

## **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT POLICY COMMITTEE**

NIRPC - Lake Michigan Room

February 7, 2019

Minutes

**Members/Guests:** Jan Bapst, Lauri Keagle, Sherryl Doerr, Dean Button, Tyler Kent, Susan Mihalo, Deb Backus, David Wright, Glenn Linhart, Jim Alexander, Ryan Lisek, Kelly Wenger, George Topoll, Katherine Moore Powell, Geof Benson and Kay Nelson.

**NIRPC Staff:** Kathy Luther, Joe Exl, Dominique Edwards and Candice Eklund.

### **Call to Order**

Jan Bapst called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m.

On motion by Lauri Keagle and second by Sherryl Doerr, the January 10, 2019 meeting minutes were approved as presented.

### **Presentation – Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana**

Lauri Keagle introduced the four senior environmental engineering students from Purdue West Lafayette, Indiana, who participated via conference phone. Lauri explained the goal of the students' plan was to capture a message on air quality for Lake, Porter and LaPorte Counties that would be most meaningful and understood by an individual that they could impact air quality from both a positive and negative stand point. The study began in October 2018 and monthly conference calls took place with Kathy Luther and Lauri Keagle to determine scope, format, goals, and deadlines.

Ryan Gansemer, Abby Osborn, Caroline Peeters and Audrey Whitmire presented their study on 'NIRPC's Air Quality Education and Outreach Program' through the video and project report they created. After the video presentation, Susan Mihalo inquired if the students' campaign included encouraging consumers to convert or purchase electric or hybrid vehicles. The presentation and video focused on low cost actions and the written report included choices for vehicles with better mileage and vehicles that could run on ethanol.

Jim Alexander felt the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) data was misleading and not relevant to the goal of individual air quality. Jim questioned the Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) chart referenced in the reports, asking if they were national or state statistics. The students stated the information gathered was national statistics.

The students thanked Lauri Keagle and Kathy Luther for all of their assistance and the committee for their time and questions.

Kathy Luther stated NIRPC will take all of the information discussed under advisement before publishing the video and project report on NIRPC's website.

## **Regional Planning**

Kathy Luther provided a brief introduction as to how the NOFA applications were reviewed and scored. Scoring project proposals for the Federal Highway Administration funds in both the air quality and environmental categories took place at the EMPC meetings held last October and November. When the applicants submitted their NOFA applications, they self-scored every question for each project. NIPRC staff also reviewed each application and assigned a score. The applicants were contacted if additional information was needed, giving them the opportunity to be awarded additional points. Six NOFA applications were submitted and reviewed. Some of the applications were broken down into multiple years, resulting in a total of 13 applications. Two applications were for the Environmental category and 11 were for the Air Quality category. Kathy stated the EMPC group will be acting as an advisory committee to the grants by reviewing the scoring and making recommendations to the Technical Policy Committee (TPC), who will decide the slate of projects that will be funded.

The two environmental applications were for the storm water management project in Hammond and the vegetation management project in Valparaiso. The targeted funding availability will not be available for these projects until FY 2024. Both cities agreed on the timeframe. The Committee agreed to only discuss the scoring questions where the applicants self-score and NIPRC's score differed. When scoring changes were agreed on by consensus of the committee, changes were made live by Joe Exl. When Dean Button reviewed the point differences for the project in Hammond, he stated he would have appreciated a response from NIPRC staff when points were down-graded so a response time may have allowed for the questions to be rectified, allowing for greater points. Kathy Luther agreed with Dean and noted the feedback for future NOFA application review procedures.

Kathy Luther discussed the NOFA applications for the Air Quality category. Kathy explained there is different funding allocation for different years in the TIP. There is no funding allocation for Air Quality projects in 2020 and 2021 but there is \$1,400,000 in 2022 and 2024.

The project for Lake Station is already in the TIP but the city is requesting a scope change so the project will need to be re-scored. If the TPC decides the score is high enough, the new funding will not need to be re-allocated in 2021. The project for the City of Gary for diesel replacements was withdrawn.

Kathy Luther discussed an application for CMAQ funding that was received on February 6, 2019 from Gary Public Transportation Corp (GPTC) for vehicle replacements in 2023 and 2024. The deadline to submit NOFA applications was January 11, 2019. GPTC submitted their applications on January 11 for transit 5307 funding but decided to also submit an application on February 6 for CMAQ funding after learning of the 5307 funding constraints at the Transit Operators Roundtable (TOR) meeting on February 5, 2019. Kathy Luther asked the Committee's thoughts on the fairness of scoring a new project submission after the deadline of January 11. The Committee felt the NOFA application submittal process had a clear and documented deadline and in granting this application after the deadline would then need to be opened for all communities to submit late applications. The EMPC Committee decided that applications submitted after the deadline would not be considered for this NOFA. Jan Bapst asked the committee if they wanted to vote on the application GPTC submitted on February 6. David Wright stated that based on the consensus of the group, the CMAQ funding budget, and existing projects already allocated to the funding, there was no need to vote due to funds already being allocated. The Committee agreed and the discussion was closed.

### **Discuss the EMPC Meeting Schedule**

Kathy Luther discussed NIRPC's desire to hold quarterly committee meetings since the Full Commission meetings will begin meeting quarterly in 2019 to coincide with the quarterly cycle of the TIP amendments. Some of the ideas discussed for the EMPC meetings being schedule quarterly were to still meet six to ten times a year, some meetings could be workshops (not always a NIRPC meeting), or meet with various environmental groups as opportunities presented themselves. Kathy stated a further decision on meeting frequency will be made once the new commissioners are assigned to each of the committees in late February. A proposed meeting schedule will also be added to the March 7, 2019 agenda for further discussion.

### **Other Business**

Geof Benson informed the committee that he has asked the state to fund the local match for the feasibility study for the erosion problem in Ogden Dunes. The Legislative Committee supports this request and is requesting the EMPC committee support the request as well. Kay Nelson stated there is \$1,000,000 to be divided between a feasibility study and the disposal of dredge materials on the beach. On motion by Susan Mihalo and second by Lauri Keagle, the committee voted to endorse the Legislative Committee for the funding of the beach nourishment in the state budget. The EMPC Chair (or Co-Chair if needed) will be called to provide the report of the committee at the Executive Board meeting on February 21, 2019.

### **Announcements**

The event announcements submitted will be distributed in an email to the committee.

### **Adjournment**

Hearing no other business, Jan Bapst adjourned the meeting at 11:25 a.m. The next EMPC meeting is scheduled for March 7, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.

*A Digital MP3 of this meeting is filed. Contact Candice Eklund at 219-763-6060 Ext 142 or [ceklund@nirpc.org](mailto:ceklund@nirpc.org) should you wish to receive a copy of it.*