

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
HELD AT 6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2000  
AT THE COMMISSION OFFICE  
6100 SOUTHPORT ROAD  
PORTAGE, INDIANA**

Chairman Emerson Delaney called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. Nine (9) Commissioners were present. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Quorum was declared and guests were recognized.

**Development Commissioners:**

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

**Visitors:**

Bill Petrites, Highland resident  
Jomary Crary, IDNR, Div. Water  
Jim Flora, R.W. Armstrong Company  
George Bowman, IDNR, Div. Water  
Sandy O'Brien, Sierra Club  
Mike Gooldy, Portage News  
Mark Lopez, Congressman Visclosky's  
Office  
Jim Sweeney, Izaak Walton  
Myrna Nugent, Shirley Heinze Environmental  
Fund

**Staff**

Dan Gardner  
Sandy Mordus  
Lou Casale  
Jim Pokrajac  
Judy Vamos

Commissioner George Carlson made a motion after correcting the minutes on p.4 by stating that in the Legislative Committee report, he was not present at the meeting and therefore did not give the Legislative report. It should read that Mr. Gardner gave the Legislative report; motion seconded by Chuck Agnew; motion passed unanimously.

**Chairman's Report** – To be given later in meeting.

**Executive Director's Report** - Mr. Gardner updated the Board members on the project wetland mitigation report. We had solicited for proposals for land to serve as property for this mitigation. There were 2 proposals received – Lake Erie Land Company and the Shirley Heinze Environmental Fund. Mr. Gardner gave a brief description of the proposals received. Shirley Heinz had offered 198 acres at a cost of \$8000 per each acre. Lake Erie Land had offered 634 acres in 5 separate locations. They proposed property they have optioned with the Commission. No cost was given in their proposal. Mr. Gardner further stated that we have received numerous letters of support for the Hobart Marsh area. He stated that these proposals would serve as a "floor" of lands to be considered, along with private property deemed suitable in the Hobart Marsh area. The main concern is getting the best property at the best dollar value. He has met with Mark Lopez & talked to Tim

Sanders about this. IDEM, IDNR and U.S. Fish & Wildlife will provide staff to screen the properties so that the best of the property is identified. There are 4 criteria used in evaluating the lands. They are hydrology, composition of soils, cost of establishment, and contiguity with other lands.

Mr. Vosti stated that he, Steve Davis and Bob Huffman had the opportunity to tour some of the Hobart Marsh property. Approximately 344 acres are needed for mitigation, both enhanced and restored. Jomary Crary, IDNR, reiterated that a permit could not be secured until a mitigation plan is in place. Mr. Vosti made a motion to accept the proposals received and forward them onto the COE and IDNR; motion seconded by John DeMeo; motion passed unanimously.

Public comment – Sandy O'Brien referred to a map she had given us earlier that may not be up to date. Some of the properties identified on it may have already been sold. She has a better map she will give us.

Mr. Gardner reiterated that those lands which are most suitable will determine the mitigation lands.

**Land Acquisition/Management Committee** – Committee Chairman Chuck Agnew made a motion for staff to file condemnation proceedings on DC526; motion seconded by Curt Vosti; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Agnew reported that he, Bill Tanke, Dan Gardner, Judy Vamos and Don Ewoldt (LEL) attended the river Forest School Board meeting and made a presentation for the donation of the handicapped-accessible park and community building. School officials are delighted that this park will become a reality once LEL sells mitigation credits for the 32 acre area on Clay Street. There was discussion earlier if the project would have to be bid out. Mr. Agnew read a letter from the attorney stating that upon researching it, the project does not have to be bid out.

Mr. Agnew reported that the COE and LCRBDC met with North Township Trustee and Board members regarding Wicker Park golf course levee impact. John Snell of Indianapolis will be doing the appraisal.

Mr. Agnew also reported that a Great Konomick River Restoration project meeting was held September 6<sup>th</sup>. The group meeting now is pared down from the original larger group and it was decided that a mission statement should be developed for the group.

Mr. Agnew also mentioned that Real Estate meetings were held on August 8<sup>th</sup> and August 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Project Engineering Committee** – Committee Chairman Bob Huffman gave the engineering report. He reported that a meeting will be held on September 26<sup>th</sup> at INDOT's request to talk about I-80/94 widening project and how it will affect lands/easements we may need and drainage problems that may occur. A meeting was held yesterday with the city of Gary to review the Grant Street improvement project. He also reported a

pre-construction meeting was held August 8<sup>th</sup> on Pump Station 1B contract (S.E. Hessville & 81<sup>st</sup> Street). Also, some re-alignment along the west side of the Tri-State Bus Terminal will be done to minimize real estate impacts to parking.

A request had been submitted to the COE earlier asking for information on other projects that used the Stage VII design for the V.E. proposal. We have not heard from the COE yet. We would like this information before we have public meetings in Hammond, Highland and Munster.

**Legislative Committee** – Committee Chairman George Carlson informed the Board members that the Legislative Committee met on August 22<sup>nd</sup> for a 2-hour meeting to discuss funding issue - purpose was how we can get \$12 million in the Governor's budget to keep the project going. Effort should be made to try to talk to Pete Manous, the Governor's representative for NW IN. We had previously met with the Congressman and he was very supportive and said he would talk to the Governor if needed. He would like the project completed so benefits will be received and he can channel monies toward other projects. Average monies received from each biennium has only been \$2 million. A resolution declaring a funding emergency had been prepared and distributed to members. Discussion ensued on whether the resolution was formal enough and strong enough to critically define the situation. Board members decided it should be more strongly worded. It should then be sent to all elected officials, and especially the Governor. It was also suggested that a meeting should be arranged with the editorial board of the Times and Post Tribune newspapers. Board member John DeMeo suggested we should just send it to the Governor and let him distribute it if necessary. Fellow board members disagreed and thought it should be sent to as many as we can. Board member Arlene Colvin added that we probably have not been as forceful as we should have been so by passing this resolution, it will take the urgency of the funding situation up another notch. Curt Vosti made a motion that the Commission is declaring a funding emergency and directed staff to re-draft the resolution immediately with advice from legal counsel and Legislative Committee and send out; motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously.

**Recreational Development Committee** – Discussion was held with Committee Chairman Curt Vosti and Board members regarding the trail development in Hammond/Highland. It was strongly felt that trail alignment would increase the enjoyment of the citizens walking the trail. Bob Huffman added that we will have to watch the re-alignment that INDOT does in this area. Mr. Vosti added that he was on vacation when the COE wanted to meet to talk recreation but he would still like to meet sometime with the COE in the near future.

**Marina Committee** – Committee Chairman Bill Tanke referred to the request letter in the packet addressed to the city of Portage for the October marina bond payment due. Mr. Tanke proceeded to make a motion to approve payment of the bond payment in the amount of \$28,643.84; motion seconded by John DeMeo; motion passed unanimously.

**Finance Committee** – Committee Chairperson Arlene Colvin referred to the monthly financial status sheet and claims in the amount of \$59,637.83. She proceeded to make a motion to approve the financial status sheet and the August claims; motion seconded by Bill Tanke; motion passed unanimously. Ms. Colvin further stated that the Finance Committee met on August 29<sup>th</sup>. Several items were discussed, i.e. funding, budget for the upcoming new year, contractors renewal, etc. She would like contractors request by November 1<sup>st</sup>. Also, she announced that we probably will have several budget transfers at the next meeting.

**Minority Contracting Committee** – In Committee Chairman Marion Williams' absence, Mr. Gardner stated that members received the monthly minority participation updates from the Griffith COE office. These are reports that are submitted by current contractors; i.e. Dyer Construction and Dillion Construction.

**Chairman's Report** – Chairman Emerson Delaney addressed John DeMeo, outgoing Commission member who is moving to Florida and has been a Commission member for 20 years. Since Mr. DeMeo has already been presented with a Sagamore of the Wabash award when he retired from Bethlehem, Mr. Delaney presented him with a Sagamore of the Little Cal award. He was thanked for his many years of dedicated loyal service and will be missed by all.

**Other Business** – There was none.

**Statements to the Board** – There was none.

There being no further business, the next regular Commission meeting was scheduled for **6:00 p.m. Thursday, October 5, 2000.**

/sjm