

Manitowoc Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes
July 24, 2014*

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.

Members present

Jon Reisenbuechler
Tony Fodden
Keith Shaw
Adam Becker
Judi Northen

Membership

Tony outlined the Committee's membership roster for Keith Shaw. Jon added that in addition to our regular members there is also a group of Friends of the Committee, and we should maintain contact with them for networking purposes.

Education Materials

Jon stated that the updating of these materials could be undertaken by interns. Adam suggested that dropbox.com could be used to store electronic copies of these materials to make them accessible to the committee. Jon raised a concern about unauthorized access to the dropbox, and Keith agreed that may be an issue. Jon will check with Christine regarding this.

Tony asked if anyone was working on an article relating to sustainable practices. It was mentioned that Ben Nolen had offered at our June meeting to create an article, and Tony suggested we contact Ben regarding status.

MPU Activities

Adam reported on the progress of the Express Energy Efficiency Program: per the most recent count, 504 homes were participating out of approximately 10,000 eligible households. The goal is to reach a total of 900 participants by the end of August.

MPU will hold an Open House sometime during the 2nd or 3rd week of October, and several members of the Committee expressed interest. Adam stated that it is unsure at this point whether the Open House will include tours of the facility. He further stated that he will work on setting up a tour specifically for our Committee.

Marine Sanctuary

Keith brought up the proposed Marine Sanctuary and stated that, if Manitowoc was chosen as the Sanctuary site, it would be very beneficial to the city. The project is aimed at conservation and preservation of the shipwrecks in the Mid-Lake Michigan area. Among the cities under consideration, Manitowoc would be the central site.

The Committee discussed how we may be able to contribute efforts to the project. Tony stated that he will correspond by email with Ralph Johnson, offering the Committee's assistance; Tony is acquainted with Mr. Johnson and knows he wants grassroots support for the Sanctuary.

Jon suggested that we connect with a person who is knowledgeable about the project before we relay information, in order to be sure that what we are passing along is accurate.

Earth Day 2015

Jon informed the Committee that new rules from the State of Wisconsin may prevent our collecting drugs for disposal at the Earth Day event next year. If that happens, our funding may be affected which would impact the advertising budget, so this may narrow our promotion to free-of-charge options. Attendance may also be down, since the drug disposal is a draw for many people. Adam suggested that we may need to consider fund raising and might want to work with another group on this, or possibly institute a booth charge. Jon was agreeable, but stated that he would need to get permission from his department.

Further discussion centered around attracting more attendees. The possibility of moving the event to a warmer season of the year was raised, which may bring more people and make it possible to hold it outdoors.

Keith suggested that we wait to see what the State's rules will be before making a final decision on a date change.

Front Yard Gardening

Jon brought up an article he had sent earlier today related to front-yard gardening--city policymakers' and homeowners' re-evaluation of the best way to use planting space, and the problems that arise when with gardeners' plantings annoy neighbors or violate city ordinances. None of the members present were aware of any Manitowoc ordinances governing front yard plantings. Judi mentioned that she knows of a lady, Margaret Gerhard, who has been doing this type of gardening for many years and has knowledge of the best methods and experience in dealing with municipalities. Judi will contact Margaret and invite her to attend one of our meetings to share her knowledge.

Next Meeting

There is a possibility of a future change in meeting time to encourage increased member attendance. As it currently stands, the August 2014 meeting will remain scheduled on the fourth Thursday at 5:00 pm.

At 5:40 pm, Jon moved to adjourn and his motion was seconded by Keith.

**Note: Since the Committee had no quorum today, these minutes merely describe discussion which took place, and will be re-visited at our next meeting scheduled for Thursday, August 28, 2014.*