

Minutes

Environmental Advisory Board

10 September 2014

Ogden Dunes Town Hall

The Environmental Board met on 10 September 2014 at 4:30 pm at Town Hall. Attendees were Sue MiHalo, Jim Biancotti, John Morris, Bob Cattani, Judy Mollway, Sharon Guy, Paul Panther, and Tom Clouser.

Jim moved to accept the minutes of the last meetings of the Environmental Board, for 13 August 2014, and 5 September 2014, and Judy seconded. The motion carried.

The agenda moved immediately to the comments on the crude oil trains and the Proposed Rule from the Department of Transportation which appeared in the *Federal Register* on 1 August 2014. To start, Sue read from the article which appeared in today's *Chicago Tribune* in which the Chicago City Council adopted a resolution calling for a hazardous materials transport fee for the purpose of funding emergency response capabilities. The Board agreed that we support the city of Chicago and would support such an impact fee for all communities affected by hazardous materials transport. This launched a discussion of disaster plans and planning in our community.

The gist of the comments concerned how such a rail disaster as an oil train derailment on the Norfolk Southern tracks would affect our community. The town sits in an environmentally sensitive area. The major town infrastructure (town hall, fire station, water plant) is within a short distance from the tracks. Specific to the comments, the use of population figures such as 100,000 people or the High Threat Urban Area as defined by 49 CFR 1580.3 should not be used for imposition of speed limits. Rather the Census Bureau criteria for urban areas (76 FR 53040) should be used. Speed limits are not a panacea, because the Lynchburg, Virginia derailment on 30 April 2014 was with a train proceeding in a 25 mph speed zone. Maintenance of the rails and enforcement of this maintenance should be required if hazardous materials are to be transported over those rails. Unit trains shall not be exempt if one or two other types of rail car are mixed in. The testing of the material being shipped shall be required, and the communities through which these materials pass shall be notified. This, of course, runs afoul of Homeland Security, keeping such shipments from the public to deter attacks. Tank car retrofitting should be done faster than proposed.

Judy moved to have the town council request the disaster plan be presented in an informational meeting to residents. Sharon seconded, and the motion carried.

For the MS4 exemption, Jim investigated whether there was a berm separating Long Lake Marsh on town property from Long Lake on NPS property. There appears to be none.

Sue and John Olsen will be spraying in Long Lake Marsh for Purple Loosestrife and Pfragmites this weekend.

Septic Awareness week will start 22 September 2014. Sue will supply materials from the task force to Jenny to post on the website. Sharon said that at least six homes on Deer Trail have failed septic systems. The lifetime of a system is 15 to 30 years.

Paul talked about a possible ordinance certify maintenance of the septic when the house is sold. Such an ordinance is in LaPorte, according to Jim.

Judy announced that the town cleanup is the 11 October weekend. Recycling of plastic bags was discussed, and a place fenced in near where the e-waste normally is collected was considered.

Bob Cattani we will discuss the results of our meeting on 5 September with the Bells from Beverly Shores about the Dark Skies Initiative at a future meeting.

Sue wanted to alert us to the takeover of many areas in town by oriental bittersweet. Someone had sprayed much of it along the sandtracks trail with an herbicide that killed a broad spectrum of other plants. She wanted to state for the record that she was not responsible for this action.

John moved to adjourn, Bob seconded, and the motion was approved at 6:15 pm.

Submitted by John Morris.