

Minutes

Environmental Advisory Board

19 October 2016

Ogden Dunes Town Hall

The Environmental Board met on 19 October 2016 at 5:30 pm at Town Hall. Attendees were, Susan MiHalo, Sue Adams, Bob Cattani, Jim Biancotti, and John Morris. Also attending: Nathanael Pilla of Save the Dunes, and State Senator Karen Tallian.

Prior to the arrival of Senator Tallian (at 5:50 pm), discussion was held about what information we had and what was needed to know about a potential shipment of petroleum coke (petcoke) passing through the Port of Indiana. IDEM had told Susan that many questions, some with misinformation, had come to them. Sue Lynch of Portage had contacted Scott Lehmann on 12 October 2016, concerning an impending shipment of petcoke. It was rumored to be a test shipment, but longshoremen have already been alerted. It is important what kind of petcoke it is. Particle size will determine whether to worry about fugitive dust.

Senator Tallian said that she had word three weeks ago that "petcoke is coming," but no details were available. Apparently, now she knows that the Citgo refinery in Lemont, Illinois has 30 barges of material ready to ship to the port, where it is said, it will be off-loaded to an area the port owns near the old Beta Steel site, now MLNK. The port wished to get this "test run" shipped through the Seaway before the locks close for the winter. Once they get past the use of union versus non-union labor, the port could make a lot of money, particularly if it became a permanent shipping point for petcoke. The port would need to ask IDEM if permits were needed. Whether action will be forthcoming is uncertain due to a changeover in management of IDEM, and general uncertainty in State government in general with the change of governorship. IDEM won't require permits, but and NPDES permit for runoff and an air permit for fugitive dust are certainly needed. We still don't know what type of petcoke this is, in particular, the particle size. If IDEM will not require them, contacting US EPA Region 5 should be attempted. Portage mayor Snyder has called downstate to call attention to concerns, and the NPS should be contacted for their input. Nathanael Pilla volunteered to contact NPS. Dune Acres should also be concerned. We also need to talk to the people in Chicago who got the facility in Calumet Harbor closed. Bob will contact the BP refinery to find out where their petcoke is stored.

Sue moved to accept the minutes of the last meeting of the Environmental Board, for 17 August 2016. Bob seconded. The motion carried.

Sue Adams gave an update on Dark Skies. It does not make sense that changes to the cowling for the sodium vapor lights do not make sense, because NIPSCO plans to change all lights to the LED lights. Also, the lights to be installed illuminate at 4000 kelvins, whereas the Dark Skies Initiative limits that to 3000. The 4000 kelvin LEDs are a much harsher light, which is not desirable. Dan Manis is in contact with someone at Purdue, who may talk to the taskforce.

Susan asked for a Long Lake Marsh cleanup on 19 November 2016.

Bob moved to adjourn and John seconded. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Submitted by John Morris.