

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HELD AT 6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, JULY 5, 2001
AT THE COMMISSION OFFICE
6100 SOUTHPORT ROAD
PORTAGE, INDIANA**

Chairman William Tanke called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. Eight (8) Commissioners were present. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Quorum was declared and guests were recognized.

Development Commissioners:

George Carlson
John Mroczkowski
Mark Reshkin
William Tanke
Steve Davis
Bob Huffman
Marion Williams
Arlene Colvin

Visitors:

Bill Petrities – Highland resident
Jomary Crary – IDNR, Div. of Water
Jeff Lowder – IDNR, Div. of Water.
Jim Flora – R.W. ARMSTRONG CO.
Betty K. Blossey – Hobart Marsh, Sierra Club
Howard Anderson - Fur Takers of America
Don Ewoldt - LEL
Sandy O'Brien - Hobart
Louise Karwowski – Sierra Club
Uysula Cano – Sierra Club

Staff:

Dan Gardner
Sandy Mordus
Jim Pokrajac
Judy Vamos
Lou Casale

Commissioner George Carlson made a motion to approve the minutes of May 31, 2001; motion seconded by bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously.

Chairman's Report – Chairman Tanke remembered the recent passing of Commissioner Charles Agnew with a few special thoughts and a moment of silence. He thanked Vice Chairman Bob Huffman with filling in for him in saying a few words at the groundbreaking ceremony of the Charles Agnew Handicapped Accessible Park held on June 7th. Accompanying Mr. Huffman at the ceremony were Commissioners George Carlson, Steve Davis, and Curt Vosti. The ceremony was well attended and a copy of the program was given to all commissioners.

Mr. Tanke reported that a letter has been sent to the Governor's office notifying them of the vacancy that now exists on the Development Commission.

Mr. Tanke also reported on the meeting held at the Congressman's local office with Mark Lopez and the COE on June 1st. Several areas of concern were identified that require some action so we will not be in panic mode at the next biennium session, like we experienced this biennium session.

Chairman Tanke then appointed Arlene Colvin as Chairman of the Land Acquisition/Management Committee.

Executive Director's Report - Mr. Gardner referred to the letter in the packet addressed to the Commission from Col. Mark Roncoli. informing us that the COE had received a Department of Defense 2001 Value Engineering Achievement Top Installation Award at an awards ceremony held at the Pentagon. He commended Mr. Gardner and Jim Pokrajac as their efforts were instrumental in the Chicago District winning this award. Mr. Gardner presented a copy of the awards certificate to Mr. Pokrajac, as well as Jim Flora from R. W. Armstrong Company who has a contract with us to do engineering review, and Commissioner Bob Huffman, as Chairman of the Engineering Committee. Chairman Tanke added that the recognition of their work was well deserved.

Mr. Gardner referred to the letter from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearing the Commission's post authorization change for submission to Congress. The letter cautions against any further increases.

Mr. Gardner also mentioned that he attended the dedication ceremony honoring the Coffee Creek Watershed Preserve at Coffee Creek Center in Chesterton held on June 8th. Governor O'Bannon addressed the audience, as did several other keynote speakers. The event was very well attended and the park itself is first class.

Land Acquisition/Management Committee – Committee Chairman Arlene Colvin gave the report. She proceeded to make a motion for possible condemnations for Burr Street Betterment Levee Phase 2 for the following DC numbers: DC69, 69-A, 69-B, 70-A, 575-A, 577, 582/583, 584, 597, 598-A, 600, 601 and 603; motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Colvin then made a motion authorizing a lump sum of \$6,000 to C&H Mowing for the mowing of completed levee segments; motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Colvin then made a motion approving the 2 signs at I80/94 & I-65 for LAMAR at an increase of \$1200 to \$3300; motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously. It was decided that on the other 2 possible signs, Arlene would check on the city's position and applicable ordinances and plans and report back at the next meeting.

Boy Scout Troop #280 held their third annual Conservation project on June 1-3 which included some clean-up and construction of a wood chip trail on top of the levee between Columbia & Northcote in Hammond.

Staff met with the Kim Lyles, Gary Park Superintendent and John Lowe, Golf Pro at Gleason Park, to discuss the monies available to them for the construction of a Gleason Park Driving Range. We have \$394,540 earmarked for them from the appraised value of the property easements we have received from the city of Gary and the Gary Parks & Recreation Dept. They will begin to access some of that money as they proceed forward in the development of a driving range, now that they have received a permit.

Ms. Colvin then made a motion approving a resolution authorizing the signing of closing documents of real estate properties by Attorney Lou Casale and Land Acquisition Agent Judy Vamos; motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously.

Project Engineering Committee – Committee Chairman Bob Huffman gave the engineering report. He reported that a meeting was held on June 6th to review & discuss utility drainage and coordination for Stage VIII.

A technical review meeting with the COE was held in Chicago on June 12th in which Dan Gardner, Jim Pokrajac and Jim Flora attended.

A meeting was held on June 14th with the town of Highland, INDOT, and North Township to review drainage concerns in Stage V-2. (A possibility of a partnership is being looked into with Highland, INDOT, & North Township).

A utility coordination meeting was held on June 20th to review the status of all west reach utilities and their tracking.

Substantial completion has been done for the East Reach Remediation area and the inspection is anticipated in late July.

The completion of the Burr Street Phase 1 project is anticipated around July 10, 2001.

Commissioner Mark Reshkin stated he had attended a workshop regarding storm water management in which it appeared more than just communities were present. He asked staff to see if the Development Commission has any responsibility in this Phase 2 drainage (do we have any responsibility to participate for assurance of clean water).

Legislative Committee – Committee Chairman George Carlson referred to Mr. Gardner to update the Board members on our request to be on the agenda for a partial drawdown of the \$5.5 million appropriated to us. Mr. Gardner has talked to Dan Novreske, State Deputy Budget Director, in this regard. Although we have the \$5.5 million appropriated to us, we now have to have approval to draw on it. He referred to the letter to Betty Cockrum asking to be placed on the July agenda for \$3 million approval to draw on. Although the Governor has put a freeze on Build IN Funds, we have been told that it does not apply to us. The State Budget Agency is meeting July 25-26-27 and it is imperative that we be placed on that agenda. Existing funds are nearly depleted. Congressman Visclosky has secured \$8.8 million in Federal funding for the project. George Carlson made a motion to send the letter of request to Betty Cockrum, State Budget Agency Director; motion seconded by Arlene Colvin; motion passed unanimously. Mr. Gardner mentioned that community participation to donate lands could speed up the project timetable.

Attorney Casale presented a draft of a third party agreement he has drafted in regard to mitigation properties that must be acquired. We will have to enter into an agreement with a third party. This is a major step in moving forward. The Commission has come under criticism for not moving fast enough on the mitigation issue but Mr. Gardner assured everyone we are not trying to avoid it, we just have had no money to pursue it. The COE will be reviewing the agreement at the same time we are. Mr. Gardner also noted that our letter of budget release included a commitment to begin mitigation land acquisition at Hobart Marsh as specified by the IDNR.

Recreational Development Committee – In Committee Chairman Curt Vosti's absence, Jim Pokrajac gave the report. He reported that he wrote a letter to the city of Gary about trail re-alignment from Broadway to Grant. We have not received a response from them yet. A follow-up letter will be sent out to them.

Field meetings were held with the towns of Griffith and Highland to discuss trail alignments. Griffith has an 80' easement that we should be able to relocate our trail on. Highland wants us to hug the west right-of-way line of Cline Avenue by the Cline Avenue Baptist Church.

Mr. Pokrajac also reported that in discussions with EJ&E, they have concerns about the recreational trail crossings over their railroads. They will be sending us a letter listing out their concerns and what they will request from us. It is feared that working with the railroads will be very expensive.

Marina Committee – Committee Chairman Bill Tanke stated that he plans to set up a meeting with the Mayor of Portage and John Smolnar, head of the Portage Port Authority. Discussion needs to happen to devise a way to build out the 100 marina slips required yet. Mr. Tanke referred to the permit granted to the City for approval to dredge at the mouth of the marina in Portage.

Finance Committee – In Treasurer Curt Vosti's absence, Mr. Gardner gave the monthly financial status report, and presented the claims for approval. George Carlson made a motion to approve the financial status report and claims sheet totaling \$416,983.26; motion seconded by Arlene Colvin; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Gardner then presented a revised 2001 budget. The original budget was only for 6 months because we could not predict the amount of funding the General Assembly would provide in the 2001-03 State budget. A portion of the 2001-03 budget would be needed for the second half of this calendar year, so the Commission passed a 6-month budget with the remaining 6 months to be added once the general Assembly was concluded. In anticipation of receiving \$3 million from the State budget Agency for drawdown, the budget was revised to reflect this new amount. Mr. Gardner explained the budget and the revised figures it contains. George Carlson made a motion to approve the revised budget for 2001; motion seconded by John Mroczkowski; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Carlson then made a motion to authorize staff to transfer \$316,000 from a CD note into the Land Acquisition account, if needed; motion seconded by Marion Williams; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Carlson then ratified action previously taken when the transfer of some partial escrow interest money of \$33,975.66 was transferred to the Administrative account; motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Carlson then made a motion authorizing staff to borrow money from the Gary Parks & Recreation money market account in the amount of \$66,000 to be paid to the COE as part of our local cash contribution escrow money. The money will be paid back into the account as soon as new money is received from the State. Motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously.

Minority Contracting Committee – Committee Chairman Marion Williams reported that monthly minority reports continue to be coming in and they are always available to anyone. Mr. Pokrajac added that as contracts are completed, we receive a final tabulation of minority participation reports from the COE.

Other Business – There was none.

Statements to the Board – Sandy O'Brien stated she was glad to see that there is progress being made on the mitigation in the Hobart Marsh area.

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, August 2, 2001.