

Commission on Sustainability



MICHIGAN CITY INDIANA

Thursday, March 9, 2023, 4:30 pm
City Hall, EOC Room Downstairs
Agenda

Michigan City Sustainability Commissioners: Tim Bauer, Laura Henderson (Secretary), Clarence Hulse, Andie Jahnz-Davis (Assistant Chair), Daisy Lee (Treasurer), Nancy Moldenhauer (Chair), Faye Moore, La'Tonya Troutman
Student Commissioners: Tristan Bogart, Bailey Chavis, Mary Cate Neary, Angela Reynolds
City Council Liaison: Bryant Dabney

- I. Roll Call
- II. Approval of February 9, 2023 Minutes
- III. Project Teams
 - A. **Solar Power Options for City Government**—Tristan Bogart [solar panel array plan update for installation of solar panels at remaining city buildings] *No update.*
 - B. **Funeral Homes & Crematoriums with Plant a Tree Opportunity:** Bailey Chavis [update on contact with Geisen-Carlisle headquartered in Crown Point via written communication for adding "Plant a Tree" memorial option] *Letter of thanks to funeral homes with "Plant a Tree" offering.*
 - C. **Waste Reduction/"Garbology"**—Daisy Lee, Tim Bauer, Bailey Chavis, Angela Reynolds, & Mary Cate Neary [explore preparation and timeline for next round of IDEM grant for recycling projects up to \$100,000; collaborative effort with Sacha Gee Burn of LaPorte County Solid Waste District, Shannon Eason of MC Parks & Rec Dept, and Robin Kohn of MC. Public Art Committee; contact within NIPSCO for potential funding will be approached when plan available; *Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory for carbon footprint reduction indicates Michigan City and NWI are extremely high for sending trash to landfills instead of practicing reduction and recycling* <https://www.in.gov/idem/recycle/resources/indiana-community-recycling-grant-program/>] *No update regarding the project of sending school cafeteria waste to pig farmers for feed.*
 - D. **Continue Promoting SolSmart Silver Designation with Partner Indiana University Resilience Cohort**—Laura Henderson, Tristan Bogart, Angie Reynolds, & Nancy Moldenhauer [Desire this year to begin slow review of programs we may not have acquired points to apply for Gold Designation in 2024; Nikki to look into sign to place with Tree City and Bird Habitat signs on streets; what could we do to continue leveraging SolSmart Silver Designation besides getting logo posted on Michigan City Government website?; keep sharing our link "Getting Started with Solar" found on Sustainability Commission Michigan City Government website page: <https://www.emichigancity.com/1214/Sustainability-Commission> ; <https://solsmart.org/news/soul-power-equitable-solar-workforce-development-in-michigan-city-indiana/>] *Update from Nikki on availability of signs from SolSmart to be placed below signs for Tree City and Bird Habitat which are already on poles along city limit roads with space available below for this sign.*

- E. **Carbon Neutral Indiana (CNI)**—Andie Jahnz-Davis, Laura Henderson, Daisy Lee & Nancy Moldenhauer [Carbon Neutral Indiana’s innovative book--entitled *Carbon Neutral Indiana: A Practical Guide to Climate Solutions*—is now available and can be ordered. Thinking about offering book discussion at public library during Earth Month. Who needs to schedule an assessment, get an update for their home to become carbon neutral, or set up a monthly contribution with Daniel Poynter, Executive Director and Founder of CNI? About: <https://www.carbonneutralindiana.org/book> ; Order: <https://store.carbonneutralindiana.org/>] *Plan is to consider a Book Club in May instead of April since we have so many activities with our Earth Month Extravaganza.*
- F. **U.S Department of Energy’s National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)**—Ed Shinn, Tristan Bogart, Bailey Chavis, Laura Henderson, & Nancy Moldenhauer [Need to schedule a 7th meeting as a Task Force with our consultant Scott Belding of NREL; Nancy requested that Scott prepare a summary of various options we've considered from November 2021 to November 2022. We will continue to pursue solar array powered electric-vehicle charging stations in the planned newly reconfigured rectangular parking lot directly across from the zoo. The zoo will pursue possibility of installing solar panels on the south-facing side of their buildings while it will be determined if any power from a solar panel array parking lot installation would potentially be shared with the zoo or other structures in Washington Park. *We are receiving FREE consulting, engineering, planning services for solar array installation, electric vehicle charging stations, and electronic device chargers for workstations at Washington Park, Beach, and Zoo. When completed, we will have choices to create a plan to submit for an extremely promising future with potential green energy funds provided by the Federal Government.*] *Scott replied that he would pull together a report of all options proposed so far for consideration.*
- G. **NWI Climate/Resilience Action Planning Work Group**—Nancy Moldenhauer, Laura Henderson, & Andie Jahnz-Davis [No known scheduled meetings at this time, yet it looked promising that NIRPC would get another intern from Indiana University. Best practices and model programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in a draft format were created.] *We missed a meeting on Friday, March 3rd, since we received notification only two hours before beginning.*
- H. **Soul Power**—Donnita Skully & Faye Moore [NABCEP certification results from the November six-week Solar PV Associate training are 7 of the 9 passed the NABCEP; it may take a while for the two who failed by a couple points to get rescheduled to retake exam; *Job training and certification program for solar panel installation in partnership with NAACP LaPorte County, IBEW-531, Ivy Tech Valparaiso, WorkOne, Just Transition NWI, and MC Sustainability Commission; interested individuals can sign up here for future offerings: <https://www.laportecountynaacp3061.org/soul-power-project>] *Donnita and Nancy are to meet for coffee to get caught up and solidify partnership.**
- I. **Solar United Neighbors (SUN)**—Faye Moore & Nancy Moldenhauer [Nancy attended Solar Renewable Energy Day (RED) at the Statehouse--organized by Solar United Neighbors Indiana and Earth Charter Indiana and sponsored by Michigan City Sustainability Commission—and met with Representative Pat Boy and Senator Rodney Pol; Dan Robinson is collecting names and contact information of interested persons for potential Rounds of installation being offered in 2023 at [drobinson@solarunitedneighbors.org](mailto:d Robinson@solarunitedneighbors.org) ; Nancy’s solar panel installation was finally completed in December as part of Round 1!] *Dan had offered to meet with Andie this week while Nancy is in DC lobbying for Great Lakes Days for Save the Dunes with the Healing Our Waters Coalition.*
https://public.courts.in.gov/Decisions/api/Document/Opinion?Id=cXVRn9I4RRuao6Alo0z2K0A1N5fw-Ckt_Co-Uav-jyv8MF9JXI8sz_6h2_6XWAIK0
<https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/indiana/> ; <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/indiana/go-solar/>
- J. **“Caught YOU Being Green” Engagement**—Andie Jahnz-Davis & Tim Bauer [Upcoming social media posts and press release; Update on Earth Month Extravaganza 2023, Saturday, April 29th, 12 noon - 4 pm, Krueger Memorial Hall]

- IV. **VOTE** to sign the EarthJustice letter which requests that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) expand Coal Combustion Residuals (CCR) regulations to coal ash legacy sites which would require the newer clean-up standards be applied to the NIPSCO Coal Burning Power Plant in Michigan City and other older plants countrywide.
- V. Commissioner Comments
- VI. Public Comments
- VII. Announcements
- VIII. Adjournment