

MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HELD AT 6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 2003
6100 SOUTHPORT ROAD
PORTAGE, INDIANA

Chairperson Arlene Colvin called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. Eight (8) Commissioners were present. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Guests were recognized.

Development Commissioners:

Arlene Colvin
Robert Huffman
Mark Reshkin
George Carlson
Steve Davis
Mark Lopez
Emerson Delaney
Curt Vosti

Visitors:

Sean Fahey - IDNR
Kelsee Waggoner - Congressman's Office
Imad Samara - COE
Bill Petrites - Highland resident
Sandy O'Brien - Hobart
Jim Flora - R. W. Armstrong Company
Spike Peller - GSWMD/GSD
Steve Enger - Munster resident
Kerry Keith - SEH

Staff:

Dan Gardner
Sandy Mordus
Lou Casale
Jim Pokrajac
Judy Vamos

The minutes of the May 1, 2003 meeting were approved by a motion from George Carlson; motion seconded by Emerson Delaney; motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson's Report - Chairperson Arlene Colvin referred to the updated 2003 Committees/phone list distributed to members. If there are any changes, get them to Sandy.

- Ms. Colvin informed the Board members that Colonel Mark Roncoli will be leaving the Chicago District, Corps of Engineers. A Change of Command Ceremony will be held in Chicago on July 9. His replacement will be Colonel Gary Johnston.

Executive Director's Report - Executive Director Dan Gardner referred to a Hammond Times news article regarding the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District's Tunnel and Reservoir Plan and the Corps of Engineers' Deep Tunnel work. Mr. Gardner was quoted in the article and discussion was held on how our flood control project ties in with Illinois' project.

- Mr. Gardner then referred to a Project Budget/Timetable sheet prepared by staff. Discussion ensued on how far the appropriated \$7 million will take us into the project construction. The schedule showed the monies being spent in the west reach (Stage VI-1 which is from Cline to Kennedy on the north and Kennedy to Liable on the south; Stage VI-2 which is from Liable to Cline on the south; Stage V-2B which is from Indianapolis Blvd. to Northcote; mitigation commitment; and the Commission's 7% local cash contribution). We still have the issue of Burr Street Phase 2 construction that needs to be obligated before we can begin construction in the west reach. We are actively pursuing Stage VI-1 which has an acquisition deadline of October 2003. The construction of the west reach pump stations was not addressed in the schedule but they could be pursued any time.

- Mr. Gardner is currently documenting a need for \$4 million to be allocated to the Commission for drawdown.

- Mr. Gardner informed the Board members that Representative Earl Harris will be in the office on Friday morning to discuss his help in getting us on the agenda for the State Budget hearing in August they will also try to set up a meeting

with Gary Mayor King to discuss Burr Street completion. Monies for Burr Street completion were not specifically addressed in the appropriation.

- Land Acquisition Agent Judy Vamos gave the Board members an overview of what the first area of west reach levee construction (Stage VI Phase 1) consisted of. There are a total of 52 easement acquisitions (15 residential, 2 INDOT, 19 municipal, and 16 commercial) and 37 utility relocations. Much of the work has been completed and staff is working toward the COE deadline date of October of this year. Ms. Vamos added that all 15 residential easements have been acquired. As long as funding is in place, staff is hopeful of meeting that deadline.
- Bob Huffman inquired whether a trail connection would be constructed in Stage V-2B (Indianapolis to Northcote). Jim Pokrajac replied that it would not be. Imad Samara added that the trail connection would not come until Stage V Ph.3.
- Mark Lopez inquired about the municipalities donating the needed land that is in their name. Mr. Gardner replied that we are hopeful that the municipality would donate these properties because it would save not only time and money, but also show the state legislators that the local communities are supportive and are participating in the project, and are anxious to move forward. Mr. Gardner added that appraisals still have to be completed.
- Mr. Gardner informed the Board members that he has talked to Laurie Mauldin of INDOT regarding bridge credits. She would be willing to meet with Mr. Gardner and Imad Samara in Indianapolis to discuss this issue. He will set up a conference telephone call between pertinent parties for discussion before traveling to Indianapolis.

Land Acquisition/Land Management Committee – Committee Chairperson Arlene Colvin gave the report. Mr. Carlson made a motion to condemn DC1015 as a last resort if needed; motion seconded by Mark Reshkin; motion passed unanimously.

- Ms. Colvin explained that a ratification of use of \$5,156.13 of insurance money and \$2,881.37 of O&M funds was necessary for payment of the rental house repairs. Mr. Carlson proceeded to make that in the form of a motion; motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously. Mr. Pokrajac added that the detailed sequence appears in the Land Management Report. Mr. Gardner added that the house needed to be brought up to code and had also received extensive damage after the pipes had burst. The house could not be rented or sold until some work was done and it needed to be done quickly.
- Discussion ensued on the sign that will be ordered for the Charles Agnew Handicapped Accessible Park. Board members were asked to review the proposed sign and let staff know if they think any changes should be made.
- Ms. Colvin reminded members about the Boy Scouts conducting their "River Conservation Project" on Saturday at Riley Elementary School in Hammond. The Commission is supplying pizzas for the boy scouts and any member wanting to stop by and join them for pizza at noon is welcome.

Operation & Maintenance Committee – Committee Chairman Bob Huffman gave the O&M report. He reported that the 8 outstanding issues with GSD still remain to be addressed by the COE. Once the COE has adequately addressed these issues, a meeting will be scheduled with GSD. A conference call was held with the COE on May 6 to discuss these issues.

- Mr. Huffman referred to a quote we received from South Shore Marina in the amount of \$562.28 to repair the observation deck on the south levee between Grant and Harrison. An agreement will be signed.
- Mr. Huffman reported that an O&M committee meeting will be scheduled before the next Board meeting.

Environmental Committee – Committee Chairman Mark Reshkin reported that the Commission is making progress in the Hobart Marsh area. It does appear that some acreage may be available to us. Staff and TPL continue to work at it.

- Mr. Reshkin stated that he has sent a letter to LEL requesting a meeting. No date has been set yet.
- Bob Huffman inquired about the 89 acres at Carlson OxBow Park. Commissioner Vosti answered that his Park Board has not met yet but he will make it an agenda item when they do meet.

Legislative Committee – Committee Chairman George Carlson gave the legislative report. He referred to a sample letter in the packet that was written to the State legislators thanking them for their support of the Commission's \$7 million budget request.

- Mr. Gardner has already spoke on the funding appropriation of \$7 million and the schedule that staff has put together to see how far that amount of money will take us into the west reach. He reiterated that Representative Earl Harris will be here tomorrow morning and will meet with Mr. Gardner to discuss funding of Burr Street completion and how he can assist us in appearing on the August agenda of the State Budget Committee. After Mr. Gardner meets with Rep. Harris, he will need to meet with Mayor King. He will keep Board members informed.

Project Engineering Committee – Committee Chairman Bob Huffman gave the engineering report. He reported that a meeting was held on May 28 with INDOT, town of Highland, North Township, and the Commission regarding the pump station to be built by INDOT south of Tri State on Indianapolis Blvd. in Highland. Before INDOT completes their final design for this pump station, they are waiting for letters of commitment from Highland and North Township. Mr. Huffman also stated that the pump station will be built at the same time the lowering of the bridge on Indianapolis Blvd will happen, which is during the 2004 construction season.

- Mr. Huffman reported that Stage V Phase 2 will be done in 2 separate contracts. Stage V-2A would be from Kennedy Ave. to Indianapolis Blvd. on both sides of the river (and excluding Wicker Park Manor) and Stage V-2B would be from Indianapolis Blvd. to Northcote (excluding Woodmar Country Club). It was reported that Stage V-2B could be pursued right away and then the recreation facilities would all tie in and complete the line of protection for the INDOT pump station.

- Mr. Huffman referred to the proposed cantilevered walkway at Kennedy Avenue Bridge. The Lake County Highway Dept. has met internally with their engineering firm for discussion on their rebuilding the bridge deck. The COE may have to modify the current proposed design to assure that the walkway would not have to be demolished due to structural changes that would have to be done during bridge reconstruction.

- Mr. Huffman reported that we have contracted with NIES Engineering to facilitate the Highland utility relocations.
- Mr. Huffman proceeded to inform the Board members that he passed some comments onto the Griffith COE office regarding some safety concerns at the Baring Avenue pump station that were voiced at a Board of Public Projects meeting in Munster. Some of those safety concerns have since been addressed.

Recreation Committee – Committee Chairman Emerson Delaney referred to the proposed sign for the Charles Agnew Handicapped Park at River Forest School Elementary School. He inquired what kind of material would be used for the sign. He also asked whether a photo would be appropriate. Mr. Vosti added that capital letters should be used in the descriptive paragraph describing Mr. Agnew. Staff will pass information on regarding sign changes.

Marina Committee – Committee Chairman Emerson Delaney reported he recently visited the marina site and, although the water may be a little low, it looked good. All the local marinas have a waiting list, and Portage Public Marina is no exception. Mr. Gardner added that the city of Whiting wants to pursue an addition of a marina in their city. Mr. Vosti added that, although he knows that the marina is an obligation we have with the COE, the flood control project is still our first concern.

Finance Committee – Committee Chairman Curt Vosti gave the financial report. He referred to and made a motion to approve the financial status sheet and the claims for the month of May totaling \$73,364.07; motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously.

- Mr. Vosti informed the members that a Finance committee meeting was held yesterday. He referred to the 6 month budget that was passed at the beginning of the year. Staff has proposed a 9 month budget. It increases the Administrative budget to \$138,750 (from \$92,500); in Land Acquisition budget, it was proposed that the remaining monies on hand be included as a single line item in the amount of \$664,224. It would be anticipated to carry us through the next 3 months until the new monies are made available to us. Mr. Gardner explained the itemized budget lines.

Mr. Lopez inquired how this budget compares to the funding schedule proposed earlier by staff. Mr. Gardner replied that it addresses only the money we actually have on hand to draw upon now. Discussion was held on whether the Land Acquisition budget should be changed to reflect less money. When the budget was originally prepared, the actual dollars we had on hand were reflected at that time and, although some of those dollars have been spent, the actual remaining dollars should not be reflected in a change to the budget. It was agreed upon to adopt the Administrative budget as presented with the increase of \$46,250 for a total of \$138,750 and it was agreed upon to leave the Land Acquisition budget at the original amount of \$1,013,121 to be shown as a lump sum rather than broken down into budget codes. Mr. Vosti made a motion to reflect this change; motion seconded by Mark Lopez; motion passed unanimously. Summed up, only the Administrative budget showed an authorization to spend to a higher amount.

- Kelsee Waggoner, Congressman Visclosky's office, asked where the monies received from the Berkheimer sale were reflected. Mr. Gardner replied that since it was originally lease income, it was put into the Administrative budget as an income but proceeded to say that it would not be spent for anything without Board approval.

- Mr. Vosti stated that he anticipates another Finance meeting before the July Board meeting. He feels the possibility of a conservancy district being established and the revived engineering contract on Stage VIII are 2 issues that need further discussion.

- Mr. Vosti proceeded to make a motion to approve the payment of \$18,546.35 out of O&M funds for commercial general liability insurance renewal for one year; motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously. Mr. Lopez inquired whether we have solicited for bids for general liability coverage. Attorney Casale replied that it is very hard to obtain this type of insurance and we are lucky that we have someone who will provide it to us. Our last insurance carrier dropped us when there was a claim and the Commission's insurance carrier had a difficult time finding an underwriter for us.

- Mr. Vosti proceeded to make a motion to approve \$24.91 out of O&M funds to pay Indiana American Water Company for the Gerry Street rental house; motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously.

- Mr. Vosti proceeded to make a motion to approve \$890 out of O&M funds for South Shore Marina for the removal of a beaver lodge and dam located near Chase Street and the river; motion seconded by Emerson Delaney; motion passed unanimously. (Mr. Pokrajac added that this should be the last time this would need to be done because that is the area where our in-project mitigation is ongoing).

Policy Committee – Committee Chairman George Carlson referred back to the discussion earlier where Curt Vosti had made a motion about changing the Commission meeting date to the first Wednesday of each month. According to the Bylaws, this requires 2 consecutive meetings with motions to officially change the date. Mr. Carlson proceeded to make a motion to change the meeting date of the Commission to the first Wednesday of each month; motion seconded by Mark Lopez; motion passed unanimously. This means that the July meeting will be held **Wednesday, July 2**. Everyone will be notified, including the news media and interested parties on our mailing list.

Public Relations Committee – Mr. Gardner informed Board members that it has been reported that the State Budget Committee will be meeting in northwest Indiana in August.

Other Issues – Commissioner Emerson Delaney announced that he and Bob Huffman will be biking 35 miles along the South Shore Drive in Chicago on June 15 (for this event, it is the only time Chicago shuts down South Shore Drive). He added that Bob will also have a birthday on that day and will turn 60 years old.

Statements from the Floor – Spike Peller expressed a concern that if the Little Calumet River is ultimately improved to be known as a recreational development and a re-classification of the river is done, it could mean the city of Gary would assume responsibility for assuring water quality and all expenses for that assurance. Discussion ensued that our project is not a water quality project and the treatment of storm water would remain the same. Imad Samara added that IDEM reviewed our proposed project and approved the plans. EPA should not look at it any differently.

The next scheduled meeting was scheduled for **6:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 2, 2003**.