

# Commission on Sustainability



## MICHIGAN CITY INDIANA

Thursday, May 11, 2023, 4:30 pm  
City Hall, EOC Room Downstairs

### Minutes

**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

Chair Nancy Moldenhauer called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

- I. Roll Call—Present: Tim Bauer, Tristan Bogart, Bryant Dabney, Andie Jahnz-Davis, Laura Henderson, Daisy Lee, Faye Moore, Mary Cate Neary, Angela Reynolds. Absent: Clarence Hulse. Excused: Bailey Chavis, La'Tonya Troutman. A quorum was present.
  - II. Approval of April 13, 2023 Minutes—Faye moved and Daisy seconded approval of minutes. The vote was unanimous in favor.
  - III. Election of Officers—Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer—The proposed slate is Andie Jahnz-Davis for Chair, Tim Bauer for Vice-Chair, Laura Henderson for Secretary, and Daisy Lee for Treasurer. There were no additional nominations. Faye moved and Laura seconded for approval of the proposed slate. The vote was unanimous in favor.
- IV. Project Teams
- A. **Solar Power Options for City Government**—Tristan Bogart [Approval of Michigan City Electric Vehicle Charging Station Survey; solar panel array plan update for installation of solar panels at remaining city buildings]--Tristan reports he has completed the survey regarding the EV charging stations at Washington Park and has asked Performance Solutions for an update on city-owned properties that might be good for solar array installations.
  - B. **Funeral Homes & Crematoriums with Plant a Tree Opportunity:** Bailey Chavis [update on thank you letters to homes with "Plant a Tree" option; result of contact with Geisen-Carlisle headquartered in Crown Point for adding "Plant a Tree" memorial option; article for Facebook and press release]--Bailey not present. Faye noted that the Plant a Tree option is much more visible now than in the recent past. Nancy recognized Faye Moore for bringing this possibility to our attention. Bryant Dabney mentioned that they had memorialized a fellow Notre Dame graduate by planting a tree on campus with a memorial plaque.
  - C. **Waste Reduction/"Garbology"**—Daisy Lee, Tim Bauer, Bailey Chavis, Angela Reynolds, & Mary Cate Neary [update on the progress of pilot project in Washington Park Beach which would include fun, colorful recycling collection containers of native species, like frogs; explore IDEM grant for recycling projects up to \$100,000; collaborative effort with Sacha Gee Burn of LP Co. 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/](#) --Daisy has partnered with Sacha Gee Burns at Solid Waste District of Laporte County, and is making plans to share school cafeteria waste with several fowl farmers in the area. There is a possibility of expansion of the plan to more than Barker Middle School and Marquette.

- D. **Continue Promoting SolSmart Silver Designation with Partner Indiana University Resilience Cohort**— Laura Henderson, Tristan Bogart, Angie Reynolds, & Nancy Moldenhauer [Nancy presented and Andie timed at "Toward Sustainability: Earth Day Along Lake Michigan", April 22nd, sponsored by Indiana Landmarks, Indiana Humanities, and Lubeznik Center for the Arts, view video recording here: [https://www.housepaintermedia.com/sustainablehouses?fbclid=IwAR0i9WndcD7KydaNUn7eu3mHg62vLqeovd4h\\_r4mmBFulNXgRdmXDA8jyOM](https://www.housepaintermedia.com/sustainablehouses?fbclid=IwAR0i9WndcD7KydaNUn7eu3mHg62vLqeovd4h_r4mmBFulNXgRdmXDA8jyOM) ; to begin review of programs for missed points to apply for Gold Designation in 2024; 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/> ] --Andie joined the team which will focus on looking for points to achieve Gold Designation.
- 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*—can be ordered on line; exploring possibility of offering book discussion at Northwest Indiana Green Drinks. 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/> ] -- Andie is talking with Daniel about an online book discussion in the fall, with NWI Green Drinks and Save the Dunes.
- F. **U.S Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)**—Ed Shinn, Tristan Bogart, Bailey Chavis, Laura Henderson, & Nancy Moldenhauer [Summary of various options we've considered from Nov. 2021 to Nov. 2022 was forwarded; after discussion, need to schedule a 7<sup>th</sup> meeting as a Task Force with our consultant Scott Belding of NREL; continue to pursue solar array powered electric-vehicle charging stations in the planned newly reconfigured rectangular parking lot directly across from the zoo; zoo will pursue possibility of installing solar panels on their buildings; to 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.*] --Faye joined the team.
- G. **NWI Climate/Resilience Action Planning Work Group**—Nancy Moldenhauer, Laura Henderson, & Andie Jahnz-Davis [Have not heard anything about any scheduled meetings at this time; 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] --no news, no scheduled meetings at this time.
- H. **Soul Power**—Donnita Scully, Faye Moore, & Nancy Moldenhauer [Solar Panel Installers NABCEP Certified—7 successfully completed with 2 to re-test; grant being written for Professional Installers which requires service hours, can do survey and design work, could start own company; additional grant to be written to install solar panels on roof of Hope Community Center; as with the first grant, Nancy will provide consultation services to strengthen submissions. *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> ] --no additional updates

- I. **Solar United Neighbors (SUN)**—Faye Moore & Nancy Moldenhauer [Dan Robinson is collecting names and contact information of interested persons for potential Round 3 of installation being offered possibly Fall 2023 at [drobinson@solarunitedneighbors.org](mailto:drobinson@solarunitedneighbors.org) ; [https://public.courts.in.gov/Decisions/api/Document/Opinion?Id=cXVRn9I4RRuo6Alo0z2K0A1N5fw-Ckt\\_Co-Uav-jyv8MF9JXI8sz\\_6h2\\_6XWAIK0](https://public.courts.in.gov/Decisions/api/Document/Opinion?Id=cXVRn9I4RRuo6Alo0z2K0A1N5fw-Ckt_Co-Uav-jyv8MF9JXI8sz_6h2_6XWAIK0) <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/indiana/> ; <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/indiana/go-solar/> --Andie mentioned that Dan Robinson also presented at the Lubeznik April 22 event and that he is a very engaging presenter. He also hosted a table and many people were quite interested. Faye reports that SUN is also working in the state of Michigan now.
- J. **“Caught YOU Being Green” Engagement**—Andie Jahnz-Davis & Tim Bauer [Social media posts; engaging presentation on Commission, League of Women Voters LP Co. Chapter, April 11th, by Andie, 20 attendees; congratulations on an extremely successful 2nd Annual Earth Month Extravaganza, April 29th, 20 vendors and 418 attendees; heartfelt thanks to Sustainability Commissioners who assisted including Andie, Tim, Daisy, Faye, Laura, Nancy, & Students Angie, Bailey, Mary Cate, and Tristan who represented Commission. - -Andie posted on the Facebook page a story about Brown Faces Green Spaces and Kimmie Gordon in Gary. Climate Leadership Summit 8 will be held this year in Gary IN at Indiana University NW on Friday September 8. The event will include a part on sustainability commissions, so members of our Commission are encouraged to attend. Commissioners should contact Nancy if they plan to attend. Our Mayor should also be encouraged to attend.
- V. **Commissioner Comments** –Tristan mentioned the Facebook Caught You Being Green post about GAF’s employee volunteer effort picking up trash at Barker Woods. Faye spoke of an email from Drive Clean Indiana, about DOE grant money for converting school buses to green hydrogen technology. Nancy recommended it be forwarded to Sue Harrison.
- VI. **Public Comments**—Andie introduced Tara Duffy from the town of Porter. Tara is a member of the Porter City Planning Commission, and the chair of the new Sustainability Commission in Porter. The town’s Comprehensive Plan, accepted by the town council as ordinance, calls for the establishment of such a Commission in Porter. Tara is here to learn and toward future collaborations. Nancy reiterated that our meetings are open to the public, and recordings of our meetings are available on ALCO TV.
- VII. **Announcements**—Andie announced the LaPorte County Recycling hazardous waste 7 in 1 drop-off at the LaPorte County Fairground on Saturday May 13. Materials that can be dropped off include tires, electronics, appliances, shredding, styrofoam, cardboard, batteries, sharps, medication, paint, ammunition, fluorescent bulbs. Nancy added that shredded paper (that does not contain staples) can be donated to the Michigan City Zoo to be used as bedding for animals. Laura announced that Julie Peller, professor of chemistry at Valparaiso University, will be speaking on Plastic Pollution at the Michigan City Public Library at 6 p.m. on Thursday May 18, at invitation of Potawatomi Audubon Society. This event is free and open to the public. Daisy announced the Indiana Birding Festival this weekend. Nancy noted that all the special sessions have been filled. She also noted that the public can get in to the sales tent where various bird related artists and other vendors will be. Laura added that native plants will be among the items for sale, and that there were some family friendly free events on Saturday but details could be found on the website.
- VIII. **Adjournment**—There being no further business before the Commission at this time, Laura moved and Andie seconded for adjournment. The vote was unanimously in favor. The meeting was adjourned by Chair Nancy Moldenhauer at 5:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Laura Henderson, Secretary