pudlo  
Charlene Allison Rountree  
Steve Sass  
Andy Schnabel  
Andrew Tucker

### **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 8:33 am**

### **II. Approval of minutes**

The minutes from the August 2, 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. Wildlife Coexistence Plan - Draft document was submitted on July 30. It has a complete Canada goose plan in place. EAC discussed whether to call this complete for now or to continue adding information about other nuisance species. Matt Moyers emphasized that the goose plan was highest importance for now, and that the larger plan could be made a longer-term target for EAC. EAC unanimously approved this first version to be submitted to VPA for consideration and then to be distributed to other local constituencies.

### **IV. New Business**

A. Citizen's Tree Board – Matt Moyers reported that in the near future, the Parks Board will consider an extension of the EAC establishing resolution and that the proposal will include a greater role by EAC as a citizen's tree board. Steve Sass reported that an IUSB student intern from the Sustainability Studies program is working to compile information about tree boards from other communities. It was noted that EAC was created, in part, as an expansion of a previous City resolution that formed an Urban Forestry Advisory Committee. It was suggested that we consult closely with Brent Thompson about the nature of EAC's role as a citizen's tree board and also that we consult with Carrie Tauscher, IN DNR State Community & Urban Forestry Coordinator and perhaps have her lead a meeting/workshop on the topic of community tree programs and citizen's tree boards.

### **V. VPA and City Updates**

A. Pinhook park lagoon - John Martinez reported that a large pipe leading from the northeast corner of the lagoon to the St. Joseph River is blocked by debris, contributing to high water

events at Pinhook. Some damage of the pipe is also present at the St. Joseph River end and has contributed to bank erosion. A number of plans are being considered for unblocking the pipe, repairing the pipe, and reducing chances for future problems.

## **VI. Miscellaneous**

A. Invasive Species Ordinance - Steve Sass noted that this is now in effect, but that many vendors continue to sell species that are included on the list of banned plants. Matt Moyers indicated that VPA and City of South Bend have no plans for issuing fines or for other possible enforcement methods, but instead are focused on developing informational materials directed at vendors and for the general public. EAC will help with developing materials that will list good native replacements for the most offensive invasive species and also will educate the public about the importance of choosing native over non-native species. VPA has some plans for meetings to better educate vendors about the new ordinance. It was noted that The Nature Conservancy had worked with some of the big box stores in southern Michigan to incentivize sale of natives over non-natives, so knowledge gained from those efforts might be useful in South Bend. It was also noted that the Midwest Invasive Plant Network has developed an app and a brochure that provide information on Midwest native alternatives for invasive plants:

<https://apps.bugwood.org/apps/landscape-alt/>

<https://bugwoodcloud.org/mura/mipn/assets/File/MIPN%20Landscape%20Alternatives%2020213.pdf>

B. VPA & IU South Bend's Staff Volunteer Day (Friday, Oct. 22) - Steve Sass and Hannah Teshka are working with IU South Bend to organize a day of invasive species removal (mostly honeysuckle and winter creeper) at Woodlawn Park. The event will possibly include lunch and a round-table discussion at Pinhook Park.

Next EAC Meeting: October 25

**Meeting adjourned at 10:15 am**

Minutes submitted by Andy Schnabel, EAC Secretary 2021

**APPROVED**

Minutes Approved 10/25/2021