

IDNR Lake Michigan Coastal Program

Coastal Advisory Board Meeting

Wednesday June 15, 2016

6:30pm CST

NIRPC

6100 Southport Rd., Portage, IN 46383

Attendees:

Voting: Nicole Barker (Save the Dunes/Environmental Advocacy), Shannon Eason (Park and Recreation/Michigan City Parks), Kim Swift (Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore), Tim Kingsland (Lake County City or Town / Hobart), Christine Livingston (Indiana Dunes/Tourism), Jeffrey Katz (Porter County City or Town / Beverly Shores), Ken Purze (LaPorte County – Chamber of Commerce), Tiffany Tolbert (Indiana Landmarks/Historical)

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

LMCP Staff: Maggie Byrne, Kacey Alexander, Derek Nimetz, Dorreen Carey, Kaitlyn McClain, Dejan Koch

Public: Natalie Johnson (Urban Waters), Carolyn Harris (Long Beach Beautification Committee), James Alexander (Nisource)

Old Business:

February and April meeting minutes were approved.

New Business:

Officer Elections

The first order of business was to vote on new officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary) for the Coastal Advisory Board. The current chair, Tiffany, called for nominations which are as follows:

Chair: Dan Plath & Jeffrey Katz

Vice-Chair: Tim Kingsland & Kathy Luther

Secretary: Ken Purze

Once nominations were closed each member of the board was given a slip of paper on which to write down their votes. After the votes were collected and tallied the results were the following:

Chair: Dan Plath

Vice-Chair: Kathy Luther

Secretary: Ken Purze

Priority Voting

Maggie briefly went over the basics of the grant program before beginning to discuss the priority setting process. Each of the six grant program categories must have a project type priority. During the decision-making process public input was received, April 20th to May 20th through various methods. After the suggestions were compiled, the Grants Committee met to discuss and decide upon the top 5 recommendations for each category. These top 5 recommendations are what the board voted on. **The top priority is highlighted in green in each category.**

Low Cost Construction Priority Recommendations

- 1) **Natural habitat restoration** - Projects can include such actions as invasive plant control, appropriate woody plant removal, prescribed fire, or native plantings, within natural areas, which would return a property to its original natural character.
- 2) **Interpretive and wayfinding signage for natural and cultural resources in parks and nature preserves** – creation and installation of signage
- 3) **Projects to increase public access that also implement priorities identified in these LMCP documents/plans:**
 - **Historic Public Access Study (2015)**
 - **Public Access Needs Assessment – Report**
- 4) **Installation of green (nature-based?) infrastructure to address storm water pollution into waterways**
- 5) **Lake Michigan water safety education signage/installations**

Land Acquisition Priority Recommendations

- 1) **Lands identified as priority protection areas or critical areas in watershed management plans**
- 2) **Lands included in the Coastal and Estuarine Land and Conservation Program Plan (CELCP)**
- 3) **Lands adjacent to existing managed areas**

- 4) **Cultural/historic resources – acquisition of properties which are of cultural or historic significance**
- 5) **Wetlands**

Education/Outreach Priority Recommendations

- 1) **Green infrastructure maintenance education/training** – creation and/or implementation of curriculum to educate maintenance staff how to maintain methods of green infrastructure such as rain gardens, bioswales
- 2) **Lake Michigan water safety education & outreach**
- 3) **Implementing the education/outreach portion of watershed management plans**
- 4) **Getting people involved in stewardship of coastal resources** - e.g., volunteer stewardship on nature preserves, beach cleanups, river cleanups
- 5) **Citizen conservation & stewardship training** - e.g. water quality monitoring training, conservation internships, invasive species early detection

Planning/Coordination/Management Priority Recommendations

- 1) **Urban forestry planning** - This would include, but not be limited to, such things as tree inventories, invasive pest management plans, tree management plans, iTree analysis reporting, urban tree canopy assessment, and storm damage planning.
- 2) **Coastal hazards / climate resilience** – Coastal hazards are threats such as severe weather and flooding. Coastal resilience means building the ability of a community to "bounce back" after hazardous events such as coastal storms, and flooding – rather than simply reacting to impacts.
- 3) **Municipal comprehensive plan updates** – must incorporate current watershed plans and/or include sustainable planning practices and coastal resource protection
- 4) **Development of long-term, natural resource management plans** for existing protected areas using the Lake Michigan Coastal Program template
- 5) **Land acquisition strategy and/or planning, for recreation and natural resource protection** – for communities to develop plans to identify priority parcels to acquire, and to develop strategies for acquiring those parcels, such as identifying possible funding sources

Applied Research Priority Recommendation

- 1) **Study of stormwater BMP placement, and evaluation of effectiveness** – over the past several years, many best management practices for managing stormwater have been implemented. A

project that fits this priority would determine the locations of these existing BMPs, and assess the effectiveness of both the location and the BMP installation. Are these BMPs doing what they are designed to do?

- 2) **Sediment transport modeling for Indiana Lake Michigan shoreline** – projects which examine how sand and other sediments are being transported along Indiana’s shoreline
- 3) **Forecasting future environmental suitability for species** – projects which would ascertain the level of resilience native species would have in the face of a changing climate
- 4) **Using social science to understand and evaluate public awareness and valuation of coastal resources** – this priority would include projects which gauge the level of understanding of coastal resources among people who live in the coastal region of Indiana, and ascertain how much value those people place on coastal resources
- 5) **Economic value of ecotourism in the coastal region** – projects which would determine how much revenue is brought into the Indiana coastal region by nature-based tourism

Emerging Issues Priority Recommendations

- 1) **Mapping and analysis of septic system impacts** – identify where septic systems are located within the Indiana coastal region. Determine how these septic systems are potentially impacting water quality.
- 2) **Shoreline dynamics primer for local officials** – educational tool which can be used to educate local officials about some of the natural processes and human activities that shape our Indiana Lake Michigan coast.
- 3) **Building resilient communities** - Resilience is our ability to prevent a short-term hazard event from turning into a long-term community-wide disaster. Projects which plan, or research how to build a resilient community, or educate community members how to do this, would be eligible for bonus points under this priority.
- 4) **Microplastics** - small plastic particles in the environment that are generally smaller than 1 mm are known as microplastics. They can come from a variety of sources, including cosmetics, clothing, and industrial processes.
- 5) **Early detection of exotic invasive species** – includes plants, animals, insects, fish

Committee/Program Reports:

Grants - Maggie Byrne

Maggie reminded the board that the next due dates for small Grants was July 15th. Due to NOAA now requiring the submission of small Grants to them the Lake Michigan Coastal Program will reduce the number of start times throughout the year to two instead of three which they previously held. The two new deadlines are July 15th and January 15th. The maximum amount one can receive from a small grant is \$5,000.

Ecological - Derek Nimetz

Nothing to report

Nonpoint/Septic – Dorreen Carey

Dorreen provided a brief overview of the Septic System Workgroup meeting that was held at Purdue University in Hammond. During the workgroup meeting, Natalie Johnson gave a presentation on the results of the Septic Systems focus group. A presentation at that meeting was also given by Chandra of the Virtual 3D Model of a Septic System that is being created.

LaPorte County adopted an ordinance which requires a certified inspector to inspect a septic system when a property is sold.

Planning - Kaitlyn McClain

Kaitlyn touched on the Coastal Hazards guidance document that she has created. Currently she is working with communications on formatting and graphic design. The guide should be on the website soon. It includes model ordinances used by other Great Lake states for local officials to use to help address shoreline erosion, flooding, and fluctuating lake levels.

She is also wrapping up the Coastal Awareness Training Program needs assessment. The online survey will close on Friday June 17th. After the survey closes the results will be analyzed.

Announcements:

Coastal Month – See website for details

Next Meeting – August 17th, 2016 @ 10:00 AM CST – Michigan City Hall Emergency Management Conference Room 100 E. Michigan Blvd. Michigan City, IN 46360