

HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC DISCUSSION of ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS and ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT CONCERNS

Why are we discussing these topics?

Much discussion has been taking place within our community regarding the new StarPlus battery plant and what impact(s) that facility may pose to our local resources, particularly our water. The new plant requires considerable water draw (approximately 2.7 million gallons / day). Current water usage by the city, coupled with some ground water sources being unusable, limits Indiana American Water's (IAW) ability to meet the higher demand. As such, finding additional sources of water have now become necessary. IAW has contacted land owners in the Russiaville area (along Hwy 26) in search of potential well drilling sites in order to find another source of water to supplement the current supply. Questions from the public about the new plant, jobs, housing, impacts to the environment and the financial cost to the taxpayers have become regular topics. All of these concerns led to a group of citizens asking questions and coming together to discuss and research the planned developments. We are conducting this forum to inform you, our fellow citizens, of what we have learned thus far. Our goal is to provide information to further the discussion in our community to ensure wise decisions about our resources are being made by those we have elected to represent our interests.

"For lack of guidance a nation falls, but victory is won through many advisers." –
Proverbs 11:14

CALL TO ACTION: CALL YOUR LOCAL AND STATE OFFICIALS TO COME TO A
FOLLOW UP MEETING TO ANSWER CITIZEN QUESTIONS

Meeting held at the CFC facility auditorium, Kokomo, IN
October 22, 2024, 6-8pm

AGENDA

- Opening Prayer (Mick Owens, Owner, Creative Financial Centre)
- The Pledge of Allegiance
- Speaker Presentations. Each speaker will be allowed 10 minutes
Cards and pens are available for you to write out any questions you have for the panel. During the presentations, attendants will be collecting your questions; similar questions may be combined. If your question is directed toward a specific speaker, please note their name on your card.
- Questions submitted are to be announced by the moderator for panel response, as time allows. A discussion format will be permitted by the panel.
- Closing Prayer (Pastor John Zwirn, Missionary Alliance Church)

PANEL OF SPEAKERS:

- Brian Daggy, Topic: LEAP, Lebanon Project
- Mark Basch, Topic: Water Rights & Use
- Brook Milburn, Topic: Well Health
- Sherry Roe, Topic: Local Health Issues and Concerns
- Rob Merchant, Topic: Permitting & Planning for New Developments
- Scott Aaron, Topic: Water Rights
- Ann Ihms, Topic: Water Quality
- Joe Russeau, Topic: Indiana Economic Development Corp.

Moderator: Andy Rink, Owner, DIGIDOG Tech

Speaker Biographies

Brian Daggy, Soil and Water Conservation Boone County

Brian earned his BS in Ag Economics at Purdue and his MBA at Indiana Wesleyan. He engaged in full time farming and farm management for 17 yrs, followed by 5 yrs at the IN Dept of Environmental Mgmt. (IDEM). Other positions include Natural Resource Specialist at the Indiana Farm Bureau, and President at Agricultural Environmental Consulting, LLC. He is currently a consultant to Boone County SWCD and President of Boone County Farm Bureau, Inc. Married to his wife Peggy for 48 yrs, with three children, and two grandchildren.

Mark Basch, Head, Water Rights & Use Section at State of Indiana

Mark is a hydrogeologist with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water. Mark received his Undergraduate Degree in Geology from Ball State University in 1979. He then worked three years for Reynold's Supply, Inc., a well installation and service company, prior to obtaining a Master's Degree in Geology from Indiana University. Mark has been employed with the Division of Water since 1984, and currently heads up the Division's Water Rights and Use Section.

Brook Milburn, Environmental Health Director Howard County Indiana

Born in Kokomo in 1963. Grew up in Russiaville in a family of 7. Graduated from Western High School in 1981. Served 7 years in the U. S. Army. Graduated from IU Bloomington with a BA in Geology and a Business Certificate. Worked in the construction field as a laborer, concrete finisher, equipment operator and materials tester. In 2005 I hired in at the Health Department as a septic system inspector. I worked in every program in the Environmental Health office over the next 15 years. I was moved into the Environmental Health Director job 5 years ago. I have been married to Kim for over 30 years and we have an adult son who is an equipment operator and an adult daughter working her way thru Veterinary College.

Sherry Roe, Author, Profits over People

Sherry Roe is a life long resident of Howard Co. She became an environmental activist after losing her parents to rare cancers caused from benzene exposure in the local GM factory. She advocates for the health and safety of her community. Sherry is author of **Profits Over People** which is currently being used in the curriculum at Michigan State University.

Robin L. Merchant, Certified Water and Waste Water Operator

45 years working in the Water & Wastewater Industry, including:
Utilities Management (Water, Wastewater, Gas, Electric) Municipal & Industrial Water / Wastewater Treatment Plant Operations Water/Wastewater Distribution & Collection System Maintenance & Supervision Pretreatment Management Public Works Director Water & Wastewater Utility Consulting

Education:

- A.S. Applied Business Studies (with minor in Supervision) Indiana University Kokomo – Honors
- B.S. Business Administration - Magna Cum Laude, Indiana Wesleyan University, Marion
- Certified Water & Wastewater Operator
- Past Vice President of Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE) – Indiana University Kokomo

Honors:

- 2017 Alliance Of Indiana Rural Water Utility Manager Of The Year
- 1984 EPA Award of Excellence for Operation & Maintenance of a Pollution Control Facility

Scott Aaron, Water Training & LSLI Specialist, Alliance of Indiana Rural Water

Scott has been involved in the water industry for over a decade. He has worked in water treatment, distribution, and customer service. Scott holds a Bachelor's degree from Indiana University in Business Administration, a WT3, WT5, DSL, and a Water Validator license.

Currently he is working with The Alliance as a Lead Service Line Inventory Specialist and has assisted hundreds of community water systems in submitting their inventories to IDEM. Scott has also conducted numerous training classes across the state focusing on water treatment and government regulations.

Ann Ihms, Owner, Criterion Water Labs, LLC

Mrs. Ann Ihms, B.S. and M.S. in Materials Engineering from the Univ. of Missouri-Rolla, School of Science and Technology. Owner and Lab Manager Criterion Water Labs, LLC - EPA Certified Microbiology and Chemical Analysis Drinking Water Lab since 2010. Previously Chemical Hygiene officer and Adjunct Professor for Indiana Wesleyan University, Materials engineer for Sunnen Products in St. Louis and Delco Electronics in Kokomo, IN

Joe Russeau, President, Precision Analytical Laboratory, Inc.

Joe is a lifelong citizen of Howard County. He graduated from Western School in 1990 and holds a Bachelor of Science in Biological and Physical Science from Indiana University. He is the president of Precision Analytical Laboratory (PAL), Inc., an analytical chemistry lab that evaluates electronic manufacturing materials and processes. Personally, Joe enjoys spending time with his family and working their small cattle farm. As a citizen and small businessman, he has many concerns regarding the direction of the community and the stewardship of our resources.

Disclaimer:

This event is intended to be for informational purposes only. It is not our intention to spread rumors or misinformation. The information being presented this evening comes from various sources and those can be made available upon request. If anything presented is in error, we welcome anyone to come forth with information to correct what has been presented. Additionally, the comments from each speaker represent their specific views and do not necessarily reflect the views of all speakers involved. Creative Financial Centre (CFC) has graciously provided us a space to conduct this event and the views expressed by each speaker in no way represents CFC. Please understand that state and local officials were asked to participate in this evening's event, but those we asked declined. As such, several citizens have agreed to share researched information with the public in their stead. Those presenters are not claiming to be experts. They are citizens who are concerned with the future and health of our community. Thank you for taking time to come and listen. May God Bless our community, our state and our nation.

If you have any follow-up questions please contact **Criterion Water Labs, LLC**

Phone: (765) 883-7681

Email: water@criterionwaterlabs.com

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/criterionwaterlabs>