

IDNR Lake Michigan Coastal Program

Coastal Advisory Board Meeting

Special Meeting

May 21, 2014

10 AM CT

Porter County - Sunset Hill Farm County Park

775 Meridian Rd., Valparaiso, IN 46383

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Voting: Christine Livingston (IDT), Christopher Meyers (Lake County), Bob Daum (NPS-IDNR), Dan Plath (NiSource), Tiffany Tolbert (Indiana Landmarks), Frank Seilheimer (LaPorte County), Ray Joseph (Porter County Parks), Hesham Khalil (Porter County Chamber of Commerce), Richard Morrisroe (Lake County Planner), Kris Krouse (Shirley Heinze Land Trust), Ken Purze (Citizen)

Non-Voting: Elizabeth McCloskey (USFWS), Leslie Dorworth (ILSG), Kathy Luther (NIRPC),

Non-Board Members: Don Lode (LaPorte County Soil & Water), Joe Exl (NIRPC)

LMCP Staff: Mike Molnar, Maggie Byrne, Derek Nimetz, Margaret Palicka

Welcome and Introductions - Elizabeth McCloskey Pledge of Allegiance begins at 10:10 am Introductions starting with Mike Molnar

- **Old Business** - No minutes from last meeting. Discussion of the composition of the Board was not finalized at the retreat. Ken Purze reached out to the LaPorte County Soil & Water District to see if they wanted to have a member on the board. They wanted to know how often the CAB meets and what responsibilities the board would expect. Discussed whether or not to rotate members in the position, but decided it should be consistent. By-laws would need to be amended and it would have to be decided if the member was voting or non-voting. Potentially, three new SWCD members could be added, each representing a different county. The DNR would have to approve. The issue with adding one additional board member is that the number of voting members would be 14, which could be controversial if there is a heated topic and tie. Discussion occurred as to whether or not a representative from NIRPC should be added as a voting member. Motion made to add another voting position as a representative of SWCD for a 2 year term beginning in January 2015. Similar to other user groups, SWCD would nominate an individual that they think would best serve on

the Coastal Advisory Board. The CAB is postponing creating another category for a board member until a further meeting.

Motion #1 – add a representative from Soil and Water Conservation Districts (Board member/staff) to the Coastal Advisory Board as a voting member. The position shall be two years in duration and rotate.

First – Ken Purze

Second – Frank Seilheimer

Vote – Unanimous in support

New Business – Grants Priorities:

*** Land Acquisition** – The discussion of grants priorities is carrying over from the CAB retreat. It was proposed to focus the grants priorities exclusively on RFPs for land acquisition. By doing so, the grants could support the Bicentennial Celebration of 2016, 100 years of the State Park system, and 50 years of the National Lakeshore's existence. The Bicentennial Nature Trust is a source of match with excess funding remaining. Ideally, many projects can occur without needing local entities to provide funding as a match. The maximum request to the LMCP for land acquisition projects is \$150,000. The Bicentennial Nature Trust's maximum request is \$300,000. At the retreat there was a motion to give multipliers in the grant scoring for land acquisition projects to make the projects a higher priority in the review process.

Land acquisition basic criteria: Project must provide or improve public access to natural resources or provide preservation of a significant natural resource (specific species of plant or animal). Mitigation projects are not eligible. NGO's are not eligible to apply alone. The end result would be that the DNR would hold a conservation easement on the property. Due to the standards being set by NOAA, they cannot be changed.

Bicentennial Nature Trust's criteria: More lenient (ex: can improve trails, parks, etc.).

There are issues with giving land acquisition multipliers in the grants scoring process; there is a possibility that bad projects could be funded, good projects would score low, acquisition projects could use up most or all the funds leaving unhappy applicants for other projects, other applicants could be scared away, and the process would be very difficult to explain/understand. See Maggie's handouts and PowerPoint if additional information is needed. Maggie spoke with Lake County Parks, Porter County Parks, and LaPorte County Parks to inquire about possible projects – each county said they had multiple land acquisition projects. The public input meeting would need to be changed to invite only public entities. A workshop has been created with Mark Becker from BNT.

The DNR Technical Advisory Board and the Lake Michigan Coastal Program are in favor of the land acquisition priority in grants. A suggestion was made to issue a survey to local entities, but would be difficult for everyone to access and would require a long time frame. The Coastal Advisory Board came to the conclusion that the public needs to be involved in

the decision of grants will be exclusively land acquisition. The voting would take place at the public meeting where the public can comment on what the board is discussing.

The motion to set a priority for land acquisition at the retreat was approved. There was a motion to strike that priority and it was approved. The discussion will be had with the public at the June 18 meeting. It is encouraged to invite individuals from townships or counties to participate in the public meeting and the topic of land acquisition.

Motion #2 – Strike the motion from the CAB retreat regarding weighting of Land Acquisition projects in the Coastal Grant scoring.

First – Christopher Meyers

Second – Hesham Khalil

Vote – Unanimous in support

Mike reiterates that as members of stakeholder groups CAB members should be collecting their co-workers thoughts and comments. The LMCP will continue to have discussions with board members up until the June meeting to avoid chaos or the inability to make a decision. The Grants Committee will try to meet and discuss issues before the June meeting as well and make a formal recommendation at the June meeting. Maggie will be making an additional formal presentation.

*** Officer Elections:** Officer Elections were tabled from the retreat due to time restraints. The Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary positions are to be re-slated. Each position is a one year term. An individual cannot serve more than two years successively in the same position. Positions are open to any voting or non-voting member.

The Chair conducts meetings, works with staff to develop the agenda for the meetings, ensures all committees are chaired, determines whether the CAB needs a special meeting, and ensures proper procedures are being followed. Tiffany Tolbert was elected.

Chair – Tiffany Tolbert nominated

First – Bob Daum

Second – Christopher Meyers

Vote – Unanimous in support

The Vice Chair serves in the Chair's absence and helps with board operation. Christopher Meyers was elected.

Vice Chair – Christopher Meyers nominated

First – Tiffany Tolbert

Second – Kris Krouse

Vote – Unanimous in support

The Secretary runs meeting procedures and keeps attendance. If both the Chair and Vice Chair are absent, the Secretary conducts the meetings. Christine Livingston was elected.

Secretary – Christine Livingston nominated
First – Kris Krouse
Second – Christopher Meyers
Vote – Unanimous in support

*** Strategic Plan Update:** Presentation given by Derek Nimetz.

The handout shows where the LMCP stands in the Strategic Planning process and the timeline. The past strategic plan was conducted in 2012 and it was very brief. NOAA has been facilitating the process. The staff will be working on objectives and strategies. The mission, vision, goal, objectives, and strategies were highlighted and descriptions for each were given. The first meeting occurred on February 20 at Meadowbrook. Many of the goals and objectives that were created on February 20 have since been changed/edited. See Derek's presentation and handouts for additional information. All components will be met by LMCP staff with aid of partnerships with the intent of being more proactive within the community. Most of the objectives are set to have goals in the year 2020. Board Members are encouraged to join committees and assist in the Strategic Planning Process. Implementation is hopefully going to occur around July 2014 and the plan will be implemented through 2020.

Announcements:

- * Mike Molnar – Gave matted print to Liz as a thank you for serving as the chair.
- * Don Lode - Conference on the Environment on June 5 in Michigan City at the Blue Chip Hotel Casino and Spa from 8:30am – 4:30pm, Banana Slugs String Band concerts on June 5 (Millennium Park at 6:30pm) and 6 (Franklin Square at 11am) in Michigan City
- * Dan Plath - Fun Float and Luau on June 8 all day, WG Jackson in Michigan City June 20-22
- * Kathy Luther – EMPC meeting June 8 at 8am at the Blue Chip Casino preceding the Conference on the Environment
- * Tiffany Tolbert – City of Gary – Marquette Park Preservation Award Presentation Video is available via searching Indiana Landmarks, The Churches of Edward Dart at St. Augustine Episcopal Church (Chicago architect famous for his design with churches) in Gary, IN on June 7 from 1-4pm
- * Derek Nimetz – Indiana DNR Division of Nature Preserves teaming with partners throughout the state of Indiana to highlight nature preserves and is partnering with Shirley Heinze Land Trust to emphasize Amber Flatwoods in LaPorte County at 10am on June 21, more info can be found on the DNR website
- * Mike Molnar – June is Coastal Awareness Month and the calendar is posted to the LMCP website – cam.dnr.in.gov or search for “Indiana Coastal Awareness Month”

Next Meeting – June 18, 2014 - Public Input Meeting - 6:30 PM CDT

Porter County – Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission
6100 Southport Road, Portage, IN

Topics: 1. Reports 2. Public Input Session for 2015 Coastal Grants Priorities

~Meeting Adjourned~