

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HELD AT 6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 1999
AT THE COMMISSION OFFICE
6100 SOUTHPORT ROAD
PORTAGE, INDIANA**

Chairman Emerson Delaney called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Nine (9) Commissioners were present. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Quorum was declared and guests were recognized.

Development Commissioners:

Emerson Delaney
Charles Agnew
William Tanke
George Carlson
Robert Huffman
Steve Davis
Arlene Colvin
John DeMeo
Curtis Vosti

Visitors:

Charles Olson-Interstate Env.
Jomary Crary – Div. Water, IDNR
Denis Buksa, Munster IN
David Hendrix – The Times
Jim Flora – R.W. Armstrong Co.

Staff:

Dan Gardner
Sandy Mordus
Lou Casale
Jim Pokrajac
Judy Vamos

The minutes of the July 1st, 1999 meeting were approved by a motion from Chuck Agnew; motion was seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously.

Chairman's Report – Chairman Emerson Delaney referred to the work study session held on July 13th in regard to the proposal received from Lake Erie Land Company (LEL) for environmental enhancement of Commission lands. This proposal was received in response from a RFP the Commission had advertised. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss points in the proposal and also review maintenance costs and ask questions of LEL. Committee Chairman John DeMeo thought the meeting went very well. Jim Pokrajac added that it is a good opportunity to address long term maintenance. Chuck Agnew added that he was glad to see the handicapped park included in the proposal. Arlene Colvin was glad to be able to hear some questions answered first hand so the Commission can make an informed decision. George Carlson inquired how the Commission would proceed from here. Emerson Delaney stated that LEL has been very responsive in providing us with any information we've requested and they are still putting together some more information for us that we will be receiving in a day or so. Attorney Lou Casale stated those negotiations are proceeding. We probably will have to have at least one more meeting before any action is taken. Bob Huffman thought the meeting was very informative and useful. Steve Davis stated that he was glad that the Commission lands can serve this purpose and be used in this manner. Curt Vosti voiced his opinion in that this is a fantastic opportunity for a recreational

benefit to the public. It is something we can take down State to show the legislators that we can help ourselves. John DeMeo added that we will try to get questions answered and something in place before LEL meets with IDNR in Indianapolis. We are working toward a date of August 19th for a potential meeting down state. A date of Monday August 16th at 5:00 was set for the Commission to meet again. That date is not confirmed at this time. A public notice will go out if the meeting is needed and is scheduled. Bill Tanke added that he would like for staff to mail out the additional information that LEL is putting together prior to the August 16th meeting so that the Board members have an opportunity to review it.

Executive Director's Report – Executive Director Dan Gardner referred to a letter in the packet from Mayor King stating the withdrawal of a city request for the 179 acres of Commission land in lieu of actual dollar value for city easements they gave the Commission for project purposes. The letter further states that those monies (\$262,000) can be paid to Gary Parks & Recreation Department for further use in the development of Gleason Park driving range. It has been determined that none of these easements are in the empowerment zone.

Mr. Gardner then referred to a letter received from Gary Sanitary District regarding cost of operating and maintaining the pump stations. Dan has written a response to Luci Horton, Director of GSD in which the detail of costs was provided.

Land Acquisition Committee – Committee Chairman Chuck Agnew stated that there were no motions to be made. Mr. Agnew stated that several support letters were received from environmentalists Emryn Artunian, the Dunes Calumet Audubon Society, Save the Dunes Council, and the Griffith Izaak Walton League to expedite our acquisition; lands are being lost to private development.

Mr. Agnew also stated that we have received official letters from the COE to proceed with acquisition for Stage V-2 and Stage V-3.

Project Engineering Committee – Committee Chairman Bob Huffman reported that we have received a letter from in IN Dunes National Lakeshore regarding the review of COE turf and landscaping specs. Mr. Huffman also reported that engineering review of Stage IV Phase 1 North and the West Reach pump stations is completed. A revised construction schedule is included in packet.

Legislative Committee – Committee Chairperson Arlene Colvin referred to the newspaper article in the packet stating House approval of \$9.4 million of Federal funds earmarked for the flood control project. She also referred to a letter received from Congressman Pete Visclosky's office expressing his concern of lack of State dollars to match the Federal appropriations he has been securing for the project. Arlene stated that she was at the State Budget Agency's office recently and she discovered that there were more requests than actual dollars available in the Special Build IN Fund. We need to contact our legislators and move quickly. Mr. Gardner added that he has received the construction schedule from Imad and he will have the COE write a letter stating their concern about meeting the construction schedule. Dan will be meeting with the Legislative Committee soon to plan a strategy.

Recreational Development Committee – Committee Chairman George Carlson reported that the cut has been made in the channel between the river and the lake at Carlson-OxBow Park. It is about 80% complete. He also referred to the letter from the North Township Trustee's Office and the Town of Highland in regards to the Commission putting in a pedestrian bridge over the river and finishing the trail west of Indianapolis Blvd. from the river, south past Tri-State Coach Lines. Discussion ensued on whether it was feasible to take this portion of Stage V Phase 2 and request the COE to bid it separately. There has been some grant money (1999 Transportation Enhancement money) allotted for this project to be given to Hammond and Highland for completion of their trail. Our trail will tie theirs together. The Commission is obligated to put a connecting bridge in that area. Curt Vosti added that the Mayor of Hammond is supportive of constructing this portion of work now. Before he takes any action on behalf of the City, he will wait and see what the Commission and the COE decide. A motion was made by Curt Vosti to write a letter to the COE and ask them to take this portion out of sequence and build that section now thus being able to take advantage of the grant money and complete the trail link-up system; motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously. Bill Tanke expressed concern that it may be cost prohibitive to do this now; Emerson Delaney said the COE should be able to calculate those costs and provide them to us in order that we may evaluate that consideration.

Marina Committee – Committee Chairman Bill Tanke referred to the letters in the agenda packet concerning the dredging of Burns Waterway. It appears that there are FY2000 funds available but the COE needs to secure 401 water quality certification from the State before dredging can begin.

Mr. Tanke also reported that we have closed out the marina construction account that was opened when construction of Phase 2 of the Portage Public Marina began. Since we did not anticipate any need for that account, the \$11,700 was transferred into a note earning a higher interest rate.

Finance Committee – Committee Chairperson Arlene Colvin presented the financial status report and claims for approval. She made a motion to accept the financial report and approve the July claims; motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously.

Minority Contracting Committee – In Committee Chairman Marion Williams' absence, Mr. Gardner reported that there is really not much new to report at this time. Once new contracts are let, we will begin monitoring the monthly reports to ensure that the 40% minority participation is fulfilled.

Other Business – Bob Huffman inquired about the vacancy that still remains on the Board. It would be beneficial to the Commission to have a full 11-member Board. Mr. Gardner stated that he has had conversation with people from the Town of Highland and they are interested in that position being filled by a Highland resident. They have contacted Representative Dan Stevenson to that effect. Staff will check with the town to see if they have sent a request letter to the Governor.

Chuck Agnew referred to the COE monthly publication, The Chicago Breeze. Several Board members, as well as staff, took offense to how an article was written concerning our project. All members felt that staff should convey our dissatisfaction with the article, either verbally or in a letter. Mr. Tanke made a motion to inform the COE that we wish to review any articles (concerning us) before they are published; motion seconded by Chuck Agnew; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Gardner took this opportunity to thank Jomary Crary (and Ken Smith) from the Div. of Water, IDNR, for their help at the mitigation meeting that was held in Indianapolis on July 16. At the conclusion of that meeting, it was determined that the Commission has about ± 100 acres over the required acreage we need to mitigate.

Statements to the Board – There were none.

There being no further business, the next regular Commission meeting was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Thursday, September 2, 1999. Please keep the date of August 16, 1999 at 5:00 open if a special interim meeting is needed. A notice will be forthcoming.