

Commission on Sustainability



MICHIGAN CITY INDIANA

Thursday, October 13, 2022, 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 4:35p.m.

- I Roll Call—Present: Tristan Bogart, Bailey Chavis, Andie Jahnz-Davis, Laura Henderson, Nancy Moldenhauer, Faye Moore, Mary Cate Neary, Angela Reynolds. Absent: Tim Bauer, Bryant Dabney, Clarence Hulse. Absent and excused: Daisy Lee, La'Tonya Troutman. A quorum was present.
- II Approval of September 8, 2022 Minutes—Andie moved and Faye seconded approval of minutes. The motion was unanimously approved.
- III Project Teams --
 - A **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; international ideas for an artist commissioned native fish sculpture to collect recyclable plastic bottles and aluminum cans at Washington Park Beach was shared with team and partners, contacts within NIPSCO for potential funding and support require follow up; *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/>]--In addition to the team members listed above, this project will also include Sacha Gee Burns of the LaPorte County Solid Waste District, and Shannon Eason of Michigan Parks Department.
 - B **Funeral Homes & Crematoriums with Plant a Tree Opportunity:** Bailey Chavis [Facebook comments noted recently encouraging local funeral home to offer option; future contact with Geisen-Carlisle headquartered in Crown Point being planned]--Bailey has submitted a letter intended for Geisen-Carlisle, encouraging adoption of the tree planting option, to Nancy for review. She plans to send it to all the Geisen-Carlisle locations. Nancy encouraged commissioners to comment on Facebook postings of Geisen-Carlisle promoting the plant a tree option
 - C **"Caught YOU Being Green" Engagement**—Andie Jahnz-Davis & Tim Bauer [Upcoming social media posts; Green Halloween event] –The latest posting by Angie on our Facebook page was Mary Cate's article on Abby Neary's many pro-environment activities. Next article will be by Bailey regarding plant a tree option. Commissioners, especially Student Commissioners, are invited to submit articles and/or pictures to be posted. Preparations for Earth Month Extravaganza are proceeding; the date is Saturday April 29, 2023, Krueger-Memorial Hall.

- D **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*--will be available mid-October and can be pre-ordered. CNI to have a table at the Hoosier Environmental Council Greening the Statehouse annual conference. Who needs to schedule an assessment or get an update for their home to become carbon neutral with Daniel, Executive Director and Founder of CNI? About the book: <https://www.carbonneutralindiana.org/book> ; To order: <https://store.carbonneutralindiana.org/>]--The book will be given to elected officials throughout the state of Indiana. Some professors have expressed interest in using it as a supplemental text in some classes.
- E **U.S Department of Energy’s National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)**—Ed Shinn, Tristan Bogart, Bailey Chavis, Daisy Lee, Laura Henderson, & Nancy Moldenhauer [Will schedule our 6th meeting for this fall with our consultant Scott Belding of NREL. Ed Shinn and Nancy have reached out to Jamie Huss, Washington Park Zoo Director requesting a meeting. A decision needs to be made in collaboration with the Zoo whether we will go with primarily supplying solar energy to the zoo and/or focus solely on electric-vehicle charging stations in the parking lot. 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 funding to be provided by the Federal Government.]--Jamie Huss cannot meet until after the Boo at the Zoo event.
- F **NWI Climate/Resilience Action Planning Work Group**—Nancy Moldenhauer, Laura Henderson, & Andie Jahnz-Davis [Andie attended fourth meeting on Thursday, September 15th with Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) as Laura and Nancy were out of the country; fifth meeting will be on Friday, November 18th, 1 pm, via Zoom.] --Andie reported 2 takeaways from the meeting: discussion of some programs to assist lower income families with energy costs and energy efficiency, mostly through NiSource, check their website for details; and discussion about how to deal with Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory data, where she shared our experience of having a Sustainability Commission or other structure to advance goals. <https://www.nipsco.com/energy-efficiency/for-your-home>
- G **Soul Power**—Donnita Skully & Faye Moore [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; conducting a six-week Solar PV Associate training with 11 participants, when completed on Nov. 10th, will be eligible to sit for the NABCEP PV Associate Exam to obtain NABCEP certification; Interested individuals can sign up here: <https://www.laportecountynaacp3061.org/soul-power-project>] --Nancy reported as above. Faye added that one difficulty has been that the class is 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. for 6 weeks, without pay, but nevertheless each offering has had around 10 or so participants. Evening classes are not feasible due to instructors not available then.
- H **Continue Promoting SolSmart Silver Designation with Partner Indiana University Resilience Cohort**—Laura Henderson, Tristan Bogart, & Nancy Moldenhauer [Case study authored by U.S. Department of Energy on the Michigan City SolSmart experience will focus primarily on the Soul Power aspect of how we received our SolSmart Silver Designation; 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>] --no additional news.
- I **Solar United Neighbors (SUN)**—Faye Moore & Nancy Moldenhauer [Plans in the making with Dan Robinson for Round 3 hopefully in 2023; Nancy’s solar panel installation scheduled for Oct. or Nov. as part of Round 1] <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/indiana/> ; <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/indiana/go-solar/>--Faye mentioned that a friend of hers who is senior and disabled was able to get solar panels installed with

assistance from NIPSCO. Nancy added that she has heard that NIPSCO really wants to help people get solar power.

J Opportunity: [Possibility to still attend the largest and most significant annual conference in our state at Hoosier Environmental Council's "Greening the Statehouse" this coming Saturday, 15th, 8 am – 3 pm CT, via Zoom. You'll come away prepared to recognize significant beneficial and harmful bills being introduced and how to successfully partner with your Indiana Legislators. Information: <https://www.hecweb.org/gts/> ; Register: <https://www.hecweb.org/gts/gts-registration/>]--no additional news. Keynote speaker is Robert Bilott, subject of the film Dark Waters. Kim Gordon of Brown Faces Green Spaces will also be speaking.

IV Invitation to sign onto this letter: *Join us in Telling the EPA to Regulate Toxic Legacy Coal Ash Sites!*
Please join us in standing for up for Northwest Indiana and all Lake Michigan communities by adding your signature to our sign-on letter to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 5 demanding that the agency update their federal Coal Combustion Residual (CCR) Rules to include the 300 inactive "legacy" coal ash landfills.
Those sites include the lakefront facilities, the Michigan City and Waukegan Generating Stations, that are currently exempted from live-saving health regulations. The majority of these sites are leaking toxins and contaminating drinking water and surface waters, including Lake Michigan, and devastating communities across the country. This environmental justice crisis must be addressed immediately!
Thank you for filling out this form and standing with us.
In solidarity, Just Transition Northwest Indiana (JTNWI) Team
Can sign on as individuals or groups: <https://forms.gle/Kcq4m5B8vSvp5MoC7> Faye moved and Laura seconded that the Commission sign the petition letter as it stands. The motion passed unanimously.

V Commission Comments—Faye expressed her appreciation for the youth members of the Commission.

VI Public Comments--none

VII Announcements—none other than Nancy's previous announcement re HEC Greening the Statehouse on November 15.

VIII Adjournment—Laura moved and Andie seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was unanimously approved. Chair Nancy Moldenhauer adjourned the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Laura Henderson, Secretary