



ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

January 9, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.
Lake Michigan Room, NIRPC Office
6100 Southport Rd. Portage, IN 46368

1.0 Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

2.0 Introductions

3.0 Meeting Minutes – September 5, 2019
ACTION REQUESTED – Approval

4.0 Public Comments

This is an opportunity for comments from members of the audience. The amount of time available to speak will be limited to 3 minutes. Commenters must indicate their wish to comment on the sign-in sheet.

5.0 NWI Sub Area Plan Presentation

Dan Haag, Environmental Protection Agency

6.0 Other Business

6.1 2020 EMPC Schedule

Kathy Luther, NIRPC

6.2 Vehicle Emission Workshop Update

Lauri Keagle, South Shore Clean Cities

7.0 Announcements

8.0 Next EMPC Meeting

March 5, 2020 at 9 a.m.

9.0 Adjournment

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ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

NIRPC - Lake Michigan Room

September 5, 2019

Minutes

Members/Guests: Jan Bapst, Michael Spinar, Carl Lisek, Lauri Keagle, Richard Morrisroe, Bri Ciara, Kathryn Vallis, Kacie Kolbert, Natalie Johnson, Leslie Dorwith, Jeff Loewe, Deb Backhus, Michael Kuss, George Topoll, Geof Benson, Brenda Scott Henry, Kay Nelson, and Ashley Hodges

NIRPC Staff: Kathy Luther, Kevin Polette, and Candice Eklund.

Call to Order

Jan Bapst called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The meeting was streamed live on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9ze8mgj-l8>

Kathy Luther conveyed her heartfelt sentiments on the passing of Mary Thorne. Mary was an Administrative Assistant with NIRPC for over 13 years and had become the point of contact for many in the region as they interfaced with NIRPC.

Kathy introduced Kevin Polette, NIRPC's new Technical Assistant.

On motion by Richard Morrisroe and second by Deb Backhus, the April 4, 2019 meeting minutes were approved as presented.

Presentations

Calumet Heritage Area Calendar

Kathy Luther introduced Ashley Hodges with the Calumet Heritage Area. Ashley presented the new interactive calendar created to be a resource for all programming and events in the Calumet area for nature, industry, and culture. The link to the calendar and the guidelines for submission can be found on their website: <https://www.calumetheritagearea.org/calendar.html>. The link to the calendar is also available on the environmental presentation page on NIRPC's website. NIRPC will work with South Shore Clean Cities to explore the visibility of their calendar providing live updates on NIRPC's website. This new calendar will replace the announcement form used at the EMPC meeting.

NWI Green Fleets and Revitalizing Air Quality Public Education Program

During the previous EMPC meeting, the Committee requested a presentation from South Shore Clean Cities (SSCC) on how the grant money awarded at the last NOFA was being allocated in the region.

Carl Lisek, Executive Director, and Lauri Keagle, Communications Director, presented on the history of (SSCC), and their goal to reduce dependence on imported oil nationally. SSCC will continue to report on their progress of actions in future meetings.

For additional comments or questions, contact Carl Lisek at 'clisek@southshorecleancities.org' or Lauri Keagle at 'lkeagle@southshorecleancities.org'.

Other Business

Air Quality – Non-Attainment Status Bump-up and Vehicle Emission Testing Board Request

When NIRPC adopted the NWI 2050 Plan and the new Transportation Improvement Program, several Commissioners voiced concern with the vehicle emission testing and ongoing air quality requirements. Bill Emerson, Chair of the EMPC Committee, stated he would request the EMPC research emissions testing and report back to the Commission on where the transportation air emissions were originating. The Environmental Protection Agency has since posted their final register, reporting that our region 'bumped up' from a status of moderate to serious. Kathy inquired if the committee were interested in creating an air quality working group. Carl Lisek volunteered SSCC to take the lead on this initiative and will schedule a workshop with a panel of experts. Kay Nelson with the Northwest Indiana Forum and Deb Backhus also volunteered with the possibility of a volunteer from Indiana University Northwest.

Water Quality Incidents, Regional Communication, and Roles

In discussing the toxic chemical spill resulting in a Fish Kill in Lake Michigan last month, Kathy Luther asked if the EMPC would be interested in providing help as a committee. This could include requesting the reporting processes from IDEM to discuss at public forums, to talking with American Water on how they safeguard our drinking water. Discussions were had on the reporting efforts by organizations involved.

Kathy Luther stated Joe Exl, Senior Water Resources Planner at NIRPC, is participating on an Environmental Protection Agency led response plan and has been invited to assist in scoping a response exercise hosted by the EPA. Kathy questioned if a working group should be formed on planning an educational program around communications and reporting during an environmental disaster and Michael Kuss, General Manager with the Sanitary District of Michigan City, volunteered his services.

Announcements

Announcements were made by several committee members. Future environmental events will continue to be announced at the meeting, but the collaborative calendar will replace both the announcement form used at the EMPC meetings and a separate notification sent to the committee.

Adjournment

A moment of silence was observed in the memory of Mary Thorne.

Hearing no other business, Jan Bapst adjourned the meeting at 11:01 a.m.

A special program with NIRPC and Urban Waters will be held in the Lake Michigan room on October 3, 2019 at 9:00 a.m.

A digital MP3 of this meeting is filed. Contact nirpc@nirpc.org should you wish to receive a copy of it. Barring technical issues, the livestream video recording of this meeting is available on NIRPC's YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/NIRPCPlanning>.