

**IDNR Lake Michigan Coastal Program**

**Coastal Advisory Board Meeting**

Wednesday February 17, 2016

10am CST

Crown Point Library

122 N. Main Street, Crown Point, IN 46307

**Attendees:**

**Voting:** Nicole Barker (Save the Dunes/Environmental Advocacy), Dan Plath (NiSource/Industry), Shannon Eason (Park and Recreation/Michigan City Parks), Kim Swift (Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore), Tim Kingsland (Lake County City or Town / Hobart), Paul Labus (Local Natural Resource Management/TNC), Christine Livingston (Indiana Dunes/Tourism), Richard Morrisroe (Citizen at Large - Lake), 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), Tom Davenport (US EPA Region 5), Young Choi (Purdue University Calumet/Universities)

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

**Public:** David Carr (DNR/Land Acquisition), Brad Baldwin (DNR/Land Acquisition), Carl Wodrich (DNR/Land Acquisition), Leanne Whitesell (IDEM), David Wright (GPTC), Natalie Johnson (Urban Waters), Emily Stork (DNR/Nature Preserves), Kati Molchan (Lake County Parks), Daniel Goldfarb (Wildlife Habitat Council)

**Old Business:**

October and December meeting minutes were approved

**New Business:**

***Indiana Stream & Wetland Mitigation Program presented by Carl Wodrich***

Carl discussed the DNR's proposed sponsorship of a statewide in-lieu fee program. The approval process began in 2013. He is hopeful that the final instrument will be approved before the end of 2016. The permits that have been proposed for this program include regulations of Army Corps of Engineers under Section 10 Harbors Act and Section 404 of Clean Water Act, as well as Indiana Department of Environmental Management regulations under section 401 Water Quality Certifications.

An In-lieu fee program helps the restoration, establishment, enhancement, or preservation of aquatic resources through funds that are paid to a governmental or nongovernmental natural resource management organization. There are several factors that work in the favor of this type of program. An In-lieu fee program targets a larger, more ecologically valuable parcel. It also provides for a rigorous scientific and technical analysis, as well as financial assurances.

The three Program Development Components are:

1. Prospectus – Summary of information regarding the program
2. Instrument – Describes the legally binding process that the program operates within
3. Compensation Planning Framework – Project selection screening process

The Compensation Planning Framework states that for project selection a project must:

1. Replace lost functions and services
2. Involve re-establishment, rehabilitation, establishment, enhancement, and preservation
3. Be located within or adjacent to “Hotspots” or other priority conservation areas
4. Include projects that restore wetland types which differ from approved mitigation banks

The next step is to address the concerns of the Army Corps and IRT and incorporate those concerns in the final instrument. Once this document has been approved, the Department of Natural Resources can sell advance credits.

### ***A Livable Broadway: Mobility Analysis Plan by David Wright***

During the 2013 grant cycle, the Gary Public Transport Corp. submitted and was awarded a grant \$50,000 grant for the costs of developing a livable Broadway regional plan. In order to create this plan, the current state of transit on Broadway was assessed. During the assessment the following areas were reviewed:

- Demographics
- Employment type/location
- Housing and density patterns
- Market and growth potential
- Roadway characteristics
- Congestion/Traffic counts
- Modal share
- Bike/pedestrian infrastructure
- Walkability/Accessibility
- Land use/Employment

Based on the information gathered, a plan was formed and is currently coined Broadway Rapid. This service will increase the frequency of buses, involve more efficient routing, and reduce stop overlaps to

speed service. These improvements are being done in collaboration with the roadway improvements planned by INDOT. The goal is to have the service launched in the summer of 2017.

### ***Dunes Residential Guide by Nicole Barker***

Nicole spoke briefly regarding the grant that Save the Dunes was given for their project: Creating an Indiana Dunes Ecosystem Natural Resource Protection Plan. Work on the guide has begun with its aim to help residents identify invasive species and control them. It will also suggest native plants for landscaping use and where to find these plants. A consulting firm, Hitchcock Design Group, was hired to develop the guide. A team of advisors was formed to provide input and give feedback as the project progresses. The finished plan will consist of an 8-10 page, full-color document and include a corresponding website.

### **CAB Officer Election Information - Mike Molnar**

Mike gave a quick reminder that the April meeting will include elections for the next chair, vice chair and secretary. Tiffany has been the chair for two terms and as such is ineligible for chair. Please start thinking of board members to nominate.

### **Coastal Priority Setting Discussion – Maggie Byrne**

Maggie reviewed the idea formed by the Grants Committee on how to improve the Priority Setting Process. Issues with the current process include duplicate priorities, too many priorities, and very specific priorities. As it is now, the decisions concerning the priorities for next Grant Cycle are decided within ten minutes with no discussion.

The proposed change was to begin the discussion and look for input beginning at the April meeting, which will now be a public meeting in the evening. This will happen at the meeting and via e-mails, paper, and other forms of social media and include more opportunity for public input as well. All of the submissions will be compiled for the Grant Committee to discuss and prioritize. This will help align the process to be more in line with the goals and objectives of the Lake Michigan Coastal Program. The Grant Committee would then present the top three or four recommendations to the Coastal Advisory Board to vote on. The CAB will then vote on the recommendations made by the Grant Committee, at the June CAB meeting, which will also be public, and take place in the evening.

## **Small Grant Proposal Vote – Maggie Byrne**

Maggie sent out six (6) small grant proposals that were submitted to members of the board to review. The applications were distributed ahead of time to allow the members time to review and decide if the projects were worthy of receiving funding prior to the vote.

After introducing the small grants, Maggie turned it over to Tiffany Tolbert to begin the process of discussion and voting. She began by questioning if board members wished to vote on the projects individually or as a group, as well as seeking any questions from the board members.

Shannon Eason recused herself from the Great Lakes Surf Rescue Project, Inc. – Open Water Rescue Training, and Tim Kingsland recused himself from the City of Hobart – Hobart Water Festival project

Ken Purze asked if the board could vote on them as a group with the two above-mentioned exceptions. He then motioned to approve the six small grant applications as submitted. Shannon Eason seconded the motion. Tiffany put the motion to a vote with all members voting in favor of approval.

- City of Hobart – Hobart Water Festival
- Gary Public Transportation Corporation – Livable Broadway and Transit Benefits Outreach
- Great Lakes Surf Rescue Project, Inc. – Open Water Rescue Training
- LaPorte County Soil and Water Conservation District – Michigan City's 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Trail Creek Week
- Miller Garden Club – Spread the Word: Protect Our Shoreline
- Purdue University – Public Workshops on Recreational Fishing in Southern Lake Michigan

## **Committee/Program Reports:**

### ***Grants - Maggie Byrne***

The technical advisory board met and discussed the 2016 Grants that would be funded this year.

- Michigan City Department of Parks & Rec. – Winding Creek Cove BMP's Demonstration Phase 2 Bank Stabilization
- City of Hobart – Gilliana Property
- Porter County Parks & Rec. – Extension to Brincka Cross Land Acquisition
- City of Hobart – City of Hobart Storm Water Master Plan – Ross Township Element
- City of Hobart Sanitary/Storm Water District – City of Hobart Tree Inventory Program
- Town of Highland Parks & Rec Department – Highland Community Tree Inventory & Management Plan
- Michigan City Sanitary District – Cheney Run Drainage Area Plan
- City of Portage Marina Commission – Portage Public Marina Master Plan
- City of Gary Department of Public Parks – Barrier – Free 2020 Plan
- Dunes Learning Center – Launch of New Mighty Acorns Curriculum
- Izaak Walton League of America – Porter – Family Nature Education Programs

- Lake County Solid Waste Management District – Protecting Lake Michigan Water Quality Starts with Me!
- Recycling and Waste Reduction District of Porter County – “Water Quality Protection Means the World” Initiative
- National Audubon Society – Marsh Bird Conservation Planning in the Calumet Region
- City of Gary Department of Planning and Redevelopment – City of Gary Green Infrastructure Plan
- Save the Dunes – Climate Change Action Plan for the Nearshore Indiana Dunes Region

***Program Updates - Mike Molnar***

We received the draft funding numbers from NOAA for the upcoming year, and it appears as if we will be receiving a bump of \$58,000. The funding for special projects went down about \$3,000. These numbers are not finalized yet, so it is highly possible that they will change.

Last month we hired a new Coastal Planner, Kaitlyn McClain. We submitted the paperwork to hire a new Coastal Non-Point planner last week and hope to have it approved in four weeks. Once this happens we will be able to get it placed on the job board. Due to a recently announced hiring freeze, this position request is on hold. LMCP staff will request an exception to the hiring freeze given the potential loss of Federal funding if the 6217 program is not fully approved by the deadline.

***Planning - Kaitlyn McClain***

Kaitlyn has started on developing a Coastal Training Program. The first step in the process will be a needs assessment to see what materials are already available and what is needed. This will keep from duplication of materials. She is looking to form a planning committee of 3 to 5 people to help review stakeholder list, provide feedback, review documents and findings. The time commitment would be from now to probably July. There will be around three in-person meetings. If you're interested, see Kaitlyn for more information or to sign up.

***Outreach - Mike Molnar***

The staff is collecting events for June Coastal Awareness month to post on the website. If you do have an event, please submit it.

***Nonpoint/Septic – Dorreen Carey***

On Thursday, at the LaPorte County Health Department, there will be a Septic Workgroup meeting. During the meeting, the group will be given an update on the status of the Septic Ordinance. It is important to get this Ordinance approved as it helps to meet a 6217 measures.

***Ecological - Derek Nimetz***

In the coming months Derek will be reaching out to the CELCP/Habitat committee members to help develop a template. The purpose of this template will be to assist communities in keeping their biodiversity plans up-to-date.

**Announcements:**

March 10<sup>th</sup> – Lecture: The Connection between Organized Labor and Environment @ Barker House 6pm – 7:30pm

May 26<sup>th</sup> – Black Oak Savanna Hike at Miller Woods @ Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education 5:30pm – 7:30pm

June – Coastal Awareness Month

Saturdays and Sundays March 5, 6, 12, 13 – Maple Sugar Time @ *Chellberg Farm* 10am – 4pm

May 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> – Species Count Hikes @ Chellberg Farm – currently looking for Volunteers

**Next Meeting – April 20, 2016 @ 6:30 PM CST – Porter County**