

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION HELD AT 6:00 P.M. WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 13, 2014**

**Held at  
Munster Town Hall, Munster, IN**

Chairman William Baker called the meeting to order at 6:10 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  
Debbie Long  
Rom McAhron  
Tom Gozdecki  
Dave Castellanos

**Executive Director:**

Dan Repay

**Attorney:**

Dave Wickland

**Staff:**

Sandy Mordus

**Visitors:**

Ruth Mores – Southmoor, Hammond  
Roman Sawczak - Dyer  
Mark Gordish – City of Hammond  
John Beckman – PCC - IWLA  
Allen Smith - Munster  
Fred Baginski – Hammond  
Bridget Bodefled - Munster  
Roy Deda - USACE  
John/Laurie Czulno – Forest Ave, Hmd  
Joe Simonetto – Munster Town Council  
Bonnie Vavrek – Stateline, Hammond  
Sandy O’Brien - Hobart  
Dave Wellman - RDA  
Janet Venecz – Hammond City Council  
Mike Echterling – Friends of the Little Cal  
Leon/Alice Kozlowski – Oakwood, Munster  
Bill Emerson Sr – Hammond City Council  
J. Ahearn – Forest, Hammond  
P. Yackanich – Forest, Hammond

- Chairman Baker referred to the minutes of the July 9th meeting. Commissioner Wichlinski made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Gozdecki; motion passed 6-0.
- Chairman Baker introduced David Castellanos as a new Lake County Commissioners' appointment to the Commission. Commissioner Castellanos stated he was happy to be a new member to the Board and is looking forward to serving Lake County.

**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. Flooding of that magnitude never wants to be seen again so we have to be ready to deal with Mother Nature at any time and do everything we can to insure we never see flooding of that nature again. We are far better prepared than we were in 2008. We have a strategic plan in place and we are doing deferred maintenance and looking at all the tributaries in the watershed and not just the river.

- **Finance** - Mr. Repay referred to the claims for the month of August. Tom Wichlinski made a motion to approve the August claims in the amount of \$357,537.16; motion seconded by Ron McAhron. Mr. Repay proceeded to explain some of the claims. He stated that several projects previously bid out are coming to conclusion. Grimmer Construction has submitted a final claim of \$125,672.15 for State Line tie-back protection; R. A. Oros has submitted a claim for about 90% work completed for the Grant Street culvert removal; C&H Mowing has submitted a claim for the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle mowing in the amount of \$20,262.50

(he is currently doing a 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle mowing); Garcia Engineering is currently doing engineering oversight of several projects, including Belmont sluice gate and the manhole extensions in Gary. Mr. Repay also reported that we have a contractor that will be doing mowing from Hohman to State Line. Because that area is so tight, smaller lawn mowers & hand cutting must be done.

Commissioner Wichlinski asked if we budgeted for 4 mowing cycles. Mr. Repay replied we did but, depending on weather and how fast the grass grows, we may even need a 5<sup>th</sup> cycle. Chairman Baker added that mowing needs to be kept up as it is part of the inspection requirement per the Army Corps. Mr. Repay added that some areas, like Forest Ave area, is a populated area and very steep, making mowing very difficult. That is why we had to hire a small contractor to do this type of mowing. You are literally in people's backyards in some areas and access is very difficult. He also stated that in the next couple of weeks, we will be using Weed Patch to supply weed killer on the rip-rap like last year.

- Commissioner Gozdecki asked about the Garcia claim for Kennedy Avenue FM subsidence. Mr. Repay replied that a small sinkhole was found at Kennedy Ave. that presented a concern for the line of protection. They could not find a cause for it. After filling the hole, it re-surfaced. Highland then dug down and discovered a sanitary line coming from Hammond to Highland that was not shown on the as-builts. Work has done by Highland because of the potential problem to the line of protection. Highland sent their bill to the Army Corps for reimbursement. Commissioner Gozdecki suggested we do the same with the bill we have received from Garcia Engineering, since we essentially should not have been involved. Mr. Repay stated that initially they thought it was our problem, which is why we had engaged Garcia to check it out, but then found out different. He will work with the attorney and send a letter & invoice to the Corps. Roy Deda, from the Army Corps, confirmed that the Corps did receive the bill from Highland.

- Commissioner Wichlinski asked about the claims from Wiltjer Excavating. Mr. Repay replied that the 2 large claims are both for Hart Ditch and are high because they entailed amphibious time to clean the blockages. It is very difficult to get into Hart Ditch. The downed trees on banks have not yet been addressed. Hart Ditch is a non-regulated drain. Regulated drains start at Main Street and go south. Mr. Repay stated that one of the challenges as you cross over Hart Ditch at Main, immediately north, is that there is an 8 ton limit on the bridge. It makes it a real challenge to gain access and clear out trees there. Right now, there is an issue with an 80' tree leaning from the west bank to the east bank that is falling in and creating a dam. That is a problem that is consistent throughout Hart Ditch.

Motion to approve the claims as presented passed with a 6-0 roll call vote.

Executive Director's Report – O&M/Engineering -

Mr. Repay reported the following:

- Gary North levee rehabilitation project was awarded at last meeting to Hasse Construction. They are mobilizing now. This is the last segment to be fixed.
- The levee inspection reports were just received this evening. They will be put on the web site for viewing.
- The high velocity channel permit for Hart Ditch and the sand bar permit at Kennedy Avenue are both still in the permitting process.
- The walk-thru on Columbia Avenue bridge reconstruction took place today.
- Initial tour for the design of a backup generator for the Burr Street Pump took place. There are some stability issues; the contractor has been looking over drawings, checking the pumps, still need to address a few more things; initial assessment will be made. Burr Street Pump 1 was chosen first because this pump has the biggest impact on residents if it goes

out. Eventually, we will pursue the other major gage stations so when power goes out, there would be a backup generator in place.

- Commissioner Godzecki asked how long it has been since we've applied for permits on the high velocity channel and sand bar removal. Mr. Repay replied it has been more than 7-8 months. Issue is that there are multiple jurisdictions that have to approve it and that is the case for both permits. Corps has to review it first, then IDNR and IDEM. Chairman Baker added that after gaining flood insurance relief for communities and putting about \$4 million back into the economy, we need to make sure we do not do anything regulatory to jeopardize the flood insurance relief process.
- Dave Castellanos asked when we award projects, do we have to follow the federal/state requirement of MBE. Mr. Repay replied that we do not but we do use the prevailing wage schedule.

Other Issues/New Business

- There was none.

Statements from the Floor

- Sandy O'Brien from Hobart, asked about the mitigation situation. Mr. Repay stated that the holdup is because the Army Corps and the Commission are in an impasse over additional monies they are requesting. The Corps has to review the Hobart Marsh mitigation plan and because our dollars are off, they are not in a position to review it at this time. The permit is under the Corps' name. It is an ongoing issue that both parties are trying to solve. Until that happens, the mitigation is at a standstill. Roy Deda agreed that we are trying to work through it. The Corps has just recently met with Commission members, with the Colonel, to discuss. Everyone is hoping for a compromise that will resolve the issue. Commissioner McAhron added that, although we were originally hopeful, it does not appear that any mitigation will proceed this year.

There being no further business, the next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>.

