

Ogden Dunes Environmental Advisory Board Minutes
19 March 2024, 5:30pm
Meeting held at Karl's home due to town hall scheduling conflict

Attendees: Frank Lani, Tom Davenport, Vicky Albritton, Bianca Passo, Carol Angarola, and Karl Krizmanic.

1. Agenda – any additions?

Beach Water Quality Management issue, NIPSCO tree-cutting issue (see Other, below)

2. Bird Town (status, what we still need to do, who will do it & do we need a meeting early next month to finalize arrangements)

Since our last meeting, EAB members have been busy planning our Bird Town (BT) opening. Vicky wrote up some informational material for Ogden Dunes' page on the BT website. Other BT committee members read it. Frank and Patti (Patricia Perry) added to the material. Vicky will gather everything together asap and send it to Whitney Yoerger with BT-Indiana for review. When Whitney approves it, it will be posted publicly on the BTI website and our BT opening day will be announced. Whitney will also send us our BT signs.

We also set the date for our BT opening: April 27th at 11am at Polliwog Pond. Whitney says a BTI board member will attend. We will also invite members of various OD boards and committees, including the Town Council. Email invitations will have to be sent out. We might invite a bird expert to say a few words about the birds at Polliwog Pond. Tom has agreed to say a few words at the opening and announce future bird- and invasive species-related activities. We will likely have various handouts including pamphlets on gardening for birds, bird counts, and invasive species. We will announce an invasive species clearing day at Polliwog Pond and bring a sign-up sheet for volunteers.

We will schedule an extra BT meeting soon to ensure everything is properly planned. Among our concerns: How and where to post our new signs? We will have two. Perhaps one at Polliwog Pond and one on HWY 12 beside the Tolleston Dunes sign. We will apply for a grant to purchase at least one more sign for HWY 12 coming the other direction.

4. Invasive Species Annual Activities meeting with interested volunteers on next steps

We will hold an invasive species clearing day at Polliwog Pond on May 4th (tentative). Tasks: We must make sure that an expert is on-hand to show us which plants and shrubs to kill (Laura Brennan or Susan Mihaló, we think). We need to secure the proper aquatic-approved herbicide. We need to pick a time. We need to make sure we know where the boundaries are between the Home Association's property (Polliwog Pond) and the surrounding private residences. We might need to talk to these homeowners and educate them about the dangers of fertilizer and herbicide run-off, which could spill down the slope into any native plants that we put in. Karl will talk to the Home Association to find out more about boundaries and resident concerns.

5. Septic Coordination Workgroup Report

Vicky attended the final meeting before a long-planned two-day educational conference on septic systems. This will be held in La Porte, IN at the Red Mill County Park on April 23rd and 24th. The first day will be geared toward professionals involved with MS4s and Health Departments while the second day will be geared toward educating Realtors. That said, both events are **open to anyone** interested in learning more about septic systems. Reservations required. Seating capacity is about 80.

April 23rd event:

https://events.in.gov/event/onsite_septic_systems_and_homeowner_conversations?utm_campaign=widget&utm_medium=widget&utm_source=State+of+Indiana

April 24th event:

https://events.in.gov/event/septic_education_day_meeting?utm_campaign=widget&utm_medium=widget&utm_source=State+of+Indiana

6. Monitoring Nearby Industries

<https://www.in.gov/idem/resources/lake-michigan-sites-of-interest/>

- a. Cleveland Cliffs - nothing to report
- b. U.S. Steel Midwest - nothing to report
- c. PreCoat Metals - nothing to report

7. Save the Dunes Pollution Prevention Roundtable update

Bianca attended a meeting. Discussion centered on a recent BP (Lake County) incident and permit renewals.

8. Recycling

Karl is still trying to improve recycling in OD. He wants to work with the Street Dept to get a new and improved large recycling container installed in town. He will talk to John Hannon about this. We may be able to use Community Grant funds next year to buy the new container.

9. Facebook activities

Tom continues to post educational links and comments on the new [ODEAB FB page](#). He says neighbors have written in and expressed interest in volunteering. We discussed what types of posts we should put up in the coming weeks to raise awareness about our events and increase community engagement. These might include asking neighbors to submit photos of birds that they see, photos of potentially invasive plants, and posting information on bird counts and gardening for birds.

10. Other

Beach Water Quality Management

Last fall, Bianca applied to IDEM for our town Beach Quality Water Management grant as usual. The grant covers collection of daily water samples during the beach season, testing the water, and program management costs to track and post results and change the water quality status signs posted in town. Bianca has just learned of a lack of funding this year to cover all these things. IDEM now says they will only test on weekdays to cut costs. IDEM also says they cannot pay a manager this year. The EAB discussed our limited options for moving forward. Tom pointed out that it seems unreasonable to cut funding long after an application has been successfully turned in on time—especially so close to the beach season. We are now considering rolling the beach manager costs into the lab work, which is how Beverly Shores does it, although they use a different, private laboratory, whereas we have always used Gary Sanitary Works.

NIPSCO Tree-Cutting During Nesting Season

Bianca reported on a recent concern raised about NIPSCO's practice of topping trees at the end of the summer, just when birds might be nesting in them. We think they could be persuaded to trim trees in the late fall, winter, or early spring instead.

11. Next Meeting(s) – April 16th

Meeting Adjourned at 7:28pm

Minutes taken and submitted by Vicky Albritton.