

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
HELD AT 6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, JULY 1, 1999  
AT THE COMMISSION OFFICE  
6100 SOUTHPORT ROAD  
PORTAGE, INDIANA**

Chairman Emerson Delaney called the meeting to order at 6:10 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.  
Kerry Keith – S.E.H., Griffith  
Don Ewoldt - LEL  
Cliff Fleming - LEL  
Jim Flora – R.W. Armstrong Co.  
David Hendrix – The Times  
Sandy O’Brien – Duneland Sierra  
Imad Samara - COE  
John Sirles - COE

**Staff:**

Dan Gardner  
Sandy Mordus  
Lou Casale  
Jim Pokrajac  
Judy Vamos

The minutes of the June 1st, 1999 meeting were approved by a motion from Bill Tanke; motion was seconded by Chuck Agnew; motion passed unanimously.

**Chairman’s Report** – Chairman Emerson Delaney announced the passing of Robert Trelo, who had been a Commissioner on the Board since 1992. He was a faithful member and will be missed by all. Chairman Delaney then announced the appointment of Curtis Vosti to the Board to fill the vacancy created when Roger Chiabai resigned from the Commission. Mr. Vosti is a Governor’s appointment and will serve immediately until December 31, 2002. He was welcomed to the Board.

Mr. Delaney stated he, as well as fellow Board member Bill Tanke, attended the first annual picnic at Coffee Creek subdivision in Chesterton. There is the newly developed 180 acre corridor park dedicated to preserving open space as part of the development.

Mr. Delaney then introduced John Sirles, Deputy District Engineer of the Chicago District Corps of Engineers. Mr. Sirles replaces Richard Carlson, who has retired.

Mr. Delaney stated that the second follow-up public meeting for the Marshalltown residents was held on June 29<sup>th</sup>. About 60 people were in attendance, as well as several Commissioners. Mr. Gardner added that there are still some remaining issues in the minds of the residents, even though we have done our part in following up on issues that were previously of concern at the last meeting. Discussions included debris/obstructions in the river, dumping on NIPSCO R/W, mosquito spraying, possible relocation of levee alignment, etc. We did send a team out to investigate a blockage they were concerned about. It turned out that the blockage was minor and the water flow is fine. The culverts are open and water is flowing. NIPSCO did a clean up on their right-of-way and they will better secure the site. The city of Gary was cited as very responsive to assigning city personnel flow and the potential clean-up area. Gary Sanitary District has written a letter to the COE regarding drainage in that area. Mr. Gardner stated that a third meeting will be held and stated a lot of effort is being made to accommodate the residents. Chairman Delaney complimented Judy Vamos for the excellent job of putting it together.

**Executive Director's Report** – Executive Director Dan Gardner announced the Commission's advertisement on June 11<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> for proposals to design and develop restoration and environmental enhancement on lands owned by the Commission. Proposal opening was on June 30<sup>th</sup> and, although 4 proposal packages were picked up, only 1 proposal was received by Lake Erie Land Company (LEL). Attorney Casale declared an official Public Hearing and asked for public comment. Attorney Casale gave a brief overview of the proposal. Sandy O'Brien, Duneland Sierra, asked what LEL gets from this proposition? Mr. Gardner answered in that they would use the land as a credit to be used for wetland mitigation banking. The advantage the Commission would have is that (1) the land would be enhanced and developed as passive recreation and (2) a fund for maintenance that the Commission is responsible for. Ms. O'Brien then asked who would own the land. Mr. Gardner replied that the Commission would retain ownership but just license the property to LEL (if accepted) for development. There being no other comments, the attorney stated that the proposal would be reviewed and the Chairman will appoint a committee to study it and report back at the next meeting. Mr. Tanke asked is there any reason to expedite this and Mr. Gardner answered that some timeliness needs to be had. Mr. Ewoldt added that they would like to start work in the spring (if granted). Mr. Tanke proceeded to make a motion for the Chairman to appoint a committee consisting of 5 members and report back to full Commission; motion seconded by John DeMeo; motion passed unanimously.

**Land Acquisition Committee** – Committee Chairman Chuck Agnew made a motion to approve an additional 0.171 acres of land east of Colfax for the Lake County Highway Dept. to construct the Colfax bridge; motion seconded by Bill Tanke; motion passed unanimously. (This area was inadvertently omitted in their previous request for land).

Mr. Agnew reported that the committee met with Dan Downey of Indiana Recreation & Equipment for the purpose of discussion of plans for the handicapped accessible park. Once a land enhancement proposal is accepted and in place, we will meet again.

Mr. Agnew reported on the Boy Scout river clean-up project held on June 5<sup>th</sup> at the Riley School area in Hammond. The project was a real success and Mr. Agnew thanked Judy Vamos for working out all the details and helping with its success.

**Project Engineering Committee** – Committee Chairman Bob Huffman reported that the COE has received one bid for the East Reach Remediation area. That bid was from Dyer Construction, whose bid was 138% of the government's cost estimate. We have written the COE a letter urging them to attempt to negotiate to reduce the cost to closer to the government estimate.

Mr. Huffman reported that a meeting was held on June 10<sup>th</sup> at the Surveyor's Office to review the potential for 325,000 cu.yds. of clay from the Hartsdale Pond.

Mr. Huffman then reported that we sent a support letter for the telemetry system for the Gary Sanitary District.

**Legislative Committee** – Committee Chairperson Arlene Colvin deferred to Dan Gardner for a legislative report. Mr. Gardner stated he is working with Imad Samara of the COE to put together an accurate schedule as possible for the 2-3 years for documentation of our dire need for the \$4 million that we have been told we can access from the \$10 million "Special Fund Account". Mr. Tanke suggested we find out when the State Budget Agency meets next and then go and at least ask them to set aside the \$4 million. Mr. Gardner felt that is not the approach we need to take; we need to document our need up front. He committed to producing a document and contacting the Budget members to begin the process.

**Recreational Development Committee** – Committee Chairman George Carlson reported that we should be receiving a final recreational map soon, showing all features such as trails, fishing piers, observation decks and all other support facilities.

Mr. Carlson referred to the IDNR website clipping in the agenda described Carlson Oxbow Park with pictures.

Mr. Huffman inquired about the pending channel cut to join the two bodies of water together. Curt Vosti stated that he had talked to the IDNR biologist and he feels that as long as we can receive his approval in writing to do the cut, that should be sufficient for the Hammond Parks Dept. to move on.

Mr. Carlson stated that a letter was sent to the COE for modified layout for trail ramp. Mr. Huffman asked if everyone had seen the big Times article on Sunday on the bike trails in northwest IN. The levee project was mentioned several times in the article. Jim Pokrajac added that he has mounted the Times map on a display board for future use.

**Marina Committee** – Committee Chairman Bill Tanke stated the committee met on June 23<sup>rd</sup> and then again prior to tonight's meeting. They are discussing several financial questions and will report back to Commission once their information is finalized.

**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 June claims; motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously. She reported that the audit report for 1996 and 1997 was received. If anyone is interested in looking at it, staff has a copy.

**Minority Contracting Committee** – In Committee Chairman Marion Williams' absence, Mr. Gardner reported that there is really not much new to report. Several minority contractors were in attendance at the pre bid meeting held a few months past for the east reach remediation area. They want to see more 8A contracts. Mr. Gardner stated that there may be more of an opportunity in future contracts. Mr. Gardner referred to the monthly construction reports we receive from the local COE office.

**Other Business** – There was none.

**Statements to the Board** – Imad Samara from the COE and Sandy O'Brien from Duneland Sierra both inquired whether they could view the LEL proposal received. Mr. Gardner stated that it was public information and was available for viewing. Copies would be furnished to anyone requesting one.

Sandy O'Brien expressed her concern that much of the Hobart Marsh land is being bought out by others and will not be available for a mitigation site if the COE doesn't hurry along with land acquisition. She is hopeful that the July 15<sup>th</sup> meeting with IDNR is supportive of this area so that acquisition can begin.

Chairman Delaney then appointed a committee of 5 to review the LEL proposal. They are Bill Tanke, Steve Davis, Curt Vosti, John DeMeo and himself, Emerson Delaney. John DeMeo will serve as Chairman of the Committee. Other commissioners can attend the public committee meeting if they desire and media will be notified once committee date is set.

There being no further business, the next regular Commission meeting was scheduled for **6:00 p.m. Thursday, August 5, 1999.**