

MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
HELD AT 6:30 P.M. THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1990  
AT THE COMMISSION OFFICES  
8149 KENNEDY AVENUE, HIGHLAND, INDIANA

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Chairperson Arlene Colvin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Ten (10) Commissioners were present. Quorum was declared and guests were recognized.

Development Commissioners:

Charles Agnew  
Clyde Baughard  
Dave Springman  
Steve Davis  
Nathaniel Leonard  
William Critser  
George Carlson  
Arlene Colvin  
William Tanke  
John DeMeo

Staff:

Dan Gardner  
Lou Casale, Attorney  
Bruce Stouffer  
Sandy Mordus

Visitors:

Phil Wieland - The Times  
Pete & M.J.Zak-S. Shore Marina  
Herb Read - Izaak Walton  
Courtney Van Lopik-Ogden Dunes  
Dick Wawrzyniak - IDNR  
Edward Wisinski-Izaak Walton  
Rev.Comer-E.C. NAACP  
Ola Kennedy - Lake County Park Board  
Richard Bundy - Salmon Unltd.  
Eloise Gentry-Urban League of N.W. IN  
Jodi Dickey-Lake County Parks  
B.Morales-WZVN, Merrillville  
Tom DeGiulio - Town of Munster  
Bob Huffman - LCRBC  
George Bunce-Izaak Walton  
Ortho Lyles-Greater Gary Const.

A motion was made by Clyde Baughard to approve the minutes of the November 1st meeting; motion seconded by Chuck Agnew; motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Colvin appointed a Nominating Committee for election of 1991 officers. The Committee consisted of John DeMeo, Charles Agnew and Nathaniel Leonard. The Committee will designate their own chair.

A lengthy discussion began on the recent flooding that took place in Highland. Mr. Gardner distributed water elevation readings at Hart Ditch and the Little Calumet River experienced during the recent flood event. They revealed some of the highest readings ever recorded in the river system. Lake County has been declared both a state disaster area and a Federal disaster area. The Federal and State Emergency Management Agencies have set up field offices and are attempting to assess damages and prepare recovery plans.

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LCRBDC Minutes  
December 6, 1990  
Page 2

Commissioner George Carlson reported on the situation he observed at the hardest impacted area - the Wicker Park Manor subdivision of Highland. He reported based on site visits and pictures he has taken that, in his judgement, the lowering of the C&O railroad embankment was the principal cause of the recent flooding. He reported there was no evidence of levee failure. Discussion ensued on the flooding situation and its implications. Because of the Federal and State disaster declarations, the Federal and State Emergency Management Agencies are in charge of interim recovery plans. Staff was directed to maintain close contact with these agencies. Mr. Gardner commented that he has been contacted to participate in the formulation of remedial recovery measures.

Discussion on the status of the existing levees that are serving to protect Hammond, Highland and Munster took place. Comments on periodic inspections and regular maintenance were needed by the communities prior to the Corps construction project. Munster town manager Tom DeGuilio, present in the audience, commented that Munster performed periodic inspections and encouraged the other communities to do also. A directive was made for staff to contact each of the communities that have levees and urge their inspection and reinforcement if needed.

Discussion then focused on the needed emergency restoration of a levee to replace the removed railroad embankment. A resolution was adopted to support the use of Federal or State emergency funds to finance replacement. Discussion took place regarding the role of the various agencies, the Town, and Tri-State Coach Lines in the reconstruction. It was stated that the property is currently owned by Tri-State, so they would be involved in any reconstruction project. Time and source of funding would dictate the best approach to an emergency solution.

It was moved by Bill Tanke, seconded by George Carlson, to contact Tri-State and work with Federal, State and town officials to pursue legal authority to allow reconstruction of flood protection; and if no agreement can be reached, then to authorize the Commission attorney to proceed with condemnation to provide a suitable location for reconstruction. Funding is to come from whichever source can best accomplish the task; motion passed unanimously after lengthy discussion.

LCRBDC Minutes  
December 6, 1990  
Page 3

Finance/Policy Committee - Treasurer Clyde Baughard presented the financial status report for November as well as the claims. Mr. Baughard made a motion to approve the pending claims; motion seconded by Chuck Agnew; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Baughard informed the Commissioners that the escrow account has been established at INB, where the highest interest rate was offered. He also stated that a Finance committee meeting would be held before the next Commission meeting.

Because she had to leave early for a previous engagement, Eloise Gentry, President of the Urban League of Northwest Indiana, was permitted to speak out of order. She expressed concern for the minority contractors who wish to participate in the construction projects that will be forthcoming on the Little Cal project. She wants the Commission to take a pro-active role in doing what they can to insure contracts to minorities. Mr. Gardner gave a brief synopsis of the seminar that was held in Gary to inform all area contractors of bidding procedures with the Federal government. Mr. Gardner stressed the point that the Development Commission is supporting local people for local jobs and that people in northwest Indiana should benefit.

Legislative Committee - Mr. Gardner reported he attended a Forum meeting in which state legislators were briefed on various projects for support. The Little Calumet River Flood Control/ Recreation Project was on the Forum agenda in support of the Commission's request for \$3 million. A mailing will be done prior to the January legislative session to update all legislators. Some budget information should be forthcoming in the near future.

Land Acquisition/Management Committee - Committee Chairman Chuck Agnew gave committee report. Mr. Agnew made a motion to authorize staff to advertise the farm land on leases L100, L100A, L101 and L112 for the year 1991; motion seconded by Nathaniel Leonard; motion passed unanimously.

He stated that staff will have the corner of 35th & Chase (Chase Street Produce) appraised. The owner wishes to sell and since the levee line will go through the parking lot and the lot will have to be relocated, it is beneficial to the Commission to own the property.

He stated that we have received a letter from the Corps stating that all properties purchased prior to September 28, 1990 will require updated appraisals to determine current value. A motion was made by Chuck Agnew for staff to pursue contracting with how every many appraisers are needed to update the appraisals in a timely manner (approx. 3-4 appraisers); motion seconded by Clyde Baughard; motion passed unanimously.

LCRBDC Minutes  
December 6, 1990  
Page 4

Mr. Agnew reported that Bob's Fishing Lake has now been vacated by the lessee and it is planned that access to Clark Road would be cut off. That would eliminate much dumping being done in the area.

Interim Flood Control Committee - Committee Chairman Clyde Baughard referred to the letter contained in packet from the Corps in response to Woodmar Country Club's letter regarding reconfiguration of the south levee on their property and the Corps response that reconfiguration was not feasible at this time.

Mr. Gardner stated that the Little Calumet River Basin Commission has approved and signed a resolution transferring their remaining monies to the Development Commission upon their sunset 12/31/90. Those remaining funds were earmarked for the completion of the Conrail culvert enlargement project and any miscellaneous bills that may be forthcoming and transfer of all rights & obligations of the Commission. The Development Commission must now approve and sign a resolution accepting the transfer of funds under those terms. Mr. Agnew made a motion to approve the resolution as presented; motion seconded by John DeMeo; motion passed unanimously.

Bruce Stouffer stated he participated in the van trip with the Corps, State Highway Dept., Lake County Highway Dept., Lake County Civil Defense, Gary Civil Defense, & Griffith Public Works Dept. to view some flood control structures in several cities that are already in place. In the Little Cal flood control project, the plans call for several closure structures to be used in flood periods.

Breakwaters/Marina Committee - William Tanke, Committee Chairman, referred to the proposal letter from Hunter Corporation for the marina sand excavation.

Mr. Tanke also referred to the letter from Northern Laboratories regarding proposal for sand testing of the marina sand.

Mr. Gardner informed the Commission that he has had several firms interested in the sand. One interest has come from Superior Construction. Mr. Gardner stated he will be meeting shortly with the IN Port Commission again to try to resolve the sand issue.

Mr. Gardner reported that the final order of the marina hearings will be signed by entities involved.

LCRBDC Minutes.  
December 6, 1990  
Page 5

Executive Director's Report: Mr. Gardner spoke on the Commission's needs for the upcoming year. He sees the need to establish a new committee. The new committee would be a Project Planning, Engineering and Construction Committee, replacing the Interim Flood Control/Planning Committee. Procurement needs for 1991 would be: (1) maintenance channel work - the need for a firm on retainer, (2) engineering firm selection for construction project management - qualifications and selection, (3) help in updating appraisals for credit and (4) consulting design firm for Gary park lands. He also indicated there will be a need for updated status of area minority, disadvantaged contractors participation in project bidding/construction as the project moves along.

Mr. Gardner informed the Commission that the Corps met today with staff and the Lake County Parks Dept. regarding the County park land that could possibly be used as a borrow site. An advantage in using their land is that it is already in public ownership.

Mr. Tanke directed staff to meet with Bill Henderson of the county Surveyor's Office regarding the drainage authority status that the Commission has now assumed from the county. Staff was also asked to see what kind of gage readings were produced from the two gage stations the Commission is paying maintenance on.

Statements from the floor - Richard Bundy, Salmon Unlimited, complained that during flooding, commercial developments still continue to pump into the river while houses flood. He complained that flooding is flooding - whether it is here or there - an abundance of water is just being transferred from one spot to another.

Ed Wisinski - Agreed with Mr. Bundy and stated the loss of wetlands is due to all the development in the floodplain.

Bob Huffman - Inquired whether other areas hit by the flooding other than Highland would be able to take advantage of the low interest grant programs.

Herb Read commented that Porter County seems to be more sensitive and cautious in not allowing an overabundance of development in the floodplain.

Richard Bundy inquired whether the plans for raising of the bridge over Burns Waterway were still intact.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for January 3, 1991.