

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

NIRPC- Lake Michigan Room

September 7, 2017

Members/Guests: Geof Benson, Jen Birchfield, Mary Tanis, Will Farrellbegg, George Topoll, Lauri Keagle, Jennifer Gadzala, Brenda Scott Henry, Leslie Dorworth, Dorreen Carey, Chandramouli Viswana, Jeff Loewe and George Malis.

NIRPC Staff: Kathy Luther, Rachel Veronesi and Mary Thorne.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Geof Benson called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions.

Approval of June 1, 2017 EMPC Minutes

On motion by Mary Tanis and a second by Will Farrellbegg, the August 3, 2017 EMPC meeting minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

Old Business:

a) Action on Resolution 17-19

On a motion by Will Farrellbegg and a second by Mary Tanis, the EMPC voted unanimously to recommend Resolution 17-19 in Support of Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and Indiana Dunes State Park Request to be Designated as a Dark Sky Park by the International Dark Sky Association to the NIRPC Board for adoption.

b) Additional Information

Kathy Luther informed the committee that additional information received from Dr. Robert Kramer on CO2 savings for the retrofit of the HPS street lights to LED was available as a note to the August 3, 2017 minutes.

Presentations:

a. SepticSmart Week September 18-22, 2017 – Dorreen Carey, DNR – Coastal Program

Dorreen Carey presented information on a statewide outreach program to homeowners who have septic systems. The information includes a system guide, maintenance record keeping information, and yard signage designed to advertise and promote SepticSmart in the neighborhoods. Deb Backhus is the Special Projects Coordinator for the Source Tracking Project. LaPorte County has adopted an ordinance that homes on the market containing septic systems must first have a certified inspection prior to being put up for sale. Brief discussion followed. Contact Dorreen Carey for more information.

b. Microbial Source Tracking – Jenny Fischer, Ph.D., Indiana University Northwest

Jenny Fischer presented on technology being used in tracking sources of pollution in waterways through the use of DNA testing and E. coli, which is a good indicator of microbial pollution. Fixing septic systems will not eliminate E. coli in waterways. Identifying bacteria in the watershed will show which sources are contributing to the pollution. Dr. Fischer has applied for a Lake Michigan Coastal Program grant to identify septic pollution in Northwest Indiana and establishing the proportion of E. coli derived from septic system leakage.

New Business:

a) Action on Resolution 17-18

On a motion by Chandramouli Viswana and a second by Brenda Scott Henry, the EMPC voted unanimously to recommend Resolution 17-18 in Support of SepticSmart Week September 18-22 to the NIRPC Board for adoption.

NIRPC Announcements

- a) Kathy Luther introduced Rachel Veronesi, NIRPC's new environmental educator.
- b) Kathy Luther said NIRPC has staffing positions openings in accounting, planning, etc. Go to www.nirpc.org for more information.
- c) Kathy Luther said NIRPC is hosting the statewide Indiana MPO Conference September 25 through September 28 at the Stardust Event Center in Michigan City. Several mobile tours are being offered. A PowerPlanningPalooza will be held the morning of September 27 and the keynote speakers are from FHWA and INDOT. Go to the NIRPC website at <http://www.nirpc.org/2017-mpo-conference/> for the registration link.
- d) Joe Exl said the CommuniTree Program was made possible with funding through a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant awarded to NIRPC by the USDA Forest Service. CommuniTree grant applications are due this Friday, September 8. The workshop and tree planting will be held at NIRPC on September 19 from 9 a.m. to noon. Go to <http://www.nirpc.org/2040-plan/environment-green-infrastructure/communitree/communitree-events/> for more information.

Public Comment:

No comments were offered.

Other Announcements

- a) Laurie Keagle announced the Electric Vehicle Ride & Drive on September 15 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at NIRPC. Contact Catherine at 219-644-3690 or cyoder@southshorecleancities.org for reservations.
- b) Geof Benson announced the Apples Festival September 16 and 17 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Chellberg Farm. Contact Geof at (219) 395-9555 or gbenson@duneslearningcenter.org for more information.
- c) The Clean Air Golf Outing is September 19 at 10:30 a.m. at River Point Country Club, 6700 Country Club Rd, Hobart. Register at http://southshorecleancities.org/events/golf_outing.php.
- d) FarmHop, four local farm tours, will be held on September 23 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Buy your tickets at <http://mailchi.mp/af3c0c4c4d23/cs0rifzuly-1139669?e=ee0ddd13d9>.
- e) Green Business Workshop and Showcase is October 17 at Century Center, South Bend. Details will be forthcoming.
- f) Jennifer Birchfield said the Urban Waters meeting will be the last week in October.

The next meeting of the Environmental Management Policy Committee will be held on October 5, 2017 at 9 a.m. featuring a presentation on the 2017 Air Quality Survey.

Hearing no other business, on a motion by Mary Tanis and a second by Chandramouli Viswana, Chairman Benson adjourned the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

A Digital MP3 of this meeting is filed. Contact Mary Thorne at 219-763-6060 or mthorne@nirpc.org should you wish to receive a copy of it.