

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION HELD AT 6:00 P.M. WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2014**

Held at

Munster Town Hall, Munster, IN

Chairman William Baker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. An Executive Session/Work Study Session was held prior to the public meeting. There were six (6) Commission members present at roll call. Quorum was declared.

Commissioners:

William Baker, Chairman
Tom Wichlinski
Ray Kasmark
Anthony Broadnax
Tom Gozdecki
Ron McAhron
Debbie Long(present for Ex.Session)

Executive Director:

Dan Repay

Attorney:

Dave Wickland

Staff:

Sandy Mordus

Visitors:

Ruth Mores – Southmoor, Hammond
Roman Sawczak - Dyer
John Beckman – IWLA - PCC
Judy Knapp – Forest Ave, Hammond
Charles Svitko – Munster resident
Fred Baginski – Friends of the Lit Cal
Bridget Bodefelf – Munster
P. Yackanich – Forest, Hammond
Colonel Christopher Drew - USACE
John/Laurie Czulno – Forest Ave, Hmd
Joe Simonetto – Munster Town Council
Bonnie Vavrek – Stateline, Hammond
Sandy O'Brien - Hobart
Eric Wolverton – Town of Schererville
Brian Ralstin – City of Lake Station
Dave Wellman - RDA
T. Cholipski - Munster
Darren Olson – Christopher Burke Eng
Matt Lake – Merrillville Stormwater
District

- Chairman Baker referred to the minutes of the September 10th meeting. Commissioner Broadnax made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Kasmark; motion passed 6-0.

Chairman's Report - Chairman Baker referred to the 2008 flooding pictures that are displayed each month as a reminder as to what happens when a \$275 million man-made structure is not maintained. Through the General Assembly, funds are now in place to address the watershed, which is any water that flows into the Little Calumet River; funds will cover the entire Little Cal watershed. Flooding of the magnitude we experienced in 2008 changed a lot of lives and we need to do everything we can to prevent it from ever happening again. More than 1,400 homes came out of the mandatory floodplain which saves residents \$4 million every year and those are dollars that go back into the community. We will continue to move forward.

Executive Director Dan Repay proceeded to show a power point presentation of pictures he has taken of ongoing projects. They included the exercise drill at State Line; the Grant Street culvert removal; ongoing construction at Gary North that Hasse Construction is working on; closure gate replacement at Burr Street; Munster closure drill at Bernice Road using roughly 1200 sand bags; sink hole off Main Street between Dyer & Schererville.

• **Finance** - Mr. Repay referred to the claims for the month of October. Anthony Broadnax made a motion to approve the October claims in the amount of \$241,157.76; motion seconded by Ray Kasmark. Mr. Repay proceeded to explain some of the claims – the largest claim of \$90,540.90 by Hasse Construction is for the ongoing cost of Gary North Levee Rehabilitation project; Grimmer Construction has finished up the Burr Street levee sluice gate repairs; cost of a new flood gate at Burr Street; final cost of Grant Street culvert removal; partial cost of pump station backup power at Burr, expense incurred for O&M of gage stations. Mr. Repay also stated that the levee segments are currently being mowed as a final mowing that was budgeted. Commissioner Broadnax stated he would like to see some numbers as to how the routine O&M vs. emergency repairs compare. Mr. Repay informed Commissioner Baker that all gages were working. There is nothing final yet as to any new gages being added. Current gage information is available thru the Commission's web site. Chairman Baker asked Mr. Repay to give a background report on providing generator backup power at pump stations. Mr. Repay replied that because power occasionally goes out, we need to secure and protect people if the power goes out at a pump station. The study that Superior Engineering is doing for us will address if it is feasible to incur the cost of a generator for this purpose. Burr Street pump station was chosen because that pump station protects the most houses. The study will be used as a template to look at other stations. Right now, the sump pump at Burr runs constantly; other pump kicks in when needed. After discussion, motion to approve the claims passed 6-0 in a roll call vote.

Executive Director's Report –O&M/Engineering – All items have been covered. Mr. Repay added that the Gary North levee rehabilitation is the largest project we're working on right now. Next month will focus on reports on watershed projects.

Other Issues

- Commissioner Broadnax made a motion to renew the contract to the Lake County Solid Waste District through June 2015 at an amount of \$1,000 per year. This is for about 10 acres of land at 35th & Chase. Motion seconded by Ray Kasmark; motion passed with a 6-0 roll call vote.
- Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion to authorize the Executive Director to enter into a license agreement, with attorney review, with Lake County Commissioners for 1 acre of land for an E-911 tower at no cost to them; motion seconded by Commissioner Broadnax. Mr. Repay stated that they approached him a couple of weeks ago and asked about this location at 35th & Chase in Gary. They will erect the tower at no cost to us. Commissioner McAhron asked if we would part of that system and Mr. Repay replied that we would be. In emergency situations, we use cell phones to communicate to coordinate emergency preparedness. It will help make us more efficient. INDOT is part of the emergency response team so they will have access also. Motion passed 6-0 with a roll call vote.

New Business

- Mr. Repay introduced Matt Lake, Executive Director for the town of Merrillville Stormwater Board and Darren Olson from Christopher Burke Engineering, who gave a presentation of their watershed project. They have submitted an application to the Commission for the funding of the design of a series of flood control improvements in the town of Merrillville, known as the Meadowdale Lateral Flood Control Project. The total cost of the entire proposed project would be anywhere from \$3.9 to \$13.9 million. They would plan to bond out some of the cost. Although a map was presented showing the various stages of construction/development/flood control which could be funded separately,

the reality was that they most likely would request funding from the Commission for each stage of construction. A lengthy discussion was held (presentation can be heard on the audio minutes posted on the Commission's web site, www.littlecalumetriverbasin.org.) After a question/answer period, Commissioner McAhron made a motion to table this request and get a list of additional information they would like to see (i.e. Stormwater District master plan) and within the next couple of months, have a more coherent picture of the project. Items can be coordinated thru the Executive Director; motion seconded by Commissioner Broadnax; motion passed 6-0 with a roll call vote. Chairman Baker added that this is a reason that it is important that the Commission's Advisory Board be formed so they can coordinate some of the requests and make recommendations to the Board.

- Chairman Baker acknowledged Col. Christopher Drew in the audience and thanked him for attending the meeting.

Statements from the Floor

- Laurie Czulno from Forest Avenue in Hammond was present for the tieback levee closure exercise that took place on State Line and it appeared to be a success. She stated that there are still about 20 homes in her area that are still in the floodplain and paying high flood insurance. These houses can't be petitioned to be removed from the floodplain until the Army Corps certifies the tieback and that hasn't happened because of the difference of opinion between the Commission and the Corps on monies owed to the Corps. She pleaded with the Corps that they put aside the monetary difference issue to get this issue resolved. Residents have been patient but patience is running thin. She asked that they work toward this effort and put safety first.

- Paul Daniels from Munster inquired about our overall maintenance program and what systematic inspection plan we have to make sure all areas are protected. Mr. Repay replied that we are constantly trying to eliminate snag points and blockages. We've had Grant Street culverts removed. One area of concern is the railroad tracks by the Visitors Center. It needs constant monitoring. Pumps are checked on a regular basis and we've hired a company that will clean the trash racks once a month. Monthly meetings with municipalities are held to discuss all emergency preparedness issues. All communities report on the functionality of items in their respective area. Gages are monitored during rain events. When a storm event is forecasted, all areas are checked, especially areas of concern that presented problems in the past.

- Sandy O'Brien from Hobart thanked Mr. Repay for giving her an update of the Hobart Marsh mitigation plan. She agreed that it is a good idea to put aside the issue of dollars between the Commission and the Corps and just get the projects finished off. She also stated that she was very impressed with the presentation from Merrillville Stormwater District. She supports upland storage and their plan calls for that. She also stated that some of the excess water in the Merrillville area is because Hobart Marsh mitigation plan is not completed.

There being no further business, the next meeting was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 12th at the Munster Town Hall.

