

Environmental Justice Forum Minutes
September 13, 2021

Shirley reported on her weekly tabling at the Farmers Market. PJ will be doing the October celebration flyer on World Food Day.

We heard from our guest speaker, Katie Rock from the Iowa Sierra Club. She spoke about their Beyond Coal Initiative and the work they have done nationwide to retire 325 coal plants that includes 60% of the nation's fleet. There are 8 left in Iowa, and MidAmerican Energy has no plans to retire them. Sierra Club is working to get state and national laws enforced on the plants. Iowa eliminated the state solar subsidy, leaving hundreds of citizens without the subsidy that they thought they would receive. There are coal plants in Muscatine, Louisa County, and Ames, although the one in Iowa City was retired. Susan thinks there is also one on the Arsenal Island. She also discussed how Des Moines passed their Climate Emergency Resolution and set clean energy standards. By calling it an emergency, they could tag into emergency tax credits, while calling it a crisis doesn't meet that criteria. The most important aspects of their plan was to complete the initial energy audit and hire staff. She will send us the Sierra Club's 100 Campaign sample language, which is their goal to get to 100% clean energy standards.

We reviewed the Rock Island County Waste Management Agency's ongoing plan to discontinue the drop off recycling centers, and that we need people to attend the 9/21 meeting at the County Building at 1 pm.

Susan reviewed the QC Plastic's Free program. Apparently Whitey's agreed to post signs telling people that they can decline straws. We will also approach other local restaurants (Happy Joes, Heart of America, Rudy's, etc.) We need to contact Dawn Temple and let her know what we are doing, since they started this initiative.

Judith Lee hasn't gotten back to us about things Davenport is doing about the Climate Resolution. Rock Island is working on a solar project for municipal buildings, YWCA, Fire Station and Libraries.

We will be meeting with 2 students from North High about their environmental science class and brainstorm ways we can support their projects. The Science Fair Showcase is on October 17th.

Ongoing work is necessary on the Environmental Forum web page, but we need to work with Jeannie on that.

Earth Day Fair is now 8 months away. We need artists to work on making signs for our sandwich boards.