

## **Illinois Green Government Coordinating Council**

Minutes of the June 10, 2005, Meeting

15<sup>th</sup> Floor, James R. Thompson Center

**Roll Call:** Lt. Governor Pat Quinn, Kevin Greene (Environmental Protection Agency), Joe Shacter (Environmental Law and Policy Center), George Vander Velde (Waste Management and Research Center), Paul Campbell (Department of Central Management Services), Hans Detweiler (Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity), Warren Goetsch (Department of Agriculture), Ron Wright (Capital Development Board), Townsend Albright (Illinois Finance Authority), Mark Pruitt (University of Illinois at Chicago, Energy Resources Center)

**Other Attendees:** Daniel Persky, Katie McClain, Mercedes Lyson, Mary Beth Murphy, Ernie Weintraub, Josh Levin, Michael Norbeck (Office of Lt. Governor Pat Quinn)

### **Call to Order and Opening Remarks:**

Lt. Governor Pat Quinn welcomed the attendees to the second quarterly meeting of the Illinois Green Government Coordinating Council. He said the upcoming summer months are a good time to interact with the public and continue educating citizens about energy efficiency and other green practices. The Council wants to make Illinois a true model of energy efficient practices. After the Northeast blackout in 2003, ComEd was very concerned that Illinois be prepared.

### **Discussion of First Quarter minutes:**

Council members approved the March 31 minutes and agreed that GGCC meetings are open to the public. The Council encourages public participation in green government considerations.

### **Legislative update:**

#### 1. SB 250, Green Buildings Act

##### Ron Wright, of the Capital Development Board

Parties involved with SB 250 reached a compromise pledging to construct a certain number of green building pilot projects for the state. A series of eight green building workshops will also take place during the upcoming summer months. Universities will co-host these events, and a report will be prepared before the next fiscal year. CDB is beginning its plans to showcase LEED 2.1 before the public and design professionals. It hopes to break down common misperceptions of green building.

##### Hans Detweiler, of the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

DCEO was disappointed because the legislation did not specifically mention LEED standards. Its language is also less “robust” than DCEO would have hoped. Nevertheless, LEED standards have and are being pursued by the state. LEED 2.1 focuses on new construction in Illinois as opposed to building maintenance.

George Vander Velde, of the Waste Management and Research Center

It is important to find state building projects that are in their initial stages to ensure that their planning can involve LEED designs. In the past, the state's green building projects have been remodeling projects only (not new construction) and did not achieve LEED standards.

Hans Detweiler, of the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

The state is doing what it can under statute, but it is still helpful to reinforce these ideas before the public through legislative language. The green building workshops aim to spread information and expand interest beyond those who already support green building. The workshops aim to educate those who tend to look at economic hindrances.

The Lt. Governor would like the Clean Energy Community Foundation to do more projects for the State of Illinois (included in part of statute). Right now, most of its work focuses on not-for-profit and the private sector.

Summary of SB 250: Though the language helps educate the public, it does not change current behaviors.

2. HB 1149, Computer Equipment Disposal Commission

This is a new commission with seven members of which the Lt. Governor is vice-Chair. The commission will present a report on May 31, 2006, setting forth recommendations for legislation, pilot projects, and ways the state can benefit from the proper disposal of computer equipment. Improper disposal of electronic waste is dangerous because it can lead to water contamination and public health hazards if toxic elements leach out from landfills. There are several model programs the commission can study in other states and in Europe. In California and the Northeast, for example, there have been landfill bans on certain electronic products because the mercury, lead, and silver they contain contaminate aquatic environments. The Environmental Law and Policy Center has conducted research indicating that businesses and recyclers' first preference is to craft a national solution to e-waste; their second preference is a regional solution, and third is single-state. The larger the base for a set of rules, the more efficient it is to follow those rules. Thus, a regional approach is better than a single-state approach, but a national approach is best of all.

George Vander Velde, of the Waste Management and Research Center

There is a strong federal push for preemptive law, and two important state models exist:

- A. A recovery fee that the consumer pays (as in California)
- B. Producer/Manufacturer take-back (as in Minnesota)

Although it is important to note that some companies now make computers with fewer toxins, the issue requires further study and state action.

The commission needs to learn where the state purchases its new computers from and look into the possibility of leasing computers (as Massachusetts does). According to CMS, IL is looking to move to leasing eventually (using our purchasing/leasing power to change decisions). The state currently spends \$13 million per year on computers, and

CMS gets rid of most of the state computers through auctioning or bidding. The Council is uncertain what happens to the computers that no one buys.

Computer-reuse programs, which are now well-established, represent another opportunity for the state. A large number of corporate company computers go to reuse in schools, community groups, and NGOs. The state has not traditionally participated in these programs, but the possibility exists.

The Lt. Governor asked if there are any current studies showing the effects of the leaching of computer toxins. George Vander Velde said a significant portion of computer toxins go to China, where they have had notable problems with worker safety and public and environmental health. Manufacturers might bear the long-term liability in situations like this, so it is in their best interest to turn their attention to it.

The Council also mentioned that it is possible to recycle cell phones, because they also create health and worker safety problems when improperly disposed.

## **Council Update**

Between the quarterly Council meetings, the Lt. Governor's staff has been meeting with different state agencies to work on an individual basis. Staff met with Donald Barnes from CMS, and would like to implement energy audits CMS currently has through the Council. Staff also met with Barb Bonansinga from the Vehicles Department at CMS to talk about flex-fuel vehicles and hybrid cars. There was discussion that state police purchase a new fleet of flex-fuel vehicles, but budget issues arose. In the past, state purchasing of hybrids/flex-fuels was slightly controversial because they were foreign-made cars, but Ford now makes hybrids, and other domestic manufacturers are heading in the same direction. The state already owns many flex-fuel vehicles.

The Lt. Governor will speak next Friday (6/17) at the IL Board of Higher Education Community College meeting. He will be looking to spark green ideas. Already, five schools—Eastern IL Univ., Southern IL Univ., Northern IL Univ., Chicago State, and Heartland Community College—have done significant work in the way of green practices. UIC is planning to do a soy roof this summer.

The Lt. Governor's office is going to have a solar-powered golf cart at the IL State Fair in August as part of an energy-efficient products display.

The Annual Report of the Council is due Sept. 1, 2005. So far, 19 agency reports have been turned in, and they will be circulated for others to read. Highlights of agency reports include:

1. Illinois Historic Preservation Agency: Has planted over 1500 trees; leases out land to farmers; farming land is "no-till," which decreases CO2 emissions.
2. Pollution Control Board: Has made the switch to online filing, which has greatly reduced the amount of paper used; 56% of staff carpool or take public transportation.
3. Illinois State Board of Education: Has decreased printing by 75% over the past two years.

## **Goals for 2005**

The Council is looking for relatively easy/achievable, broad-based goals (see attached). New ideas are always welcome. Some additional goals include:

1. Recycling construction debris—there is a definite need for this downstate
2. Participating in the Energy Star Challenge
3. Establishing benchmarks for the State of Illinois. We would like to know the size of our “footprint” in order to decrease our impact.

## Townsend Albright, of the IL Finance Authority Presentation

Townsend discussed a couple of different financing options the IFA offers that might be useful to finance some of our “green” ideas. He had 3 main products that could be of use:

1. Enhanced Based Financing. This was used for the Department of Veteran’s Affairs co-generation facilities, and will also be used for the new University of Illinois Business School building. This type of financing focuses on efficiency and is best used for larger projects.
2. Certificates of Participation. This was used at Eastern Illinois University and at University of Illinois for a power plant renovation. This is similar to a capital lease.
3. Bond Bank. This is a creation of a “group” loan program, where several agencies or schools group their projects together. The users appoint or elect an administrator of the funds. All users need to be on the same time frame, but they can have different sized projects.

## **Other**

The council also discussed the need for a creation of a new website, and a transfer of information from IEPA’s website. At the next meeting the council should discuss creating an awards program, and how that would be set up.

## **Council Functions**

Council meets quarterly. The September 1<sup>st</sup> report to the Governor will be circulated to Council members for review prior to submission.

## **Date for Next Quarterly Meeting**

Next meeting set for September 9, 2005.

## **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.