

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION
HELD AT 6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1998
AT THE COMMISSION OFFICE
6100 SOUTHPORT ROAD
HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

Chairman Robert Trelo called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Eight (8) Commissioners were present. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Quorum was declared and guests were recognized.

Development Commissioners:

Robert Trelo
Emerson Delaney
William Tanke
Charles Agnew
Robert Huffman
John DeMeo
Steve Davis
Marion Williams

Visitors:

Denis Buksa – Town of Munster
Howard Anderson- Issak Walton
Jim Flora – R.W.Armstrong Co.

Staff:

Dan Gardner
Lou Casale
Jim Pokrajac
Judy Vamos
Sandy Mordus

The minutes of the October 7th, 1998 meeting were approved by a motion from William Tanke; motion seconded by John DeMeo; motion passed unanimously.

Chairman's Report – Chairman Bob Trelo appointed a Nominating Committee. They were John DeMeo, Chuck Agnew and Steve Davis. Commissioner George Carlson added that it wanted it known that he has never served on the Nominating Committee. Although he was appointed last year to the Committee, they unintentionally met without him, thinking Arlene Colvin was the appointee and not Mr. Carlson. The Nominating Committee will meet and report back to the Commission.

Executive Director's Report – Mr. Gardner referred to the letter in the agenda packet given from the COE office to Larry Macklin, Director of IDNR, transmitting the mitigation plan.

The letter was sent as a draft to IDNR. The letter cited the Hobart Marsh area as the mitigation area. Mr. Gardner has talked to DNR staff and reported that an initial response from them should be coming in a few weeks. A meeting will then be scheduled.

Mr. Gardner then stated that he attended and was a speaker at the IN Assoc. for Floodplain and Stormwater Management conference held 10/28-29/98 at Turkey Run State Park.

Mr. Gardner stated that he hoped to have a development plan and management proposal before the Board at the next meeting for the area at 35th and Chase (not the COE mitigation site)

Land Acquisition Committee – Committee Chairman Chuck Agnew made a motion for staff to file condemnations proceedings on DC139, DC348, DC349 and DC480; motion seconded by Arlene Colvin; motion passed unanimously. Mr. Agnew then made a motion to approve an increased offer on DC526 from \$600 to \$900; motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Agnew talked about the tour of the project lands that the Commission had on October 17th. He said it was a great tour and riding on the levees really gave you a different perspective of the properties. Unfortunately, there was not enough time to see everything and he would suggest another tour be planned for the spring. We could visit the recreation development areas then, i.e. Lake Etta and Carlson OxBow Park.

Project Engineering Committee – Committee Chairman Bob Huffman stated that the working relationship between staff and the COE staff has improved since meeting with the Design Construction Evaluation team back in August. Staff expressed some concerns about timeliness and accuracy of plans and specs to them and it appears that there has been some improvement.

Mr. Huffman also reported that agreements need to be put in place with Gary Sanitary District (GSD) for the four pump stations located in Gary. Attorney Casale stated that the agreements have been sent to Jim Meyer (GSD's attorney) back in July and he is awaiting their approval. A meeting will be scheduled to resolve any issues. Commissioner Marion Williams inquired about pump cost estimations. Mr. Pokrajac responded that we did have that estimation from the COE and it was given at one time to the GSD.

Legislative Committee – Committee Chairperson Arlene Colvin referred to the letter in the agenda packet that was sent to Peggy Boehm, Director of the State Budget Agency, seeking to be put on their next agenda in order to seek the approval to draw against the unallocated 1997-98 biennium monies of \$2 million.

Ms. Colvin also stated that the Commission needs to start talking to area legislators before the next General Assembly session begins. Now that the election is over, we need to begin getting support for the \$6 million budget request before the State Budget Agency. One-on-one contact is needed with area legislators.

Marina Committee – Committee Chairman Bill Tanke informed the Board that the corner marina sign is not up yet but should be shortly. Mr. Tanke also stated that he would like staff to obtain a year end accounting of marina monies. Staff will contact John Hannon.

Finance Committee – Committee Chairman George Carlson referred to the financial status report and claim approval list. He made a motion to accept the financial report and approve claims totaling \$39,303.96; motion seconded by John DeMeo; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Carlson referred to the COE letter requesting the \$39,000 from the miscellaneous betterment escrow account and made a motion to approve it; motion seconded by Chuck Agnew; motion passed unanimously. Mr. Carlson also referred to an accounting chart of the monies received from interest from the escrow accounts. We have just purchased a \$100,000 CD from the accrued interest.

Mr. Carlson also stated that a Finance Committee meeting was held on November 3rd. The topic of discussion was the contract agreements we have with our contract employees. Mr. Carlson has suggested changes to the contracts regarding clarification items, compensation adjustments and allowable benefits. Mr. Carlson is concerned about the 7-1/2% mandated employer match to social security and medicare that the contract employees must pay themselves. As a result of the meeting, Mr. Gardner will further research with the State to make sure no discrepancies exist.

Recreational Development Committee – In Committee Chairman Emerson Delaney's absence, Jim Pokrajac referred to an article on the George W. Carlson Oxbow Park dedication. He also said the dedication of the Gleason Park recreational facilities took place on October 27th and was very nice. Mayor King spoke. Commissioner Agnew added that he was really impressed with how the park facilities turned out. The overlook and parking lot were really nice. Mr. Gardner added that it was really an improvement to have 30th Avenue paved.

Mr. Pokrajac also stated that a field walk-through took place on Phase 1 recreation. He also stated that he talked to Bob Nickovich, Superintendent of Lake County Parks & Rec, who would like to coordinate efforts in a volunteer clean-up of the river. Staff will follow up. Mr. Carlson added that some boys from Hoosier Boys Town helped clean up Carlson Oxbow Park in Hammond and they did a fine job.

Mr. Pokrajac also thanked Commissioner Bob Huffman for accompanying him and the COE for a walk-through of recreational trails on October 6th. There is still some concern about the safety at road crossings and what can be done to improve those crossings.

Minority Contracting Committee – Committee Chairman Marion Williams stated that at their last committee meeting where COE project manager Imad Samara attended, he did promise some data that we are still awaiting. Staff will pursue.

Other Business – Mr. Gardner referred to the COE letter concerning the operation and maintenance manual approval. We have not given our final comments to the COE yet and we need to give those as soon as possible. If any Commissioners still wish to comment, please do so immediately.

Statements from the floor –Howard Anderson spoke on the beaver dams we have in the ditches and river. At the last meeting, we authorized Mr. Anderson to trap the beavers and dispose of them in a humane way. Mr. Anderson stated that conditions in the ditches are ideal for beaver. If we would cut down all the willows, keep it all cut down and mowed, the beavers would not build dams there. That is impossible so we will probably continue to have trouble with beavers. Mr. Anderson said he will submit his plan of action to us of his intentions for disposal. Beaver trapping season started November 15th.

There being no further business, the next regular Commission meeting was scheduled for **6:00 p.m. Wednesday, December 9, 1998.**