

Minutes

Environmental Advisory Board

17 February 2016

Ogden Dunes Town Hall

The Environmental Board met on 17 February 2016 at 5:30 pm at Town Hall. Attendees were, Sue MiHalo, Jim Biancotti, John Morris, and Susan Adams. Doug Cannon was a guest, and Paul Panther sat in.

Jim moved to accept the minutes of the last meeting of the Environmental Board, for 20 January 2016. Susan Adams seconded. The motion carried.

Regarding the MS4 exemption, there was nothing new.

The next Septic System Coordination Work Group meeting will be on 25 February 2016, and Jim is planning to attend. There will be discussion of LaPorte County's system.

The beach contract is ready, waiting for IDEM to approve it, so that it can be presented to the Town Council for approval.

For the Dark Skies Initiative, Susan is still working on the tally of streetlights. Kristine was helping with the count. Getting together with the Street Department for an official count is probably necessary. It would be nice to know if we are paying for the right number. Getting buy-in from residents is needed. A pilot project could be done to demonstrate the improved safety of the light directed downwards. Paul suggested near the town entrance, near Town Hall, where all residents could see it. Susan wanted a way of getting the word out, since many residents don't check the web page. She suggested Prime Timers as a way to reach those people. There was discussion of LEDs, which NIPSCO wants to switch to. The problem is that there are different types of LEDs, some more desirable than others. An estimate of cost is also needed.

The discussion turned to recycling, with Doug Cannon describing his discussions with the Homewood sorting facility, and the differences between what they describe and what Republic Services tell us. The object of all this is to increase the town's diversion rate. There is even some deviation from their published guidelines in what Doug was told. For example, recyclable items in plastic bags are *not* immediately tossed, although the bag itself is not recyclable at that facility. Pizza box cardboard is recyclable if a paper insert has been used to keep the grease off the box. All plastic is recyclable, except 6 (styrofoam) and film plastic (most bags). Plastic bags should just be turned in at the grocery stores that accept them. Styrofoam is just not cost effective to recycle. The containers that should not be recycled are those that have contained automotive (oil), chemical (pesticide), and paint. All other containers are accepted without rinsing.

The goal is to make people aware of all the items that can be recycled. If you have a doubt, put it in the yellow bin. The motto "Check it before you chuck it" proposed by Susan, with the idea that check it it can be recycled before you toss it in the garbage. Even better than the idea floated last month about a sign placed on the inside of the lid of the yellow bin saying what was recyclable, a separate recycle basket could be placed in the kitchen of the household for recycling. A refrigerator magnet or some other reminder in the kitchen was proposed, but that would need funds. In the meantime, when thinking about this, Jim plans to get brochures from the County to pass out at a table during the Memorial Day picnic. Regarding plastic bags, it was proposed to pass out (or sell) reusable grocery bags with an Ogden Dunes recycling logo. That, of course, requires funds. Another possibility is to have a contest about who can come up with a new item that can be recycled. The prize is one of the bags. The best is to have exposure throughout the year. The Lions Club Kids Night was proposed to make a pitch, as well as National Recycling Week (7-13 November 2016). For those who want to put recyclables in bags, Jim said Porter County had clear plastic bags, to insure that they wouldn't be tossed. The Board needs to decide if we go the OD Community Fund to accomplish these things.

Susan raised a question about lead testing for drinking water. She wanted to know if the samples were drawn in homes. The answer is that the lead-copper rule specifies that testing be done at point of use. What we don't know is which homes are used as representative of the town. Chuck Litzkow should be contacted.

Jim added at the end of the meeting that he tried to get from Jim Matthys the information about the quantity of compost generated. He said he filled out the forms on line, but did not keep copies. This is an issue of compliance that needs to be addressed.

John moved to adjourn, and Jim seconded. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Submitted by John Morris.