

Environmental Management Policy Committee

Lake Michigan Room

August 4, 2022

Minutes

Bill Emerson called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call.

In attendance were Bill Emerson (Lake County), George Topoll (Union Township), Sharon Semko (DCI), Susan MiHalo (NC), Cathy Csatari (IDEM), Tim Kingsland (Hobart), Jennifer Collins (IDEM), Jan Bapst (Dune Acres), Joe Exl (LMCP), Jenny Orsburn (LMCP), Brenda Scott Henry (Gary), Katherine Balkema, Kevin Breitzke (Porter County), Betsey Maher (SD), Daina Dumbrys (Michiana Shores), Harshini Ratnayaka, Nancy Moldenhauer (Michigan City), and Ashley Sharkey (DNR).

NIRPC staff present were Kathy Luther, Jennifer Birchfield, Candice Eklund, Meredith Stilwell, Kevin Polette, and Flor Baum.

The meeting minutes of April 7, 2022 were tabled for the November 3 meeting.

Public Comments

No public comments were submitted.

IDEM Presentation

Cathy Csatari and Jennifer Collins presented on Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management (IDEM) overview. Staff updates were presented, which included Brian Rockensuess as the new commissioner, and Parvonay Stover as the new Chief of Staff. IDEM services the Region, as well as Jasper and Newton County. Inspector positions and projects are growing for water quality, air quality, and land quality. IDEM has created new websites where residents and stakeholders can sign up to receive updates for individual sites of interest. Residents can view current permits, consent decrees, and agreed orders on the new websites. The sites contain links to IDEM's virtual file cabinet and links to any recent incidents at the facility. The Compliance and Technical Assistance Program (CTAP) is free and confidential, non-regulatory, and is multimedia. CTAP offers environmental regulatory assistance to Indiana businesses and organizations for all sized and types including the following:

- Existing facilities with legacy issues
- New companies looking to locate in Indiana
- Government agencies
- Trade Associations, industry groups, environmental consultants, and other interested stakeholders

Communities can apply for memberships that are tiered as bronze, silver, and gold. The bronze level requires a positive environmental history, developing a "clean team," and attending a Clean Annual meeting. The Silver level requires the community to meet the bronze level, implement 4 – 8 projects, report performance metrics, and achieve recognition and benefits. The gold level meets the bronze and silver requirements, implements additional 4 – 8 best practices, and additional recognition. Grants and awards were presented. The Indiana Governor's Awards for Environmental Excellence is Indiana's most prestigious recognition for most innovative and sustainable programs within the categories of environmental outreach, improvement, greening government, land use, pollution prevention, recycling, and renewable resources. For more information, contact Jennifer at jcollins@idem.in.gov.

Climate Action NWI Update

Kathy presented on the NWI Regional Climate Action Planning (RCAP & CAP) update. NIRPC has been accepted to have the McKinney Climate Fellow from IU extended for the remainder of the calendar year. NIRPC is currently working on the draft RCAP framework. The Local CAP and performance metrics are slated to be developed between the months of August and September. By the end of November, NIRPC staff will finalize and adopt the NWI Regional Climate Action Framework. NIRPC invited 68 stakeholders to form a work group with an expertise in several environmental categories. 36 participants attended the virtual kickoff meeting that took place on May 6 and covered the GHG inventory, CAP workplan, and reduction targets. The June 2 virtual meeting had 18 participants and covered a “business as usual” forecast and climate vulnerability and equity. For more information, please contact Kathy at kluther@nirpc.org.

Reports from Planning Partners

Sharon Semko (DCI) reported on events and programs with Drive Clean Indiana. For more information, please visit <https://drivecleanindiana.org/>.

Announcements were made.

The next EMPC meeting is slated for November 3, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. in the NIRPC offices.

Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:26 a.m.