

## March 10, 2021 ILRC Meeting

Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams

Katie Nelson opened the meeting and welcomed council members and participants.

- Roll Call of members- 7 members attended the meeting
  - Seth Harden
  - Kara Salazar
  - Mayor Debaun
  - David Kovich
  - Tom Slater
  - Jeff Healy
  - Richard Beck
- Members of the public present
  - Todd Woods
  - Chris Crabtree
  - Nathaniel Warenski
  - Mark Dobbs
  - Greg Slipher
  - Mike Pittman

Approval of November 2020 Meeting Minutes

Katie- We had one change at the bottom of page 7 of the minutes from Jeff Healy, which changed the wording to read “regulated drains.” This was simply a mistake in the draft minutes.

- A motion was made to approve the November minutes, the motion was also seconded
- All members present voted to approve the minutes

Pollinator-friendly Solar guidebook addition

Katie- Next we will move to discussion of the Pollinator-Friendly Solar guidebook addition. Councilors received this ahead of time for comments. We received comments from a few members and forwarded them to Purdue to be included in this final version. We received the final copy this past Monday. Any further discussion?

- The guidebook was moved and seconded
- Council members voted to approve the guidebook addition (7-0)

Kara Salazar- the designer was able to put this addition into the existing guidebook, so it will be populated on the website now that it is approved. It will be a standalone document available for distribution as well. We will request that the website be updated with the new version of the guidebook. The design is complete and we can move forward.

David Kovich- am looking to do some pollination work in the next section of a project I’m working on. Any way we can find people who do the work- for example landscapers who are familiar with pollinator-friendly development? Is there a group we can contact that does this already and can provide recommendations?

Katie- Purdue is one of the best places for general guidance. Brock Harpur has worked a lot on this issue and can be a good point person.

Kara- we have different individuals who specialize in native plantings. Recommend contacting county extension office as well. Jared Brook is a great resource, as well as Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Private landscape contractors that specialize in restoration could be good contacts too.

Seth Harden- each SWCD can provide list of technical providers as well.

2021 Land Use Summit update

Katie- we will now move to Kara to give us an update on planning for the Land Use Summit

Kara- thanks to those who are serving on the Land Use Summit planning team.

- We now have dates, times and a general flow for the summit.
- Wanted to bring it to the council for some discussion and feedback on the direction of the conference.
- We've had a lot of discussion with Purdue conferences, who will help us manage the program. Guidance we are receiving is that you can plan for an in-person event, but you would still need to plan for social distancing. This would be hard for the size of the event and could become challenging.
- Decided to make it virtual for this year.
- "Land Use Planning for Ag and Natural Resources" is the main theme.
- We have 3 types of concurrent sessions planned for the event, including climate change and renewable energy community planning, community engagement, and innovations in environmental planning.
- For the first day we plan to have a speaker, concurrent session, networking and exhibitor breaks and then another concurrent session.
- For the second day we would start with a concurrent session, transition to another concurrent session for the potential of a facilitated discussion, and then end with a speaker.
- Some of the topics we are looking at for speakers are pollinator-friendly solar, climate change and renewable energy tools, etc. but wanted to get feedback from this group.
- Looking for examples from communities- hoping to have a combination of speakers- practitioners, planners, community representatives and academic/non-profit.
- Hope to have a good balance of presentation and discussions. Starting to think about who we would like to bring in for the two keynote speakers.
- Have a small budget to use as needed- a grant that has \$5500 to support the conference.
- The platform we will use is Socio, which is the platform for sessions to take place. They have how-to tips for us to use, and the conference planner will help as well. The fee for use is \$3500.
- We can also have the Purdue team record videos to be viewed later as well.
- Purdue conferences will handle registration and manage any questions people have.
- We would have room to spend \$2,000 or so unless we get sponsors. We can break even if we have 100-200 people, which would mean we could keep the rate at \$40-\$50/person.

- Feedback on the agenda? Do people have thoughts on topics and speakers? We want to make sure to keep the focus on planning within ag and natural resources.

Mayor Debaun- anyone paying attention to the legislature and how the agenda might accommodate some follow-up on legislation that is passed?

Kara- yes, we have been talking about it a lot. One question I would have for this group is if you have suggestions for who can give updates?

Mayor Debaun- we can find municipal-level speakers, but the challenge will be to find objective presenters. There is a lot of conflict regarding these topics right now. Happy to try and find those in the future.

Katie- to get around that objective piece we can do a panel on what approved legislation means for communities in the state.

Todd Woods- would also mention that there is legislation about establishing an Ag Conservation easement program. It might be possible to have the bill sponsor speak to that (HB 1521)

David Kovich- a lot of bills will get shot down and we will end up with far fewer bills at the end of session. It might be good to have people from the state to inform everyone on the bills that passed.

Katie- session will end by April 29<sup>th</sup>. We will know what has passed or has gone into effect. HB 1521 has died because it did not get a hearing in the first half, but it is a conversation that we have been having with legislators. That is something we could lead at the summit and bring in others who are more knowledgeable. We could accomplish a legislative update during the summit.

Mayor Debaun- sounds like a great alternative way to open a discussion

Kara- one thing we were talking about is having some focus on managing conflict in facilitating these discussions. We've had the idea of bringing in some people who are experts in that style of facilitation and providing examples of how that is done well.

Mayor Debaun- that's a good idea because local decision-makers would find the information valuable. Community meetings can get heated.

Kara- also curious to know if people have attended national meetings where you heard speakers we should be considering. We would like to identify dynamic speakers and practical applications to present to attendees.

Seth- I don't have any suggestions, but The Nature Conservancy can focus on assisting with sessions in the climate space.

Kara- we want to reach out broadly to see if there are speakers in the state or area. How do people feel about the design so far? It may change a little as we continue to think about the speakers and topics. Feedback on having this broken up into 2 days and combination of speakers, breakouts, etc.?

Jeff Healy- provided example of listening to a roads school presentation that was broken up into 2-week period- there are all kinds of innovative ways to go about this. One main session during this period had almost 1,000 people in attendance and it was done through a Zoom webinar. I'm curious about the

socio platform and the cost associated with that. Due to it taking place over Zoom, there was no sign-up cost for roads school this year.

Kara- there are always costs with managing technology. We either do it in-house or we have a platform to have it all together. I've seen conferences done in multiple different ways too. I would prefer having the support from Socio on the technology side. The other pro on this system is that Purdue conferences are well trained to manage this. We have the funds, and we can make it affordable for attendees too. If we want to look for additional sponsors we can. Is \$40 something manageable for constituents?

Mayor Debaun- I don't think it's out of the question- a lot of other meetings and conferences have registration fees.

David- if you have 92 counties and one person out of each county would find this helpful and attend, then you already have 92 people that will be counted on for attendance.

Kara- hopefully we would reach that 100 mark pretty easily. We had 160 people last time- hope we will have more since it's virtual this year. Should we be asking for sponsors?

Mayor Debaun- AIM and other groups always have sponsors for monthly meetings. There is no harm in having sponsors to help with costs.

Katie- I was going to say the same- is there harm in seeking out sponsorships? Can we display them during the conference and in marketing materials?

Kara- absolutely and we want to create exhibitor booths through the platform too. Depending on plenary speakers we should plan on Honoria for those sessions- we could have at least 2 sponsors to support speakers and then more to support the conference in general. Any other thoughts?

David- I don't know when our next meeting is, but it might help to have more specific topics outlined. We can discuss it further in the process then?

Seth- would suggest finding sponsors who are attached to the speaker's topic or vice versa. Things have to flesh out a little more before this could be decided.

Kara- the next step is for the conference committee to meet sometime in the next 2 weeks and then we will come together to bring in more specifics on speakers. We hope to provide some further information to the council via email. We have a long list of brainstorming and ideas for the conference, but they need to be placed in specific categories. We would like to get the save the date out soon too.

Todd Woods- you were talking about speakers being considered. Is that something you could provide insight into?

Kara- we have a lot of interest for communities interested in the pollinator-friendly solar projects. Another project we are working on is about a statewide ordinance inventory for renewable energy and climate. The Environmental Resiliency Institute has come up as well but nothing has been solidified and these are the ideas

Mark Dobbs, Naval Support Activity for Crane- has brought up the issue of land use around military institutions. Wanted to throw that topic into the mix- looking at federal programs regarding readiness

and environmental protections. Looking at web-based tools available to landowners for land use conservation.

Kara- thank you for the input. This is the kind of thing we are looking for. That is all I had to share as far as progress on the plans for the Land Use Summit. Appreciate the time that has been spent in crafting this. Will turn it back to Katie

Todd- you mentioned the council committee reconvening. Is there a way to provide them with feedback?

Katie- feel free to send me an email (provided email). Happy to take public comments on the summit. Thanked Kara for her work on this and for carrying the heavy weight on it.

- Wanted to bring a topic to your attention that is making it's way through the legislature. It is not one we have been involved in, but are hearing from constituents and others who have thoughts.
- The bill I would like to mention is HB 1337 and Shelby can send out a link to the bill after the meeting.
- The bill deals with planning and zoning law. The specific language I'm mentioning was added in House Local Government committee.
- We are being told this is providing a solution for Monroe County- it would grant the county's legislative body final approval for special exemption land use.
- Also restricts plan commissions from restricting Ag and Forestry use within a municipality.
- Have heard that the intent is to protect Ag use, but there might be some unintended consequences including protecting ordinances that are meant to protect agriculture use and municipalities.
- Any feedback or thoughts from the council?

Mayor Debaun- we don't think it's good legislation because adding the extra step requires the legislative body to approve a special exception. This could be cumbersome.

- Also, legislative bodies don't have the knowledge base that a board of zoning appeals might have.
- Have heard the bill portrayed differently- heard it was a Monroe County issue and a special interest issue that involved a timber harvest issue and individual that didn't get their way.
- From a local government perspective, it is bad legislation and I have been openly opposing it.

Rich Beck- I have not reviewed it but would likely oppose it as well. I struggle with legislation that deals with one particular county and it seems like the wrong way to go about solving the situation. Would not be in support of it.

David- where is the bill now?

Katie- it passed out of the House and is waiting for a hearing in the Senate. If you have thoughts feel free to reach out- we have been focused on other things, so would appreciate the additional feedback. Any other business for the council?

Kara- would the summary you provided for the bill be in our notes? Have some colleagues who are interested in it.

Katie- yes we can include

Mayor Debaun moved to adjourn the meeting.

David Kovich seconded the motion.

All voted to adjourn the meeting

Katie- look for a meeting in May or June for a legislative session update, as well as an update on the Land Use Summit.