

Commission on Sustainability



MICHIGAN CITY INDIANA

Thursday, April 14, 2022, 5:30 pm
City Hall
Minutes

Chair Nancy Moldenhauer called the meeting to order at 5:50 p.m. due being locked out of Community Room.

- I Roll Call—Present: Nancy Moldenhauer, Andie Jahnz-Davis, Daisy Lee, Faye Moore, Tim Bauer, Angie Reynolds,, La'Tonya Troutman, Mary Cate Neary. Absent: Bailey Chavis. Excused: Tristan Bogart, Laura Henderson, Philip Kohler, Bryant Dabney.
- II Approval of March 10, 2022 Minutes—Daisy Lee moved for approval of the minutes; Tim Bauer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- III 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; Nancy sent email to MC Planning & Inspection Dept. for assistance in identifying department ownership of properties]--By installing solar panels to provide renewable energy for more government buildings, we could both save the city money and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.
 - B **Funeral Homes & Crematoriums with Plant a Tree Opportunity:** Bailey Chavis [follow up with Greisen-Carlisle headquartered in Crown Point; post to share final list on social media as "Caught YOU Being Green" feature]--skipped due to absence of Bailey Chavis.
 - C **Biking, Hiking, and Walking Culture**—Phillip Kohler & Tim Bauer [ride along the new Singing Sands Trail to be scheduled in the spring with MC Park & Recreation Department and Bike Stop partnership; announce date, time, beginning and destination]--to be rescheduled.
 - D **Adopt Carbon Footprint Reduction Goal for Michigan City:** Suggestion to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50% in 2030. Discussion and vote.--Nancy noted that other communities in this process have adopted goals ranging from 30% reduction by 2050 to 50% reduction by 2030. With the closing of the NIPSCO plant planned for 2026 and already having our Sustainability Commission working on multiple projects to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, Nancy suggested that we adopt a goal of 50% reduction by 2030. The baseline would be the 2019 GHG study done by our Indiana University extern. Our next big target would be conversion of the city fleet to cleaner energy. At present only the Sanitary District has switched to propane gas powered vehicles. After some discussion, Andie Jahnz-Davis moved that the Commission adopt a goal of a minimum of 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by Michigan City by 2030. The motion was seconded by La'Tonya Troutman and passed unanimously.

- E Acceptance of Sustainability-Climate Action Plan for 2020 – 2030:** Entertain questions and comments regarding the Sustainability/Climate Action Plan. Reviewed for mistakes by Officers. Includes an account of past programs and partnerships plus current projects and collaborations already voted on and approved by Commissioners unanimously.--After a brief discussion, La'Tonya moved for adoption of the Sustainability-Climate Action Plan and Daisy seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.
- F Consider Opportunity to Submit Expression of Interest:** Daniel Poynter, Executive Director of Carbon Neutral Indiana, has approached our Sustainability Commission about the chance to apply for a \$1 MILLION grant to accelerate the implementation of a city climate/sustainability action plan while addressing inequality. Potential funding from Google and ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability USA, Inc. (ICLEI USA) would advise chosen finalists of the opportunity to provide a full proposal by May 11th. There will be two awardees nationwide.--Tim Bauer moved and Andie Jahnz-Davis seconded that we submit a letter of interest to apply for the Google and ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability USA grant through Carbon Neutral Indiana. The motion passed unanimously.
- G Formal Representation on Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) Environmental Management Policy Committee (EMPC) as Member:** Kathy Luther, Director of Environmental Programs, inquired about someone serving from our Sustainability Commission in the place of Mike Kuss since he has left employment with the MC Sanitary District. Beside Nancy, is anyone interested in filling the position or being the back up? Take a vote. --Faye Moore nominated Nancy Moldenhauer to serve as the Michigan City representative on the NIRPC Environmental Management Policy Committee. La'Tonya Troutman seconded the nomination. The vote was unanimous with the exception of Nancy who abstained from the vote. Nancy then asked for a person who could be her back-up. The meetings are quarterly, on a first Thursday at 9 a.m. and last about an hour or possibly up to 2 hours. Commissioners are invited to consider this for a future meeting.
- H Solar United Neighbors (SUN)—** [Round Two of cooperative membership ended on February 28th. Had 61 interested individuals signed up in the FREE cooperative. Seventeen (17) are in Michigan City. Satellite review and solar energy systems installer visit completed on 30. Site visit scheduled for 1. Proposal submitted to 9. Six (6) disqualified by installer. Opportunity lost on 6. Signed contract with 8. Cancelled contract of 1. Plans in the making for Round 3.]
<https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/indiana/> ; <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/indiana/go-solar/>-- No changes from the information provided.
- I Indiana University Resilience Cohort for SolSmart Designation—**Laura Henderson, Tristan Bogart, & Nancy Moldenhauer [Awarded SolSmart Silver Designation with 115 points and presented plaque at MC Council Meeting; Share our new link "Getting Started with Solar" on Sustainability Commission website page.]
<https://www.emichigancity.com/1214/Sustainability-Commission>-- Nancy and Andie presented a summary of our work to the City Council when the plaque for SolSmart Silver Designation was presented.
- J U.S Department of Energy National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL)—**Ed Shinn, Tristan Bogart, Daisy Lee, Laura Henderson, & Nancy Moldenhauer [We are receiving FREE consulting, engineering, and planning services for solar array installation, electric vehicle charging stations, and electronic device chargers for workstations at Washington Park, Beach, and Zoo. We're had our second exploratory meeting on February 23rd. 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.]--Next consultation meeting with Scott Belding from National Renewable Energy Laboratory will be next Thursday April 21.
- K Carbon Neutral Indiana (CNI)—**Andie Jahnz-Davis, Laura Henderson, Daisy Lee & Nancy Moldenhauer [Daniel Poynter, Executive Director, will be sending materials to Daisy Lee so hopefully Middle School Commissioners can person CNI's table at our Earth Day Extravaganza. 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 will have a CNI table at the Earth Month Extravaganza, staffed by Daisy Lee and any Student Commissioners who are available.

- L **Setting Regional Sustainable/Climate Goals and Actions**—Nancy Moldenhauer, Laura Henderson, & Daisy Lee [We voted to work collaboratively with NWI Region Resilience and in partnership with Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC). Nancy signed up to serve on the NIRPC Task Force with Kathy Sipple.] --Municipalities and counties will be working together to reduce their carbon footprint. Nancy will keep us updated. Meetings will be Thursday afternoons, every other month.
- M **“Caught YOU Being Green”**—Andie Jahnz-Davis [Earth Day Extravaganza, Saturday, April 23rd, 2022, 12 – 3 pm, Michigan City Public Library, requesting nomination submissions for Nora L. Schultz Tribute Sustainability Award in July.]--Focus is on the upcoming Earth Day Extravaganza. Over 20 organizations will have a presence there. It will be Saturday April 23 at Michigan City Public Library 12-3 p.m., free and for all ages.
- N **INVITATION:** Just Transition NWI is hosting a community conversation event to come together to engage in their campaign and take action to "Protect Lake Michigan and Trail Creek" on Saturday, April 16th, 1 – 3 pm CT, at the MC Public Library. This is a free, family-friendly event with food and refreshments. Must register at Eventbrite so they can prepare: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/protect-lake-michigan-and-trail-creek-community-conversation-event-tickets-305916513527?aff=NewsletterBlast&link_id=6&can_id=c24d05671c7767030eec8d5100d8b162&source=email-this-earth-month-join-us-in-saving-our-lake&email_referrer=email_1504991&email_subject=this-earth-month-join-us-in-saving-our-lake –nothing to add
- IV Commission Comments—In recognition of National Volunteer Month La’Tonya Troutman thanked all who have contributed to sustainability and resiliency in our area and especially Nancy for efforts to get the SolSmart Silver Designation. Nancy added we would still be working to obtain it if it weren't for Laura being sure everything was submitted and kept us moving forward.
- V Public Comments--none
- VI Announcements—Andie Jahnz-Davis announced the Porter County Earth Day event on Saturday April 30 at the Porter County Expo Center. Nancy Moldenhauer added that businesses are present. Nancy announced that Jim Poyser of Earth Charter Indiana will present “Climate Follies” at Lubeznik Center for the Arts on First Friday May 6 from 5-8 p.m. La’Tonya Troutman announced that since this is both National Poetry Month and Earth Month, she is inviting all who have written a poem with an environmental theme to post it and tag #MCSustainabilityCommission.
- VII Adjournment—Chair Nancy Moldenhauer adjourned the meeting at 6:33p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Laura Henderson, Secretary