

# Commission on Sustainability



## MICHIGAN CITY INDIANA

Thursday, February 10, 2022, 5:30 pm  
Zoom Meeting  
Minutes

Chair Nancy Moldenhauer brought the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

- I Roll Call--Present: Tim Bauer, Tristan Bogart, Laura Henderson, Andie Jahnz-Davis, Daisy Lee, Nancy Moldenhauer, Angela Reynolds, La'Tonya Troutman, Philip Kohler, Mary Cate Neary, Faye Moore, Bryant Dabney (City Council Liaison). Absent: Bailey Chavis, Clarence Hulse
- II Approval of December 9, 2021 and January 13, 2022 Minutes (*roll call vote on both*) *Motion in favor of approving Sustainability Commission minutes for December 9, 2021 by Andie Jahnz-Davis seconded by Tim Bauer. Roll call vote: Ayes: Bauer, Laura Henderson, Andie Jahnz-Davis, Phil Kohler, Daisy Lee, Nancy Moldenhauer, Faye Moore, La'Tonya Troutman, Nays: none. Motion to approve minutes for December 9, 2021 passes unanimously. Roll call vote: Ayes: Tim Bauer, Laura Henderson, Andie Jahnz-Davis, Phil Kohler, Daisy Lee, Nancy Moldenhauer, Faye Moore, La'Tonya Troutman; Nays: none. Minutes for January 13, 2022 approved unanimously.*
- III Election of Treasurer (*roll call vote*) *No additional candidates were presented. Laura Henderson moved for approval of Daisy Lee as Treasurer. Roll call vote: Ayes: Tim Bauer, Laura Henderson, Andie Jahnz-Davis, Phil Kohler, Daisy Lee, Nancy Moldenhauer, Faye Moore, La'Tonya Troutman. Nays: none. Motion passed unanimously.*
- IV Project Teams
  - A **Solar Power Options for City Government**—Tristan Bogart [solar panel array update; to introduce plan for city buildings as part of American Rescue Act Funding granted to municipal government] *Tristan is checking on the properties to see if there are any limitations and if they are suitable for solar power. He is planning a Michigan City Electric Vehicle Day in September. Nancy will connect him with South Shore Clean Cities.*
  - B **Funeral Homes & Crematoriums with Plant a Tree Opportunity:** Bailey Chavis [list and enrollment] *Deferred due to Bailey Chavis' absence today.*
  - C **Biking, Hiking, and Walking Culture**—Phillip Kohler & Tim Bauer [bicycle repair and ride along the new Singing Sands Trail to be rescheduled in the spring with MC Park & Recreation Department partnership] *Nothing to report at this time, Phil Kohler plans to work more closely with owners of Bike Stop re organizing a bike ride event this year. Phil and Tim will have more to present next month.*
  - D **Waste Reduction/"Garbology"**—Daisy Lee, Tim Bauer, Bailey Chavis, & Angela Reynolds [city park recycling] *Daisy Lee reports they are still in planning process with Parks Department for recycling in Washington Park and Patriot Park.*
  - E **Soul Power Project**—La'Tonya (Niki) Troutman [report on success of first course with added new partners of Ivy Tech and WorkOne]

La'Tonya Troutman reports 8 people went through the partnership with Ivy Tech last year. The plan is for a 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort this year also with Ivy Tech in partnership with the local NAACP chapter. There is a need for 10 people to go through the next training cohort. This is a good time to go solar in Indiana, so this improves the job market for installation work.

- F Solar United Neighbors (SUN)**— [LAST MONTH TO JOIN COOPERATIVE WITH NET METERING SCHEDULED TO EXPIRE IN JUNE 2022! Have 49 interested individuals signed up in the FREE cooperative. Fifteen (15) are in Michigan City. Satellite review and solar energy systems installer visit completed on 28. Site visit scheduled for 2. Proposal submitted to 6. Three (3) disqualified by installer. Opportunity lost on 6. Signed contract with 4. Solar Energy Systems out of Nappanee was chosen as the installer by cooperative members who volunteered to select. Kindly help spread the word and let your family, friends, neighbors, organizations, and communities in LaPorte, Porter, and Lake Counties know about this opportunity for FREE cooperative membership with DISCOUNTED equipment and COORDINATED installation. Enrollment will go through the end of February, 2022. Let me know if you'd like a sign to display in your yard!]  
<https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/indiana/> ; <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/indiana/go-solar/>  
This is our last chance to get participants to join this cooperative. Net metering expires the end of this coming June. The federal tax break has been extended through this year. Some members are requesting yard signs: Laura Henderson, Andie-Jahnz-Davis, Daisy Lee, Tristan Bogart, Bryant Dabney, Angela Reynolds. La'Tonya reported the number has increased from 49 to 53 now. She also reported on the fight in the state legislature to maintain net metering. She also raised the issue of utility accountability.
- G Indiana University Resilience Cohort for SolSmart Designation & Electric Vehicle Charging Station Plan**—Laura Henderson, Tristan Bogart, Daisy Lee, & Nancy Moldenhauer [Consultation last Monday, revealed we have one more step of posting information on website for which designation? Have contacted Michigan City IT Department regarding the need to establish a tab on the Michigan City Government website.]  
We have made silver designation for SolSmart! Nancy Moldenhauer requested letter from La'Tonya Troutman documenting SoulPower so that her program (including SoulPower, NAACP, IBEW, and Ivy Tech) will get credit for what they have done. There are only a few over 100 cities and counties in the country that have achieved SolSmart designation.
- H U.S Department of Energy National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL)**—Ed Shinn, Daisy Lee, Tristan Bogart, & Nancy Moldenhauer [Michigan City was one of three cities chosen in Indiana along with Bloomington and Indianapolis. We will receive FREE consulting, engineering, and planning services for solar array installation, electric vehicle charging stations, and electronic device chargers at Washington Park, Beach, and Zoo. We're trying to set up our second exploratory meeting next week. When completed, we will have a plan to submit for an extremely promising future with potential green energy funding to be provided by the Federal Government. *Take a roll call vote on participation.*]  
The second exploratory meeting will be not next week but the following week. Faye Moore made a motion that we participate in the U.S. Department of Energy National Renewable Energy Lab program in cooperation with the Michigan City Park Department at Washington Park. Laura Henderson seconded the motion. La'Tonya asked about ensuring that the access to EV stations will be equitably distributed throughout Michigan City. Nancy went over the 3 phases: phase one will be placement of 2 EV stations at the goat parking lot in response to a survey showing most EV chargers were at the periphery of the city; phase two will be this NREL project at Washington Park due to the enthusiastic participation of the Park Dept; then phase 3 will involve expansion to other parts of the city. Councilman Dabney reported that City Council has not discussed EV chargers. He suggested our concern with EV chargers and equitable distribution should be central to our presentation to the City Council. Roll call vote: Ayes: Tim Bauer, Laura Henderson, Andie Jahnz-Davis, Phil Kohler, Daisy Lee, Nancy Moldenhauer, Faye Moore, La'Tonya Troutman. Nays: none. The motion carried unanimously.
- I Carbon Neutral Indiana (CNI)**—Andie Jahnz-Davis, Laura Henderson, Daisy Lee & Nancy Moldenhauer [Daniel Poynter, Executive Director, will be announcing a fun activity to attract household subscribers with a culmination on Earth Day, April 22nd. CNI is becoming their own nonprofit and have announced their Board

of Directors. Who needs to schedule an assessment or get an update with Daniel, Executive Director and Founder of CNI?] <https://www.carbonneutralindiana.org/> ; <https://www.facebook.com/carbonneutralindiana>  
We are encouraged to ask a few people to consider joining CNI and get the assessment.

- J Opportunity to Set Sustainable/Resilience Goals and Actions**—Nancy Moldenhauer & Laura Henderson [Based on our Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory of 2019, we would work collaboratively with NWI Region Resilience--from which Kathy Sipple coordinated the completion of Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventories for 9 municipalities and three countries in Northwest Indiana this summer--in partnership with Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC). It will be a lot less expensive working cooperatively than working individually with the Indiana University Resilience Cohort plus it would be regionally focused. We're behind proposed schedule on this due to staffing changes at I.U. *Take a roll call vote on participation.*]

Kathy Sipple has asked Nancy Moldenhauer to join the board and she has accepted. Laura Henderson made a motion that the Sustainability Commission work cooperatively with the NWI region Resilience group, with second by La'Tonya Troutman. Roll call vote: Ayes: Tim Bauer, Laura Henderson, Andie Jahnz-Davis, Phil Kohler, Daisy Lee, Nancy Moldenhauer, Faye Moore, La'Tonya Troutman. Nays: none. The motion carried unanimously.

- K Clean Removal of Coal Ash from NIPSCO Michigan City Generating Plant**—[Michigan City Common Council unanimously passed Resolutions 4812 & 4781 for a total coal ash clean up, discuss and decide if Sustainability Commission will support this. *If approved, take a roll call vote.*]

To support the City Council in these resolutions, Daisy Lee moved that we support the clean removal of the coal ash from the NIPSCO Michigan City generating plant in its entirety, Second by La'Tonya Troutman. Roll call vote: Ayes: Tim Bauer, Laura Henderson, Andie Jahnz-Davis, Phil Kohler, Daisy Lee, Nancy Moldenhauer, Faye Moore, La'Tonya Troutman. Nays: none. The motion carried unanimously. Councilman Dabney noted that one of the speakers, probably from the EPA, reported to the council that 100% removal might not be economically feasible. Therefore, he encourages full pressure from all sectors of the city to get 100% removal. Nancy Moldenhauer noted that a study has shown a complete cleanup will be economically beneficial to our city. She also noted it is cheaper to do a full cleanup rather than try to clean up after a catastrophe. North Carolina has had good compliance with 100% clean up due to the firm stance of the state legislature in North Carolina. In Indiana we are lacking the support of the state legislature. Faye Moore added that a joint meeting of Just Transition and the local NAACP, sharing information. NAACP is planning town halls to spread the word. Sanitation Department made a presentation on this issue in 2019. The Ministerial Alliance is creating a video to share the danger of coal ash and the importance of full and safe removal. La'Tonya Troutman brought up the issue of the past and present health costs borne by Michigan City residents. She reports there is supportive data available with Earth Justice, Just Transitions, and NAACP. She will forward the information to Bryant Dabney and the rest of the Commission, as well as our former Council liaisons, Dalia Zygas and Michael Mack.

- L "Caught You Being Green"**—Andie Jahnz-Davis [Earth Day Extravaganza, April 23, 2022, 12 – 3 pm, Michigan City Public Library, nomination submissions for Nora L. Schultz Tribute Sustainability Award]

Groups participating in the Extravaganza are: Michigan City Tree Board, Potawatomi Audubon Society, LaPorte County Recycling, LaPorte County Soil and Water, Northwest Indiana Paddle Association, Izaak Walton League, Parks Department, Indiana Dunes National Park, and Save the Dunes. Friends of the Dunes, SUN, NAACP, Just Transitions may be represented as well. Andie Jahnz-Davis will meet with Tim Bauer and Angela Reynolds to discuss publicizing, probably to include Facebook, fliers, and Herald Dispatch.

- M Action Alert:** Get signed up with Hoosier Environmental Council (HEC) to receive weekly and time sensitive actions via email for this 2022 Indiana State Legislative Session. Keep an eye on HEC's and Sierra Club Hoosier Chapter Facebook pages for posts and updates also. So far, there are fewer positive bills and more negative bills on the House and Senate floors to be voted on which require us contacting our State Representative and Senator to ensure another SAB 389, Anti-Wetlands Law, is not allowed to happen this year!

<https://www.hecweb.org/bill-watch-2022/> ; <https://www.facebook.com/hecweb> ;  
<https://www.facebook.com/sierraclubhoosierchapter>

Nancy encouraged us to check these websites for action alerts.

- V Commission Comments—Andie Jahnz-Davis said that awarding of the Nora L Schultz Tribute Sustainability Award will be pushed to Plastic Free July. Nominations are requested. All Commissioners will vote for awardee. La'Tonya Troutman is looking for a resident who wants to go solar but may not be able to afford it with the planned loss of net metering in Indiana. She is also asking for photos of Faye with her solar installation. Faye Moore will email photos to her. Nancy Moldenhauer recommended the Herald-Dispatch article on Faye Moore's solar open house.
- VI Public Comments—none.
- VII Announcements--none
- VIII Adjournment—Laura Henderson moved and Faye Moor seconded to adjourn the meeting. Roll call vote: Ayes: Tim Bauer, Laura Henderson, Andie Jahnz-Davis, Phil Kohler, Daisy Lee, Nancy Moldenhauer, Faye Moore, La'Tonya Troutman. Nays: none. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned by Chair Nancy Moldenhauer at 6:50 p.m.