

Minutes

Environmental Advisory Board

19 September 2018

Ogden Dunes Town Hall

The Environmental Board met on 19 September 2018 at 5:30 pm at the Ogden Dunes Town Hall. Attendees were, Susan MiHalo, Jim Biancotti, Sue Adams, Kristine Sandrick, Chelsea Overholt, Doug Cannon, and John Morris.

Jim moved to accept the minutes of the last meeting of the Environmental Board, for 18 July 2018. Sue seconded. The motion carried.

Regarding work by the Lighting Task Force, Sue said that Joan O'Drobinak on Deer Trail requested a new streetlight be added near her house. Sue investigated, and found one was only three houses away. A large hedge blocked much of its light, but her house was well lit otherwise. Possibly the break-in on The Thumb rattled her. Sue did mention that the education planned by the task force still needs to be done.

There is not a lot new about the USS Midwest plant consent decree. The Surfriders are still pushing to go forward with their lawsuit. Susan mentioned, with such an emergency in mind, there is an Environmental Management Policy Committee (EMPC) meeting on 4 October 2018 at 8:30 at NIRPC. This is to coordinate all local responses to an event of environmental significance, such as a spill. Susan is working to get our town involved, and would also like to get Mike Teeling involved.

There is nothing new on the NICTD double tracking plan. The Findings of No Significance report will not be ready before November. We have not received anything on our comments.

Chelsea does not have the tally from Saturday's beach cleanup complete. Styrofoam was by far the most common contaminant this year. There was talk of banning Styrofoam from the beach, although most of it most certainly was washed up from the lake and out of Burns Waterway. It was suggested that a presentation be made at the Town Council to inform everyone about how much of this plastic is making its way into our water supply and into the fish we eat. Chelsea can get the historical data to see if there has been an increase. Doug said the town was considering purchase of a sand sifter to get debris below the surface as well. This could be used even on playgrounds. Doug said a demonstration of the machine was coming. Susan suggested inviting Michelle Caldwell to the demo. Chelsea was disappointed in the turnout this year, especially among families she knows use the beach regularly.

A suggestion was made to have a Sustainability Workshop for residents that could cover a number of topics, i.e., lighting, recycling, beach waste, invasive species, native species, and more. This will be explored further at the next meeting.

The beach grant is about wrapped up, and Susan will submit it to IDEM. Very few exceedances have occurred so far this summer.

Conversion of the existing file of the MS4 exemption to Word is difficult. Jim may have to do it by hand.

Jim will attend the Septic System Coordination Workgroup meeting on 24 September 2018.

Recycling of smoke detectors at our fire station is probably not practical, as often no one is there. The Portage fire stations are on the list to accept them. Sue said that Ace Hardware will accept CFL bulbs to recycle.

Susan and husband Mark sprayed purple loostrife, oriental bittersweet, and tree of heaven in the marsh on Sunday. Susan says she will work with Chuck Litzkow to prevent geese from polluting the streets and lawns near Long Lake Marsh next spring. A work day at the marsh is needed this fall. November was suggested. Susan will discuss with Eric Kurtz about a burn at the marsh this spring.

Kristine looked for the closure plan for the water plant backflush lagoon in the IDEM virtual file cabinet. Nothing since the earlier document was found.

Again, when the public wishes to report an odor or other environmental problem, they should go to IDEM to report it. If there are enough complaints, IDEM will have a record on which to base an investigation.

There will be no October at the usual time, but it was proposed to have a sustainability workshop brainstorming meeting on 30 October. Time and place are to be determined.

John moved to adjourn and Sue seconded. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm.

Submitted by John Morris.