

Ogden Dunes Environmental Advisory Board

Town Hall

November 19, 2024

Attendees: Frank Lani, Bianca Passo, Tom Davenport, Vicky Albritton. Karl Krizmanic also attended.

1. Review and approve agenda – any additions?

2. Apology to Frank for October Meeting Issue. Tom offered Frank an apology for mixing up the dates for our last meeting. Frank was the only one who got it right!

3. Indiana Bird Town discussion [2024 report, 2025 proposed activities].

Vicky reported that Ogden Dunes' Bird Town membership will have to be renewed in June of 2025, one year after the opening ceremony. Renewal requires payment of the renewal fee (\$125) which still has to be voted on by the Town Council. It also requires an application in which we must update our application content and indicate what Ogden Dunes has done to implement or enhance this content. Vicky received an email from Monica Lutes (Development and Engagement Manager, Indiana Audubon Society) asking to meet and discuss our progress. Vicky plans to contact her after brainstorming today about future educational events. Monica Lutes may also be able to suggest activities.

POSSIBLE EVENTS/ACTIVITIES FOR 2025

Vicky suggested combining a NISAW (National Invasive Species Awareness Week) talk with educational information on gardening for birds. After some discussion, we thought that two talks might be possible: one on birds and one on native plants. Karl's wife Kristine might know of a good speaker from the Porter County Master Gardener's association. We can also contact Jill Green and Pat Maxwell.

Vicky also suggested hosting a nest box building event or offering information on how to clean bird feeders. She suggested promoting a holiday bird count and an oriole bird count in the spring. We plan to promote bird-friendly practices at the Memorial Day event as well.

Tom suggested handing out Birds Bats and Bees educational flyers at a Bat House Building event, to be held perhaps during summer camp. He has looked into outdoor flyer holders as well as bird- and butterfly-friendly rain gardens for the new pavilion.

At this point, Tom shared his extensive write-up listing all the things the EAB has already done, many of which help birds. The list is too long to include here, but we will post it online (EAB-Facebook page; OD Forum-Facebook page; and Town EAB page).

4. Invasive Species eradication and planting update at Pollywog Pond [Karl]

Laura Brennan (NPS) sent us a detailed document written for the ODHA, titled: Pollywog Ecological Community Management Plan - Ogden Dunes Homeowners Association. In the plan, she describes this unique ecological site, naming many individual species and recounting the history of restoration work already done. Then she proposes Future Restoration Actions. These

include invasive plant control and native planting. She gives an ideal timeline of restoration actions and lists necessary supplies.

She states that all restoration work should be kept on the land owned by the ODHA and should not encroach on land owned by the NPS or private homeowners. The ODEAB (Environmental Advisory Board) will work in collaboration with the ODHA. We (the ODEAB) agreed that we should always seek Laura Brennan's input on any future projects and/or grant applications.

Also: Tom asked Karl to ask Sandy the specific number of plants we planted at Pollywog last month. Karl will find out.

5. Susan Mihalo's Volunteer Day Long Lake in November and next year's needs [Tom]: Tom wondered when the volunteer day would be and how many people would be needed. Bianca said Susan needs to get a brush cutter for next year, but she's worried that homeowners might object since cutting down tall shrubs might affect their privacy. We also might need to buy new herbicide, but we can add this to next year's Community Fund Grant (due in March).

6. Any update on the Town Council Proposal [Frank] Frank asked Karl whether he got Sandy's estimate for work to be done on the two proposed restoration/native plant sites. Karl said Sandy charges to give an estimate and make a recommendation. Frank said to use the \$40 left in the Community Fund Grant to pay her.

7. Beach Monitoring Update: Bianca said they just sent out a new link for the application to secure funds to pay for monitoring. Deadline: December 15th. Everything is on schedule.

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

Vicky reported that US Steel suffered a power outage on September 25th, which prompted an inspection by IDEM. The inspection was deemed “marginal” as far as Self Monitoring and Flow Measurement—nothing too alarming, but not great.

9. Public Works Dumpster Status [Karl] Tom took a photo of the new dumpster and recycling guidelines sign and posted it on the internet. Bianca shared it to the Ogden Dunes Forum page. Karl said the sign seems to be working. Everyone had been throwing wood and garbage in it, but now they are throwing in cardboard and soda cans. Karl says the location for recycling metal is in a whole different place, so we need a sign pointing people to it so they don’t get confused.

Karl mentioned that the street department lacks their own recycling bins in their office and workshop. Bianca said we could apply for a Community Grant Fund to buy bins.

Frank suggested that we put Recycling Week on the town calendar.

10. Discuss Laura Brennan’s write up (attached) Tom write up & possible funding sources. Already discussed above. We will begin talking to Laura about the Community Fund Grant Application now (deadline in March) to give her time to help us.

We are still exploring other grants, seeking information from Laura Brennan, IDNR, etc. Tom will email Laura about the CFG.

11. Other: Bats, Bees, and Birds Environmental Education Projects: Already discussed above. Tom can send out the estimated costs.

12. 2025 Proposed activities starting with NISAW: Already discussed above. But one more question: Is there any way to tell if we've increased the number of bird species at Pollywog? Is there a system online already where you can report? Vicky will ask Monica Lutes about this.

13. Next Meeting(s) – 17 December 2024, focus on 2025 plan and new members.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Minutes taken and submitted by Vicky Albritton