

MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

HELD AT 6:00 p.m., WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2022

Location: Munster Town Hall

Chairman Baker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. There were seven (7) Commission members present at roll call. Quorum was declared.

Commissioners Present:

William Baker, Chairman
Tom Wichlinski,* Vice Chairman (via Zoom)
Tom Gozdecki, Treasurer
Levon Whittaker, Secretary
Anthony Broadnax* (via Zoom)
Robert Ochi
David Castellanos
Ron Ware
Derek Nimetz

Visitors:

Gary Lee - Gary
Dave Taborski – Gary
Paul Daniels – CCxPD LLC
Andy Raab – Town of Griffith
Dennis Benoit – HRC Engineering
Sandy O'Brien - Hobart

Commissioners Wichlinski and Broadnax arrived after roll-call

Commissioners Absent:

None

Executive Director:

Dan Repay

Attorney:

David Wickland

Staff:

Jodi Lambert

Approval of Minutes -

Commissioner Nimetz made a motion to approve the minutes from December 15, 2021 as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-vote. Motion passed 7-0.

Chairman's Report –

Chairman Baker welcomed everyone to our meeting. The Commission is tasked with the continued 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 in the process of completing. The yellowing pictures from the 2008 flood event are shown at every meeting as a reminder of what can happen if maintenance on a man-made flood control project such as this is neglected. This Commission is far better prepared than was in the past, but there is always room for improvement. We continue to work with Communities within the watershed so that events such as the flood in 2008 does not happen again. The Commission has worked to remove over 1,400 properties from the mandatory flood insurance requirement. This puts 4 million dollars back into the local economy, making this project an economic development project.

Finance –

Chairman Baker referred to the January 2022 claims in the amount of \$104,242.03. Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion to approve the January claims as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Ware.

Mr. Repay explained a few of the claims starting with payment to Walker's Lawn Service in the amount of \$4,440.00 for the final mowings of 2021. Czaplicki-Lopez PLLC submitted a claim of \$3,150.00 for continued work on the Burr Street Flood Control Project. \$7,912.75 was paid to Christopher Burke Engineering for continued work on the Griffith Levee Rehabilitation Project. A meeting to discuss progress on the project is scheduled for early next month. A donation in the amount of \$6,000.00 was made to Wildlife Educational Exhibit of NWI. This organization helps trap beavers throughout the watershed. Finally, \$83.50 was paid to Microbac Laboratories for monthly water testing at the natural spring.

Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 7-0.

Executive Director's Report –

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

- We will be obtaining a structural and geotechnical study of a landside drainage ditch extending from Calhoun to Cline Avenue.
- We will be extending the date to accept proposals to license land at approximately 2400 35th Street, Gary. Sealed proposals will now be opened at the March 16, 2022 meeting.
- There will be a Griffith Levee Rehabilitation Project 50% review meeting on February 2nd.
- We have received all permits needed for the Spring Park Project. This project will be rebid, with bid opening at our February meeting.
- We are finalizing the acquisition of 3 tax sale properties as required by the USACE. The next step will be to order updated title work.
- We have removed some beaver dams along the river that were causing issues. We went out 3 separate times to remove the dams and were able to lower the river level approximately 1.5 feet.

- The Kennedy Avenue Bridge project is expected to bid out late 2023 with construction in 2024.

Presentations –

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

- Town of Griffith
 - Cady Marsh Ditch Diversion Sewer Intake Screen Raker Replacement
Request Amount: \$1,408,000.00
Video: <https://youtu.be/qxu9xGUWoF0>
- Town of Merrillville
 - Kaiser Ditch East Tributary Flood Control Improvement Project
Request Amount: 345,000.00
Video: <https://youtu.be/GDoYRK0m4g8>
- Town of Merrillville
 - Hickory Ridge Apartments Flood Control Improvements
Request Amount: 81,000.00
Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmxeRYXuXrU>
- Town of Dyer
 - Dyer Ditch/Hart Ditch Streambank Stabilization
Request Amount: 81,000.00
Video: <https://youtu.be/J2-xdz9x1Zw>

Other Issues/New Business –

Commissioner Nimetz made a motion to approve Amendment 2 of the USGS standard joint-funding agreement, pending legal review; motion seconded by Commissioner Whittaker. Mr. Repay stated that this amendment adds additional funding solely from the USGS to support obtaining additional hydrologic and water quality data from the natural spring on Chase Street. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll call vote. Motion passed 9-0.

Commissioner Castellanos made a motion to authorize the Executive Director to advertise for bids on the Spring Park project, motion seconded by Commissioner Ware. Mr. Repay stated that we received all necessary permits and this project is ready to be rebid, with bid opening at the February meeting. Chairman Baker

asked if there were any questions and called for a roll call vote. Motion passes 9-0.

Statements to the Board –

Gary Lee, Gary, requested further information on the geotechnical and structural study being conducted on the drainage ditch near his home.

Statements from the Board –

Commissioner Ware thanked the communities for their watershed presentations and thanked the public for continuing to attend our meetings.

Commissioner Whittaker thanked this evening's presenters and also stated that the Commission has an obligation to do the right thing and everyone needs to do their part in building each other up.

Commissioner Gozdecki thanked those for attending the meeting and thanked the presenters for their informative presentations.

Commissioner Nimetz thanked the communities for coming to the meeting and presenting their watershed applications.

Commissioner Castellanos thanked the Board for a fantastic year and stated that we are a diverse board that works well together for the benefit of the communities within the watershed.

Commissioner Wichlinski wished a Happy New Year to everyone and thanked the presenters for their efforts.

Commissioner Broadnax thanked the communities for their watershed application presentations.

Mr. Repay commented on the recent passing of Emil Poppa of R.A. Oros. Emil worked on numerous projects on behalf of the Commission and he will be missed.

There being no further business, the next regular meeting was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, February 16, 2022.