

MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HELD AT 6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, February 6, 2003
6100 SOUTHPORT ROAD
PORTAGE, INDIANA

Chairperson Arlene Colvin called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. Nine (9) commissioners were present. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Guests were recognized.

Development Commissioners:

Charlie Ray
Robert Huffman
Mark Reshkin
George Carlson
Steve Davis
Curt Vosti
Emerson Delaney
John Mroczkowski
Arlene Colvin

Visitors:

Jim Flora – R.W.Armstrong Company
Kelsee Waggoner – Congressman's Office
Imad Samara - COE
Bill Petrites – Highland resident
Sandy O'Brien - Hobart
Otho Lyles – Gary Sanitary District

Staff:

Dan Gardner
Sandy Mordus
Lou Casale
Jim Pokrajac
Judy Vamos

The minutes of the January 8 meeting was approved by a motion from George Carlson; motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson's Report – Chairperson Arlene Colvin introduced the Commission's new member, Charlie Ray, appointed by the Porter County Commissioners to replace William Tanke. He has been appointed to a 4-year term on the Commission.

- Ms. Colvin referred to the phone/committee sheet distributed to each member. If there are any corrections or additions, please let staff know.

Executive Director's Report – Executive Director Dan Gardner reported that he, along with Commissioner George Carlson, attended a Highland Town Board meeting on January 13. He referred to a town resolution that the Town Board adopted at the meeting in support of state funding that they have forwarded to numerous government entities. The Board members were very appreciative of the town's efforts in taking the initiative and time to do this. Mr. Gardner went on to say that he had met Mr. Joe Wszolek, a local real estate man on the Highland Plan Commission. The Northwest Indiana realtors also made the Little Calumet River project funding an issue that they took to Indianapolis as part of their slate.

- Mr. Gardner referred to a COE letter from Roy Deda, Deputy for Project Management at the Chicago District, in which he used strong language in regard to the Commission's portion of state funding and expressed great concern if the Commission cannot meet its project cost share, that the project could be put on hold.

- Mr. Gardner stated that he had written a letter to Representative Earl Harris on February 4, 2003 and other legislators serving on pertinent committees, attaching the COE letter, to make them aware of the seriousness of the situation. Mr. Gardner predicts that we probably will not know until the very end if and how much funding is there for the Commission.

- Dr. Reshkin asked for a list of talking points regarding the Commission that he feels would be helpful in talking with legislators/elected officials. Staff will develop such a list and mail it out to Board members.

- Commissioner Bob Huffman stated that NIRPC has a Transportation Enhancement Committee, funded with INDOT funds, which covers the recreation trails in northwest IN. Considering our project will have about 10 miles of trails when completed, Mr. Huffman asked if he could be officially appointed to attend these meetings. He has attended some of them but would like to be able to attend on behalf of the Commission. Commissioner Mark Reshkin made a motion appointing Mr. Huffman as the Commission's representative to attend these meetings; motion seconded by Emerson Delaney, motion passed unanimously. Mr. Gardner will write a letter to NIRPC transportation planner, John Chiabai, naming Mr. Huffman as the Commission's representative.

Land Acquisition/Land Management Committee – Committee Chair Arlene Colvin gave the report. She proceeded to make a motion authorizing condemnation on DC1033 where we need a temporary work area easement; motion seconded by Mark Reshkin; motion passed unanimously.

- Attorney Casale referred to a copy of an agreement and resolution prepared for the Hammond Sanitary District addressing the operation and maintenance of the S.E. Hessville Pump Station. Mr. Huffman made a motion authorizing the Commission to adopt Resolution 03-01, authorizing the Commission to enter into the agreement with HSD.
- A short O&M meeting was held prior to the Work Study Session in which a date was selected for the Committee to meet and address O&M topics.
- Staff has been working with the Gary Redevelopment Commission on the demolition of the 3 structures in the Black Oak area that the Commission owns. The Commission has no insurance to cover demolition.

Environmental Committee – Committee Chairman Mark Reshkin gave an update on the Hobart Marsh mitigation properties. He reported that some offers have been made and some are in the process of being made. Staff is proceeding to acquire the properties. We hope to receive a counter offer on some properties.

Legislative Committee – Committee Chairman George Carlson gave the legislative report. He referred to the letter that Mayor Scott King sent to Representative Earl Harris, seeking his help in securing funds for the project to continue.

- Mr. Carlson also referred to the news article in the agenda packet in which the Governor has proposed a restrained budget. The proposed budget will still spend more than it takes in but it provides a balanced budget with one time budget transfers.
- Mr. Carlson also referred to a letter to Representative John Aguilera transmitting some project information to him and asking him for his support.
- Mr. Carlson also reported that Mr. Gardner went to Indianapolis on January 22. He had the opportunity to talk to several legislators. All commented that this State budget promised to be the most difficult to write in many years.

Project Engineering Committee – Committee Chairman Bob Huffman gave the engineering report. He reported that a meeting was held on January 10 with the town of Highland and North Township regarding the proposed INDOT pump station in Highland near Tri-State. Both Highland and North Township have expressed concern with the proposed delay of construction north from Ridge Road to the Little Calumet River until the levee construction is completed. Staff will send a letter to INDOT transmitting those concerns.

- Mr. Huffman reported that a meeting was held with the COE and the town of Highland on February 6 to do final review of design of Stage VI, between Kennedy & Cline, in which North Grace Street Pump Station will be added to this contract
- A letter was sent to the city of Hammond on February 5 requesting that the Commission be given an opportunity to discuss construction plans with anyone proposing construction in our proposed work limits along the river.
- Mr. Huffman talked about an oil spill near our Burr Street pump station on January 16. Gary Sanitary District engaged a firm to do the clean-up and IDEM has an ongoing investigation to see who was responsible.
- Regarding the termination of Stage VIII contract, Imad Samara will furnish requested information to us as soon as it is available.
- Mr. Huffman questioned the COE progress report in which problems were mentioned with Overstreet Construction. Staff will obtain a little more information and pass onto Mr. Huffman.

- Mr. Huffman referred back to the minutes where it was stated under "Other Issues" that he was unable to download the COE project maps on their web site. For clarification purposes, he said that he was able to download them but they just took a very long time to do so.

Recreation Committee – Committee Chairman Emerson Delaney stated that no recreation construction is going on at this time. Everything is done that had to be done.

Marina Committee – Dan Gardner gave the marina report. He referred to the letter from the attorney in the packet in which he states that the City would not accept the conditions placed in the Commission's resolution presented to them. We are hopeful that we can get back together and work things out with the City for next year's boating season. Although the Mayor expressed disappointment in our conditions, he did say he would be willing to work again with us.

- Steve Davis added that John Smolar, Portage Port Authority, had called him to say that the lake level was so low that boat trailers would drop off at the end; and inquired whether there was a way to make the ramp longer using some grant money. Mr. Davis had several people investigating and found that there may be some money available if the marina were certified as handicapped accessible. Mark Reshkin added that we, as a Commission, need to move cautiously and not lose our main focus on our real purpose – being a flood control project and not a recreation project.

Finance Committee – Dan Gardner gave the financial report. He stated that the Treasurer was going to ask re-consideration of the NIRPC contract. Mr. Gardner presented the contract for 2003 administrative services. A motion was made by George Carlson to enter into the contract with NIRPC; motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously.

- Mr. Gardner presented the year end financial status sheet and the claims for approval. Bob Huffman made a motion to accept the claims as presented; motion seconded by Mark Reshkin; motion passed unanimously. It was stated that approval of the \$691 for CNA insurance would be paid out of LEL funds.

Policy Committee – Committee Chairman George Carlson stated there was no committee report at this time.

Public Relations Committee – In Committee Chairman Bob Marszalek's absence, there was no committee report at this time.

Other Issues – Mr. Gardner referred to an article in the Chesterton Tribune in which a study was performed that shows Indiana will need billions of dollars to clean up sewer problems in the state at the same time the state is facing a huge budget deficit.

- Discussion took place that the usual meeting date of the first Thursday of the month may be looked at to be changed to accommodate Commissioner John Mroczkowski, who has a work conflict with the date.
- There has been no communication from the Lake County Commissioners' Office in regard to the letter sent to them regarding attendance of their appointee.

Statements from the Floor – There were none.

The next scheduled meeting was scheduled for **6:00 p.m. Thursday, March 6, 2003.**