

CAC Minutes December 1, 2011

Present: Steve Akers, Tim Frazier, Jerry Jochim, Lily Kleinlein, Dave Parsons, Clark Sorensen, Karol Stewart **Guests:** Noma Maier, Habitat for Humanity ReStore

Meeting began at 5:17pm

Approval of minutes: Sorensen moved to accept. Frazier seconded. All approved to accept minutes as written.

Presentation: BioCycle Conference

Akers, Barker, and Parsons attended a BioCycle conference about composting and anaerobic digesters near Madison, WI in October. Akers and Parsons presented and showed a Power Point presentation about what they learned and how it may apply to our local waste management systems. It was an internationally attended conference, with many of the existing users of anaerobic digesters being from Europe and Canada. Anaerobic digesters are relatively new to the US and are generally used by cities and dairy farms.

Anaerobic digesters are warm, sealed, airless containers which create the ideal conditions for bacteria to ferment organic materials and turn them into biogas (a mixture of carbon dioxide, methane, and small amounts of other gases). There are different types of digesters which take a variety of organic waste materials. Liquid anaerobic digesters are more common, but solid food/yard waste digesters are becoming more common and desirable because of the wide range of waste that can be put in them and how quickly they break down the material (a few days).

The digesters cost more than a million dollars to start and require a lot of specialized care and knowledge in running them because they can be temperamental if the wrong materials are put into them. There is also a strong odor created by the digestion. However, the return on investment is quick and people are becoming very creative in finding use for all of the waste or by-products created by them. The machines are "very hungry" and take a lot of waste to run, but the food waste versions can take any type of food and actually do best when traditionally non compostable materials like grease, meat scraps, and oil are introduced.

When discussing the high cost of anaerobic digesters, Akers pointed out that in Canada the use of the systems grew rapidly after their carbon tax was implemented. He says that as these taxes are implemented in the US it will provide more incentive to find new technologies for energy rather than burning coal.

The main products created by the digesters are carbon dioxide and compressed natural gas (CNG), which can be used to power vehicles and can be turned into electricity. CNG is a cleaner and less impactful type of fuel because it uses existing carbon waste to create energy. Parsons and Akers gave many examples of the digesters being used to provide energy for farms, with excess being sold back to utilities companies, to fuel fleets of municipal vehicles, to provide community vehicles, and to turn the methane created by livestock into useful forms of energy.

In Indiana, Purdue University and W. Lafayette have an anaerobic digester that they use to power as much as ¼ of their campus. They also turn the use of the system into a teaching opportunity for students. They use all campus food waste as well as food waste from West Lafayette. Fair Oaks Dairy Farm in NW Indiana also has an anaerobic digester that they purchased with grant money. Akers and several others from IU are going to tour the Purdue system in December and January. CAC members are invited to attend, and Akers will follow up with the CAC on what he learns. Akers can also provide the Power Point presentation to any interested CAC members who were not present at the meeting.

MCSWMD

Barker was not present and no updates were given other than the Board packet which was emailed to all CAC members.

Old Business

Akers reported that the secretary position for the CAC is still officially open. Frazier had previously offered to take minutes but will not be able to. Kleinlein has taken the minutes for the past two months. She is willing to be the secretary, but the deadline for turning in the minutes to the MCSWD is the morning after the CAC meeting which is difficult for her to meet. Akers will check with Barker about moving back the deadline for 2012 since the CAC meeting is on a different week. Anyone who would like to be the secretary for the CAC can contact Akers, otherwise Kleinlein will take on the position.

New Business

Review CAC Membership

Akers will follow up with members of the CAC who have not been attending to determine if they are interested in staying on the committee or whether the CAC should open up membership in 2012. Kevin Dogan may rejoin the CAC in 2012 but has been unable to attend in recent months. Jeff Roll from Rumke, Ron Howard from Hoosier Disposal have not been to a meeting in several months. Jochim suggested that if Roll and Howard aren't interested in being CAC members we check to see if they would like to send a different representative from their businesses. IU student and CAC member Jessi Swafford hopes to rejoin in January when she doesn't have a class conflict. Membership will be reviewed again in January after Akers has followed up with the absent members.

Review Meeting Schedule for 2012

Akers reminded the CAC that all meetings will be moved to the Showers building (McCloskey room) for all 2012 meetings. The dates of the meetings will also be moved later in the month to accommodate the needs of the MCSWD and the availability of the room. The next meeting will be Thursday, January 26 at 5:15 in the McCloskey room, next to the City Hall Chambers. Akers will send a reminder to CAC members and will send an email to CATS informing them of the change.

Funding Dave Parsons for Biocycle Conference

Parsons attended the BioCycle Conference the week he officially became a CAC member, but he paid for the conference on his own. Akers asked that we reimburse him for his conference fees through the CAC budget. All approved to reimburse Parsons.

Closing

Akers thanked everyone for attending. Meeting adjourned at 6:12pm.