



## ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

### Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 22, 2018 – 4:00pm

Regional Design Center – 315 N. Main St.

**ATTENDEES:** Colin Belle and Ben Rohr, Region 1 Planning Council; Mark Stockman, City of Rockford; Judy Barnard and Tom Hartley, Forest Preserves of Winnebago County; Ashley Sarver, Gary W. Anderson Architects; Harlan Johnson, NAACP; Beverly Broyles, Keep Northern Illinois Beautiful; Jamie Johannsen, Rebecca Quirk, Karol Rosman, and LouAnn Johnson, Rockford Coalition for a Sustainable Future; Tim Bragg, Tom Lind, and Ian Linnabary, Rockford Park District; Brad Roos and Chet Kolodziej, Sustainability Working Group; Todd Marshall and Cynthia Hall, Winnebago County Health Department; Don Krizan and Wayne Vlk, Winnebago County Highway Department; Dennis Anthony Winnebago County SWCD; Steven Hall, Blackhawk Sierra Club

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Ian Linnabary called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m.

### I. INTRODUCTION

a) **Attendees:** Attendees introduced themselves.

b) **Meeting Agenda:** Mr. Linnabary addressed the group and briefly discussed the meeting's agenda. He explained how the focus of today's meeting was on items 1G and 2B.

c) **Previous Meeting's Minutes:** Ms. Sarver briefly recapped the January 9, 2018 meeting.

d) **Second RPC Board Meeting Recap:** Mr. Rohr recapped the second Regional Planning Council (RPC) Board meeting that took place at the end of February 2018. 25 members from all over the region were in attendance. Speakers included: Dr. Jenson talking about regional workforce development, Chairman Haney discussing consolidation plans, and Jason Anderson from Rochelle Economic Development discussing how working as one region helps everyone succeed more efficiently and with greater success.

e) **NIU Smart Energy Event:** Mr. Rohr discussed the NIU Smart Energy Event that will be hosted by NIU STEM Outreach and Region 1 Planning Council. The event is scheduled for Saturday, April 14th, 12:00pm – 3:00pm at the Regional Design Center, 315 N. Main St. Rockford, IL.

f) **Northern Illinois Water Study Kickoff Meeting:** Mr. Rohr discussed the Northern Illinois Water Study Kickoff Meeting that will take place on Thursday, April 12. The plan was initiated by Black Hawk Hills Regional Council working with IDNR. The study is focused on the supply and demand of water use. Winnebago County is included in the study area and all are welcome to attend the kick-off

meeting that will be at the Stephenson County Farm Bureau, 210 W. Spring Street Freeport IL, from 6pm-8pm.

**g) Great Plains Institute (GPI):** Mr. Linnabary introduced a DRAFT letter that was included in the meeting packet. This letter was written based on a meeting with former City of Rockford Mayor Doug Scott of Great Plains Institute and individuals from the Environmental Committee. The letter's purpose is to garner support for GPI to help the Rockford Region with developing sustainability-related shared principals, inventory of existing conditions, creating a matrix of potential projects, and communications/branding. This letter would serve as the method of attracting funding and aligning regional priorities for the purpose of implementing projects and ideas the committee develops. The Great Plains Institute is very interested in fostering a presence in Northern Illinois and they bring their own funding with them. So, they provide assistance at no cost. Based on minor comments and recommendations by the Committee, the letter will be finalized and the next steps will be to present it at the next RPC Board meeting in April.

## 2. LARGE GROUP SESSION

### a) Working Group Report Outs:

Energy Conservation Group: They established two goals, conduct a greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory for the region and raise awareness of energy efficiency improvement capabilities for residents, businesses, and institutions alike. Their current focus is on appliances and tools/machines. Initially the group would like to concentrate on the GHG inventory as some data is readily available and other data has been identified as needed. "ClearPath" software, available from ICLEI, allows access to certain GHG data. The International Council for Local Environmental Issues (ICLEI) allows partners to connect to data, obtain guidance through resource documents, and other programs. Membership is required to access the data (\$600 - \$3,500 for full data access). Membership fees are based on population size of the applicant's area. However, basic access is free to conduct an initial inventory to use as a starting point/baseline. This access would require the elected officials of the region to sign the "ICLEI contract" and agree to global climate goals. This data is important to establish a threshold to improve upon, and will fulfil goal #1.

Land-use and Growth Management Group: Met last week to finalize working group goals and select project to pursue. Goals 1 is to increase awareness of land-use planning and its importance for the region. Goal 2 is to balance land-use planning decisions between protecting natural resources and new development needs. The group's long-term project is to integrate many datasets such as the greenways map, impervious surfaces, floodplains, and brownfield sites just to name a few. This could aid in the prioritization of projects based on these factors.

No other working groups met or had anything to report out at this time.

**b) Overall Committee Goals Discussion:** Attendees discussed and analyzed the draft version of the overall Environmental Committee Goals. This was performed as a large group activity using a projector and making edits based on discussions. The Draft Goals presented in the meeting packet were

compiled based on previous working group discussions and Mr. Rohr's research. They were created as a baseline for the discussion. The group went through each goal individually and edited them as they saw fit. The consensus was the following 5 goals:

1. Plan collaboratively and effectively for future environmental sustainability region-wide.
2. Be a regional voice and platform for protection and stewardship of the environment.
3. Provide environmental planning tools and resources to local governments, businesses, organizations, and the public that allow them to improve the region's environmental sustainability.
4. Improve the regional culture around environmental sustainability through advocacy, education, and awareness.
5. Pursue projects to advance our goals that are implementable, forward thinking, measureable and improve the overall environment and quality of life in the region.

It was noted that these goals need to be broad, but also encompass a variety of different ideas within the region. Additionally, these goals are not set in stone and might need to adapt or change over time.

3. **WORKING GROUP SESSION:**

a) Each working group met for the last 20 minutes of the meeting to discuss their individual projects and the next steps they are taking with them.

4. **CONCLUSION:**

a) **Next Steps:** Continue to meet within the working groups and document project progress to report in the next Environmental Committee.

b) **Next Environmental Committee Meeting:** The next Environmental Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, May 24, 2018 4:00 – 6:00 PM in the Regional Design Center.

4. **ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.