

City of Evansville Energy Independence Team

Regular Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday, May 1 2024, 7:30 a.m.

3rd floor, City Hall, 31 S Madison Street

Evansville, WI 53536

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order.** Brooks called the meeting to order at 7:30am
2. **Introductions and Welcome.** Jim Brooks, Darren Jacobsen, Butch Beedle, Jason Sergeant, Colette Spranger, Scott Kriebs, John Rasmussen, Paul Liesse, Bronna Lehmann
3. **Approve the Agenda by Consensus.** Committee approved agenda.
4. **Approve the minutes of the February 7, 2024 meeting by consensus.** Committee approved agenda.
5. **Quarterly Energy Updates (20 min)**
 - A. **Business, Community, and School Initiatives.**
 - **Solar Array at High School.** Jacobsen reported that is close to being operational. This project has spurred conversation regarding other facility upgrades (e.g. HVAC) that should be considered.
 - **Blue Scope.** May need new street lights as part of parking expansion.
 - **Fleet Card Pilot Program.** Kriebs reported that the new fleet card can be used to track usage. Electric crew will test out the program; police department is interested if it's a success.
 - **Native Grasses:** Beedle mentioned that Edgerton recently landscaped a street median with native grasses. This spurred a discussion among the group regarding other public places the City could reasonably plant native grasses as a way to sequester carbon, such as stormwater retention ponds. Kriebs noted that the DNR typically has municipalities mow their ponds to prevent trees from growing but that he would look into possibilities. Spranger mentioned zoning code updates to encourage/reward native plantings. Sergeant noted that the success of any landscape plan is the long term maintenance. Native landscaping takes skill that differs from traditional plantings.
 - B. **EHS Green Team.** No report from school representative. There will be a ribbon cutting for the new solar array once it's operational.
 - C. **Tree City and Bird City.** Annual Birding in the Park event is this coming weekend.
 - D. **ECSD Nature Center.** Now in a better room (with windows!) at Theodore Robinson Intermediate School.
 - E. **Ice Age Trail.** Two members noted that blazes were pointed in wrong directions along the demarcated route. Spranger to reach out to the Rock County Chapter of the Ice Age Trail Alliance to see how Evansville can more easily participate or start up trail-related events within its own section of the trail.
 - F. **Community Garden.** Sergeant reports the garden should be able to operational this summer.
 - G. **WPPI.** Jacobsen reported on third party companies attempting to buy land for solar farms that then try to sell the excess energy to local utilities. Typically, the contracts

WPPI communities have in place would not allow them to buy the power. WPPI is doing a feasibility study for community solar projects and whether that kind of system is financially viable.

H. Other.

- Paul Liesse of Shifting Gears Bike Shop, 13 W Main Street, introduced himself and promoted upcoming group bicycle rides. He has interest in promoting and expanding bike access both in Evansville and regionally.
- Sergeant gave an update on the Aquatic Center at Larsen Acres Park. A ribbon cutting will be held on June 7th. The splash pad at Leonard-Leota Park should be operational within 30 days of the pool opening.

6. Evansville Municipal Energy Plan Discussion and Next Steps

Members reviewed the established goals; two (electric municipal vehicles and tracking vehicle mileage) are actively being implemented. Sergeant updated the group about a next step in the energy planning grant with Edgerton is a look at financial feasibility, which will be done by a group called Upper 90. He expects to have a firm update about the project at August's EIT meeting.

7. Next meeting date: August 7, 2024

8. Adjourn.