

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

**HELD AT 6:00 p.m., WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2021**

**Location: Virtual Meeting**

Chairman Baker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. There were eight (8) Commission members present at roll call. Quorum was declared.

**Commissioners Present:**

William Baker, Chairman  
Tom Wichlinski, Vice-Chairman  
Tom Gozdecki, Treasurer  
Anthony Broadnax  
Ron Ware  
Dave Castellanos  
Robert Ochi  
Derek Nimetz

**Visitors:**

Virtual Meeting

**Commissioners Absent:**

Levon Whittaker, Secretary

**Executive Director:**

Dan Repay

**Attorney:**

David Wickland

**Staff:**

Jodi Lambert

**Election of Officers –**

Commissioner Ware made a motion to re-elect the current slate of officers for the upcoming year – William Baker, Chairman, Tom Wichlinski, Vice-Chairman, Tom Gozdecki, Treasurer and Levon Whittaker, Secretary; motion seconded by Commissioner Broadnax. A roll-call vote was held, motion passed 8-0.

**Approval of Minutes -**

Commissioner Nimetz made a motion to approve the minutes from January 20, 2021 as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a vote. Motion passed with 8 aye votes.

**Chairman's Report –**

Chairman Baker thanked the Board for the vote of confidence to again serve as Chairman for the upcoming year. As a reminder, USACE inspection reports, minutes and audio recording of our meetings can be found on our website at [www.littlecalriverbasin.org](http://www.littlecalriverbasin.org). The Commission is

tasked with the maintenance of a \$275 million man-made flood control project. There are numerous issues with the original design and decades of deferred maintenance that we are completing. However, this Commission is far better prepared than was in the past and we continue to maintain open communication and work with all communities within the watershed.

**Finance –**

Chairman Baker referred to the February claims in the amount of \$312,258.37. Commissioner Castellanos made a motion to approve the February claims as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Ochi. Mr. Repay explained a few of the claims starting with reimbursements to Municipalities for several Watershed Projects. Payment was made to Merrillville Stormwater Utility in the amounts of \$54,500.00 for the Kaiser Ditch East Tributary Culvert Upgrades Project and \$19,194.50 for the Meadowdale Storage Basin Project. Additionally, The City of Crown Point was reimbursed \$79,808.16 for the Sauerman Woods Drainage Study Project. Grimmer Construction submitted a claim in the amount of \$19,987.08 for repair work on a few pedestrian bridges over the river. \$16,782.75 was paid to Christopher Burke Engineering for continued work on the Griffith Levee Rehab and Interior Drainage Improvements Project. Garcia Consulting Engineers was paid \$13,465.55 for work on the Kennedy Avenue Sandbar Remediation Project.

Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 8-0.

**Executive Director's Report –**

Mr. Repay gave an update on several of the projects:

- Most of our larger projects are currently on break due to the weather. We are still working on some minor tree clearing and beaver dam blockage removals.
- We are in the permitting process on the Burr Street Railroad Closure Project. This project will make this closure permanent and relieve the City of Gary from installation of the closure during high water events.
- We continue to work on the updated Watershed Master Plan with Ciorba Group. The updated plan should be available within the coming months.
- We have completed acquisition of most of the properties needed by the USACE. There are currently 6 parcels that still need to be acquired.
- Four communities, Town of Winfield, City of Crown Point, City of Lake Station and Lake County Parks, will present their watershed applications later during the meeting.

Chairman Baker asked for status on the Kennedy Avenue Sandbar Remediation Project. Mr. Repay stated that we are currently in the permitting process for the project and there is a 50/50 chance the project could go out for bid this construction season.

Chairman Baker also asked if there are any plans to do emergency closure drills with the municipalities within the watershed. Mr. Repay replied that drills have been discussed, with talks of conducting an emergency sand boil exercise.

**Presentations –**

The following Watershed Applications were presented at the meeting. The links to the video presentations are included below:

- Town of Winfield
  - i. Hidden Creek Subdivision Regional Stormwater Project – Phase 1  
Request Amount: \$480,000.00  
Video: [https://youtu.be/Nob\\_OeZYvtY](https://youtu.be/Nob_OeZYvtY)
- City of Crown Point
  - ii. Wastewater Utility Improvements – CSO 004 Parallel Interceptor  
Request Amount: \$320,000  
Video: <https://youtu.be/KRlgxJeLac>
- City of Lake Station
  - iii. Viking Village Pump Station (Construction)  
Request Amount: \$345,000.00  
Video: <https://youtu.be/SZCy-TEB860>
- Lake County Parks
  - iv. GEO Group Property Acquisition in the City of Hobart Nature District  
Request Amount: \$258,000.00  
Video: <https://youtu.be/icr6ivk3q6w>
  - v. Sarros Land Acquisition at future Lake Hills County Park  
Request Amount: \$800,000.00  
Video: <https://youtu.be/icr6ivk3q6w>

Commissioner Broadnax left the meeting during the presentations.

**Other Issues/New Business –**

Commissioner Ware made a motion to approve the City of Hammond Watershed Application for the Calumet Avenue Pedestrian Bridge Project in the amount of \$1,000,000.00 pending legal review and final execution of an Interlocal Agreement; motion seconded by Commissioner Ochi. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll call vote. Motion passed 7-0.

Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion to approve the Lake County Drainage Board/City of Crown Point Watershed Application for the Beaver Dam Ditch Lateral 5 Culvert Replacement Project in the amount of \$126,000.00 pending legal review and final execution of an Interlocal Agreement; motion seconded by Commissioner Wichlinski. Chairman Baker asked if there were any further questions and called for a roll call vote. Motion passed 7-0.

Commissioner Nimetz made a motion to approve the Town of Dyer Watershed Application for the Hart Ditch 2 Stage Ditch Project in the amount of \$600,000.00 pending legal review and final execution of an Interlocal Agreement; motion seconded by Commissioner Ware. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll call vote. Motion passed 7-0.

Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion to approve the City of Crown Point Watershed Application for the Sauerman Woods Drainage Improvements Project in the amount of 60% of the total project cost, not to exceed a total contribution of \$2,600,000.00, pending legal review and final execution of an Interlocal Agreement; motion seconded by Commissioner Ochi. Commissioner Gozdecki stated that the City of Crown Point was initially looking for a greater amount of funding from the Commission. He wishes a successful project for the City of Crown Point and hopes they are able to obtain the additional funding needed for this project. Chairman Baker asked if there were any further questions or comments and called for a roll call vote. Motion passed 7-0.

Commissioner Wichlinski made a motion to defer action on the City of Crown Point Watershed Application for the Silver Hawk Drainage Improvements at Beaver Dam Ditch Project; motion seconded by Commissioner Ware. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll call vote. Motion passed 7-0.

Commissioner Castellanos made a motion to approve an agreement with HWC Engineering for the Spring Park Project in an amount not to exceed \$69,900.00 pending review by attorney and staff; motion seconded by Commissioner Ochi. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll call vote. Motion passed 7-0.

**Statements to the Board** –

Kathy Sipple, Northwest Indiana Regional Resilience, stated that she recently met with Commissioner Broadnax regarding a regional Greenhouse Initiative and looks forward to working with the Commission on this project.

Sandy O'Brien, Hobart, stated her support of the Geo Group Property Acquisition in the City of Hobart Nature District.

There being no further business, the next regular meeting was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 17, 2021.