

## ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

NIRPC- Lake Michigan Room

December 7, 2017

**Members/Guests:** Geof Benson, AJ Monroe, Michael Kuss, BreShawn Spikes, Tim Kingsland, Robert Verbik, Rachel Ckeaser, George Malis, Drew Hart Leslie Dorworth, Lauri Keagle, Kaitlyn McClain, Jen Birchfield, Jennifer Gadzala, George Topoll, Deb Backhus, Maggie Byrne, Reggie Korthals.

**NIRPC Staff:** Joe Exl, Rachel Veronesi and Mary Thorne.

### Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Geof Benson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions.

### Approval of September 7, 2017 EMPC Minutes

On motion by Tim Kingsland and a second by Reggie Korthals, the October 5, 2017 EMPC meeting minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

### Presentations:

#### a. CommuniTree – Joe Exl, NIRPC

Joe Exl, Drew Hart and BreShawn Spikes presented an update on the successful tree program with NIRPC and several communities. There were 750 trees in all with about a 98% survival rate. We will be getting about \$100,000 for the program next year. For more information, go to the website at <http://www.nirpc.org/2040-plan/environment-green-infrastructure/communitree/>.

#### b. Deep River Watershed Initiative – Joe Exl, NIRPC

Joe Exl presented on the Deep River Watershed initiative which concludes at the end of the month. The purpose of this initiative is to restore and protect streams in the watershed. The watershed plan, which has been approved by IDEM and the EPA, is in the implementation phase. Joe Exl gave a brief account of the work in the following areas: St. Peter and Paul Church in Merrillville, vegetative swale installation with a project cost of \$17,500; North Lake Park Avenue, vegetative swale with inlet and outlet structures, project cost of \$75,000; Hobart City Hall, rain garden and turf replacement, project cost of \$75,000. Other projects: a Deep River Dam engineering feasibility study with assistance of DNR Coastal Program & LARE Program funding, will be finished in June 2018; Outreach and Public Involvement for Hoosier River Watch monitoring sites. NIRPC applied for but did not receive an IDEM 319 to implement several watershed plans, so partnerships are important. Jen Birchfield suggested a tour of the projects occur next summer.

**New Business:** None presented

**Public Comment:** No comments were offered.

### Other Announcements

- a) South Shore Clean Cities Annual Meeting and Awards February 20, 2018. Visit <http://www.southshorecleancities.org/> for more information.
- b) DNR Coastal has several small grants available. The deadline is January 15, 2018. Contact [mbyrne@dnr.in.gov](mailto:mbyrne@dnr.in.gov) for more information.

- c) Grant Specialist position was posted on State of Indiana jobs website. Contact: Maggie Byrne 219-983-9912, [mbyrne@dnr.in.gov](mailto:mbyrne@dnr.in.gov)
- d) NWI Urban Waters - 2018 Work Plan Development Meeting will be held on January 26, 2018 from 9:30 am – noon at NIRPC. Contact: Jennifer Birchfield (219) 805-1440, [jbirchfield@pnw.edu](mailto:jbirchfield@pnw.edu).
- e) IDEM Commissioner Bruno Piggott has been invited to the joint Forum/EMPC meeting on January 4 at 9 a.m. at NIRPC.
- f) Four Watershed Boundary Signs are going in at Portage, Porter County, St. John and Lake County. The unveiling is tonight at the Merrillville Stormwater Education Center on Broadway.

The next meeting of the Environmental Management Policy Committee will be held on January 4, 2018 at 9 a.m.

Hearing no other business, Chairman Benson adjourned the meeting at 9:55 a.m.

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