

# Commission on Sustainability



## MICHIGAN CITY INDIANA

Thursday, June 10, 2021, 5:30 pm  
City Hall, EOC Room (downstairs across from Council Chambers)  
Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Chair Nancy Moldenhauer at 5:31 p.m.

- I. Roll Call—PRESENT: Tristan Bogart, Bailey Chavis, Laura Henderson, Andie Jahnz-Davis, Phil Kohler, Tim Bauer, Daisy Lee, Nancy Moldenhauer, Faye Moore; ABSENT: Clarence Hulse; EXCUSED: Angie Reynolds, La'Tanya Troutman. A quorum was present.
- II. Approval of Minutes, May 13, 2021—Daisy moved and Tim seconded for approval of the May 13, 2021, Minutes as submitted. All present voted in favor with none opposed.
- III. Welcome New Liaison City Councilman Bryant Dabney—deferred due to his absence.
- IV. Project Teams
  - A. **“Caught You Being Green”**—Andie Jahnz-Davis [feature article, mini social media posts, Plastic Free July ideas, explore First Friday art or music (?) event, Earth Day Extravaganza 2022] —Contest turned out well; prizes have been distributed. Next feature on Facebook will be about Nora L. Schultz in July. July is plastic-free month so Andie will have articles on how to reduce plastic use. Andie asked for submission of photos by commissioners that are appropriate for posting. She is already planning for Earth Extravaganza 2022.
  - B. **Biking, Hiking, and Walking Culture**—Phillip Kohler & Tim Bauer [proposed bicycle focused event, maybe a city bike ride or bike repair workshop]—Tim reported on the plan to have an event on Saturday August 7<sup>th</sup> starting at 9 a.m. with a bike repair workshop at Westcott Park followed by a bike ride to the end of Singing Sands trail (where Calumet Trail starts) then looping back to the Taste of Michigan City around lunch time. They still need to get permission to use Westcott Park, find 2 qualified people to do the workshop, and produce some fliers to publicize the event. They hope to be able to arrange for a safe place for cyclists to secure their bikes during the Taste. Nancy noted that the surface of Singing Sands trail is permeable.
  - C. **Carbon Neutral Indiana (CNI)**—Nancy Moldenhauer, Andie Jahnz-Davis, & Laura Henderson [who needs to reschedule assessment with Daniel Poynter, Founder of CNI] <https://www.carbonneutralindiana.org/>; <https://www.facebook.com/carbonneutralindiana> —Nancy encouraged us to spread the word about CNI.
  - D. **Solar United Neighbors (SUN)**—Nancy Moldenhauer [Zack Schalk, Indiana Program Director, hired Northern IN Coordinator Dan Johnson, report of Zoom review meeting, possibly scheduling Round 2 this summer]—Nancy acknowledged Faye Moore as the first Commissioner to get solar installed at her home, and announced that she will be the second. She and Kathy Sipple met with Zack Schalk this morning, and the 2nd round for our area will be in September-October for any who missed the 1st round. Dan Robinson is the new SUN coordinator for Northern Indiana.
  - E. **Soul Power Project**—La'Tonya (Niki) Troutman, NAACP LaPorte County Unit 6031 [classes began in June]—Nancy reported that La'Tonya was not able to return to town in time for this meeting. The training to begin this month in June.
  - F. **Indiana University Resilience Cohort for SolSmart Designation & Electric Vehicle Charging Station Plan**—Laura Henderson, Tristan Bogart, & Nancy Moldenhauer [Update on Silver Designation & Electric Vehicle Charging Station Plan]—Nancy reported that all members missed the last Resilience Cohort zoom meeting for various reasons, however we can review the video of the meeting. We are on track to achieve Silver Designation. We still need to establish a solar

landing on the city website, and to have Sue Downs watch the on-line training video. Tristan and Nancy accessed the solar power folders in the City Clerk's office to provide data for SolSmart review. Update on Indiana Volkswagen Mitigation Trust Program grant Electric Vehicle Charging Stations installation from Skyler York, City Planner: two (2) will be installed at the parking lot at 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Washington across from the Farmer's Market, the "Goat Sculpture Parking Lot", instead of the new South Shore Line Station and the corner of 5th and Pine Streets. There will likely be a fee for charging, as the city must provide maintenance and repairs as well as the electricity.

- G. **Nora L. Schultz Tribute Sustainability Award**—Tristan Bogart [first awardee Nora Ryszka and Mike Kilbourne, co-founders and leaders of The Great Michigan City Green Clean; press release sent; Tristan working on award certificate] —the award was covered by radio and newspaper in Michigan City. Daisy will assist Tristan in developing the award certificate, and Andie will assist with framing it. If possible, the award will be presented at the next Sustainability Commission meeting. Nancy encouraged us to send thanks to Jeff Mays, Editor, at the Herald-Dispatch for covering the award.
- H. **Solar Power Options**—Tristan Bogart [solar panel array fields/farms] Tristan and Nancy gained access to the city's thick folders regarding solar panel installations at or on city government buildings and sent the information to Performance Services (as well as SolSmart soon). Tristan is looking for city-owned land that is available for solar array installation. Stage 1 in his project is to provide solar power for government buildings in Michigan City, and Stage 2 would provide solar power to much of Michigan City. It is hoped that some of the significant amount of Covid money received by the city can be used toward this purpose. There may be some assistance for solar panels for economically challenged households in Michigan City, with some workshops upcoming.
- V. Board Comments—Faye mentioned the option to order a tree planting instead of flowers in memory of a person who has died. Nancy asked for someone to see what funeral homes offer this option to mourners. Laura volunteered to do so. Tristan mentioned an add-on idea regarding home solar, that the city might offer rebates to assist homeowners with installing batteries for their solar panels. Andie mentioned that we currently do not have a treasurer although we used to have a treasurer. Since we have no money, this may not be a critical issue, but it will be added to the next agenda. Nancy encouraged us all to review our ordinance with attention to what is working and what could be improved, so that suggested changes can be submitted to the City Council for vote. Laura mentioned the use of native plants between solar arrays, and that this has been done at Ancilla College in Donaldson IN.
- VI. Public Comments—none
- VII. Announcements—Andie announced the Gnome's Day Out Fairy Festival in Porter at Hawthorne Park on Saturday, June 12, from 12 noon until 7 p.m. The event is put on by Porter County Isaak Walton League and the Indiana Arts Commission. This is a child-friendly event. Tristan announced that his Tesla photo shoot is complete. He will send a selection to Andie for the Facebook page. Nancy announced that Green Drinks is on July break; the next event will be August 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom and Facebook Live, with special guests Nora Ryszka and Mike Kilbourne of The Great Michigan City Green Clean. Her second announcement was for the movie at Pullman Park, 6 to 8 p.m. on Sunday, June 27, "In the Water", the documentary about coal ash pollution in The Pines and throughout Indiana. This event is sponsored by Just Transition NW1 .
- VIII. Adjournment—Laura moved and Tim seconded a motion to adjourn. All voted in favor with none opposed. The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.