

CONSEG Meeting
January 10, 2017

MINUTES

There were 48 attendees from 16 communities.

Program: Environmental Progress in the New Era with speakers J.C. Kibbey of Union of Concerned Scientists and Lisa Albrecht, Illinois Solar Energy Association re Clean Jobs Bill & Renewable Energy

Special Action Item: Nicholas Jansen with Food & Water Watch has asked CONSEG members to sign on to their coalition letter opposing the appointment of Scott Pruitt to head the Environmental Protection Agency, the link to the petition can be found here:
(<https://docs.google.com/a/umich.edu/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSer46JcHVmvSBvLSo8ovYOU3uTeuzTC6dgxOX3tEVwXkCyYRQ/viewform?c=0&w=1>)

Beth Drucker

- Asked CONSEG members and groups to contribute towards \$1,000 goal for CONSEG website. This would enable us to communicate between meetings more effectively. If you have not yet contributed ([LINK TO GGW](#))
- Trying to arrange screenings of “Before the Flood” all over northern suburbs (both public and private)

Kim Stone

- A ban on coal/tar sealants was passed in Highland Park
- We must refocus this year on larger impact items like climate change.
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JC Kibbey/ Union of Concerned Scientists, Midwest Outreach and Policy Advocate, Union of Concerned Scientists

- UCS began with the mission of combatting nuclear armament in the late 1960’s, yet now their efforts have become focused on climate change.
- Facts are not enough to change closed minds.
- Financial incentives, industries, and economies that are predicated on the non-existence of climate change are significant role players in convincing individuals that the threats which the issue poses are not real.
- Need more incentives for people currently are in denial to believe in climate change.
- Two deadly heat waves will happen in Chicago every summer (similar to the kind that killed 700 people in 1995)

- 200,000 people die annually in the U.S. from air pollution
- Technical challenge of implementing renewable energy → Necessitates the political will to commit to solving these problems
- Community is more convincing than other political/scientific motivators
- UCS is concerned about the nominations of Scott Pruitt and Rex Tillerson. Contact Senators Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth to ask that they vote against both:

Durbin: 202 - 224 – 2151 or 217 492 4062

Duckworth: 202 - 224 - 2854

- Call any family/friends/colleagues in Ohio, Florida, or Maine to ask them to call their senators to oppose Pruitt and Tillerson.
- Ask news stations to address weather/climate reports with the severity they deserve.
- If you'd like to receive regular emails from UCS, sign up for free at ucsusa.org.

Lisa Albrecht

- The Clean Jobs/Energy Bill passed, including wind/solar energy legislation as well as regulation on ComEd and Exelon operations. The bill also allows the state to invest more in renewable/clean energy.
- Gov. Rauner hasn't given out solar rebates since 2014, as those would be a part of the Illinois budget → in past four years, Illinois has installed no new wind power.
- Wind energy is the first project to be initiated with the Clean Jobs/Energy bill's implementation.
- The bill gives more stability to Renewable energy certificates (RECs), and the payment process for homeowners installing renewables.
- Homeowners/citizens can now be eligible for state rebates on green technologies year-round.
- Authorized Illinois Power Agency to modify incentives to manage supply and demand.
- State rebate program will offer better discounts on solar power earlier in the year to incentivize residents who want solar REC's ASAP.
- Target for community solar: 1,500 kwh by 2020

Goal- Have solar eventually become cheaper than fossil fuels.

- Community solar = ~25% residential (10 kwh). Some homes are not appropriate for solar, so community solar can provide access. Developers use vacant land to implement solar arrays, and individuals can subscribe/purchase energy generated from these arrays.
- New government program for low-income residents to be trained in solar technologies/subsidize solar power for their homes.

- 5% threshold between net metering and solar kwh. REC's \$250 rebate per every kwh produced. (Government/ municipal solar will have different restrictions on rebates than community solar)

-Anthony Starr- head of Illinois Power Agency, in charge of power procurement for the entire state.

Comments from CONSEG Members

- Food and Water Watch are also highly encouraging the petition to Dick Durbin against Pruitt/Tillerson
- Citizen's Climate Lobby: Carbon Fee & Dividend program making progress among congressional republicans.
- One Earth Film Festival, from March 3-12, showing films at locations from Northwestern U to North Shore Country Day School, the Botanic Gardens, Wilmette Theater, etc. (<http://www.oneearthfilmfest.org/>)
- LWV: critiquing the MWRD to manage stormwater more efficiently
- Go Green Glencoe/Wilmette native plant sale will be available online.

OTHER ISSUES FROM CONSEG MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

Sierra Club Climate Rally

The Illinois Sierra Club is planning a Climate Change Rally at the offices of US Rep. Peter Roskam on January 23. We want Rep. Roskam to hear our voices collectively as we enter into a new era in Washington politics and policies. As a powerful Republican in Congress, we want to let him know that people in Illinois support climate change mitigation policies, including support of the Paris Accords (COP21) and the Clean Power Plan.

You can contact the [People's Climate Movement](#) to register or contact [Tim Milburn](#) with the Sierra Club to let him know you are coming or answer questions. The People's Climate Movement has called for 100 hours of resistance following Trump's inauguration and Sierra Club is organizing this event as part of this national effort. We hope you will join in and also mobilize others for this event.

What: Tell Rep. Peter Roskam: *we want climate action*

When: Monday, January 23, 3:30–5:00 p.m.

Where: 2700 International Drive, West Chicago, IL 60185

The purpose of the event is twofold: to tell Peter Roskam that he is out of step with his constituents on climate change, and to give those worried about the incoming administration a

way to make their voices heard. Please forward this information to your friends, families and associates.

Tim Milburn
847-826-3314

Oak Park Pesticide Resolution

We urge you and your group to join Oak Park in working to reform our state's preemption with regard to pesticide use. (See Oak Park's resolution here: <http://bit.ly/OakParkPreemption>) Currently, 43 states restrict local governments' authority to regulate pesticide use more stringently than state law, including Illinois. This means localities can only address pesticide use on public property, and cannot restrict toxic pesticides on private property. If you're interested in advocating for local authority over pesticide use in your state, contact Peggy McGrath at pegspc@yahoo.com or Beyond Pesticides by email at info@beyondpesticides.org or 202-543-5450.

Oak Park's resolution also has the support of the Illinois Environmental Council, Midwest Pesticide Action Center and State Senator Don Harmon. Once a group is willing to take on the task of presenting their concerns to their village board, i.e. asking them to vote on this resolution (which is directed to the General Assembly, asking them to amend the Pesticide Act which disallows home rule for pesticide regulation), Senator Harmon is willing to contact the Senator who represents their district and lend his support.

We really need a broad representation of communities to support these Senators because they will receive a lot of pushback from chemical, lawn care and golf industries. Do not hesitate to call me 708 383 3591 or the cell number below with any questions. Refer to our website gogreenoakpark.org, for more information. And please forward to any person or groups you believe interested.

Peggy Mcgrath
773-742-3200
gogreenoakpark.org