



NOTICE AND AGENDA

Commission on Sustainability

Tuesday, May 28, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
McCloskey Room, City Hall, 401 N. Morton

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
 - Present: Gwen White (Chair), Teddie Mower-Phillipson, Cynthia Bretheim, Pam Weaver, Erin Hatch, Matt Flaherty, Chris Reinhart, Nejla Routsong
 - Absent: Alex Crowley, Jana McGee
3. Approval of Agenda
 - Chris moved to approve the agenda, Cynthia seconded. Unanimous voice vote for approval of the agenda.
4. Approval of Minutes, May 14
 - Cynthia moved to approve May 14th minutes, Pam seconded. Unanimous voice vote of approval of May 14th minutes.
5. Announcements
 - Cynthia: Hoosier Action is having a healthcare for all talk at the library tomorrow at 6:30 pm. Rob Stone will be talking.
6. Public Comment
 - No comment.
- ~~7. Report from Alex Crowley, Director of Economic and Sustainable Development, City of Bloomington~~
8. Matt Flaherty – Certification for B-corps
 - Matt: B-labs is the organization that certifies B-corps by examining businesses in regard to environmental sustainability, handling of governance, transparency, supply chain, and customer base they serve, along with many other elements. They award a score on a scale of 200, with businesses becoming eligible for B-corp certification for scores of 80 and above. Certified B-corps can be any legal business structure, and is distinct from being a legal B-corp. There are currently 6 certified B-corps in Indiana, with none in Bloomington.

- Nejla: The local B-corps are legal B-corps rather than a certified B-corp, as there is a cost associated with getting certified.
- Matt: This is a third party verification process. The advantage of using a pre-existing organization is that they have a high level of expertise. Previously Autumn circulated an article in Governing magazine about municipalities offering tax abatements for certified B-corps. I think we could offset the cost of becoming a certified B-corp. I think that this would be something to explore, maybe it's a topic to discuss with Brian Payne or Mary Morgan with the Chamber of Commerce.
 - Pam: I am interested in talking about how we can do economic sustainability. Every town of any size has an EDC to focus on bringing new businesses in and we don't have a similar focus to keep businesses and to help businesses improve. We don't have tax abatements even for people who put in a grease trap.
 - Nejla: Businesses would need support for filing out info for certification.
 - Cynthia: Some groups I can think of that would be good to talk about this topic would be SCORE and Ivy Tech.
 - Chris: BEDC (Bloomington economic development corporation) would be a good group to talk to. When it comes to the idea of tax abatements, 30-50 hours would likely be required to gather information to get certification, so maybe 3k-5k in abatement to cover this cost.
 - Matt: Philadelphia started their abatement program with \$250,000 offered on a first come first served basis, then expanded this after the first year.
 - Pam: I've read about communities that do a model similar to Community Development Banks, that have funds available for small businesses and act a local micro-loan or grants, in those cases these were funded by bonds.
 - Matt: With most bonds they are for capital expenses only, which is by law I think but may vary by state.
 - Chris: Within B-corps is there a size threshold you have to meet for your company to qualify for certification?
 - Matt: I don't know.
 - Matt: Where do we go from here:
 - Teddie: We could do subgroup for people who want work on this project and create a more solid plan.
 - Erin: I think we might need to have a better idea on what actions or role that BCOS could take, as this goes into program territory rather than an advisory body.
 - Pam: It is within our power to push any kind of policies and also participate and be the catalyst for a program.
 - Teddie: I think that this is a wonderful idea.
 - Matt: We can try to do a subcommittee and just start with stakeholder outreach, before we get a solid plan.

9. Commission strategic plan goals - updates

- Sustainability Indicators
 - Chris: We are going to have a work blitz and work in parallel to see how much we can get done within the next year. With the goal to push it to the finish line and put it to rest.
- Sustainability Awards – Presentation at City Hall May 29 6:30PM
 - Gwen: Happening tomorrow night at 6:30pm in City Hall. A press release will go out about the winners after the ceremony.
- Food Policy
 - No updates.
- Climate Action
 - Teddie: Students are still working hard on their resolution still, are hoping to get it on the agenda for next session of City Council. The students want to continue YES as a group, so hopefully going to do something through the Integrated Program for the Environment (IPE) to help them with that.
- Sustainable City Planning
 - No update.
- Collaboration
 - Nejla: We have about 15 organizations that voted on to reach out to and review their agendas. Then based on those initial communication decide if we want to invite them to come and speak to us sometime at our meetings.

10. Report from Chair

- Gwen: Will be absent next meeting June 11th.

11. New Business

- Matt: We now have two vacancies on BCOS, both Mayoral appointments. We should try and see how we can get those filled quickly.

12. Adjournment

- Teddie moved to adjourn, Chris seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting:

Work Session, Tuesday, June 11, 2019, McCloskey Room (#135), City Hall at 6:00 p.m.

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