

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

**HELD AT 6:00 p.m., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2020**

**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  
Levon Whittaker, Secretary  
Anthony Broadnax  
Ron Ware  
Dave Castellanos  
Robert Ochi  
Derek Nimetz

**Visitors:**

Virtual Meeting

**Commissioners Absent:**

Tom Gozdecki

**Executive Director:**

Dan Repay

**Attorney:**

David Wickland

**Staff:**

Jodi Lambert

**Approval of Minutes -**

Commissioner Nimetz made a motion to approve the minutes from November 18, 2020 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 –**

Commissioner Baker welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting and thanked those who joined. As a reminder, USACE inspection reports, minutes and audio recordings of our meetings can be found on our website at [www.littlecalriverbasin.org](http://www.littlecalriverbasin.org). The Commission is tasked with the maintenance is 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 December claims in the amount of \$1,495,659.37.

Commissioner Whittaker made a motion to approve the December claims as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Mr. Repay explained a few of the claims starting with payment to Earthwerks in the amount of \$871,200.00 for continued work on the Deep River Rock Riffle Project. This is a \$4.4 million dollar project located in Lake Station that was awarded in July of this year. Several additional claims on this project were paid including \$230,627.00 to Contech Engineered Solutions for final payment on the pedestrian bridge as well as \$41,340.00 to Patrick Engineering for project management. R.A. Oros, Inc. submitted a claim in the amount of \$147,786.65 for work on the Hart Ditch Stabilization Project. This Project is nearly complete with just some punch list items remaining. A few other locations along Hart Ditch have been identified as potential areas to consider for repair in the upcoming years. C & H Mowing submitted a claim in the amount of \$19,000.00 for the final levee mowing of the season. \$10,176.00 was paid to HWC Engineering for design work on the Artesian Spring. Final payment of \$28,216.50 was paid to Hasse Construction for the 80/94 Culver Clearing Project. Great Lakes Electrical Maintenance submitted a \$10,199.00 claim for monthly pump station maintenance. Finally, a pump at the Ironwood Pump Station was pulled and repaired by Gasvoda & Associations for the amount of \$2,295.00.

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:

- The Deep River Rock Riffle Project is progressing well and is at 50% complete. The current contractor schedule calls for a break during the holiday week and depending on the weather, will decide when work will continue. Mr. Repay stated he is pleased with the contractor and how the work is progressing. Additionally, the pedestrian bridge was delivered to the site and the contractor should start placing piles soon.
- HWC Engineering continues design work on Spring Park. This concept will allow better and safe access to the Natural Spring. We were also able to get some ideas from area residents in what they would like to see at the Natural Spring.
- Christopher Burke Engineering has started initial work on the design for the Griffith Levee Rehabilitation Project. This project is scheduled to start in Spring 2022.
- The Hart Ditch/High Velocity Flow Channel is near completion. Since it was late in the season, it was decided to put off paving until Spring of 2021. However, the level of the levee is now where it should be when it was built in 2009.
- The Hart Ditch Stabilization Project are near completion with a final few punch list items remaining before the project can be closed out. The Commission committed \$1 million dollars to the project for the calendar year 2020. We are working with the Lake County Drainage Board to identify critical areas that may need to be addressed in 2021.

- The Commission has received a draft copy of the revised Watershed Study that is being completed by Ciorba Group. Meetings are still being conducted with the various municipalities in the watershed.

Commissioner Wichlinski asked if a timeline or cost estimate was available for the Spring Park Project. Mr. Repay stated that an actual estimate with various options should be available by January 2021. Commissioner Castellanos asked that the site be accessible for senior citizens who access the Natural Spring. Mr. Repay also added that we conducted numerous tests on the water quality at the Natural Spring. Those results will be made available on our website.

Chairman Baker asked for additional information on the Burr Street Railroad Closure Project. Mr. Repay stated that the railroad agreed to do the project in-house and bill us for the work, using our plans. The project should begin in Spring 2021.

**Other Issues/New Business –**

Commissioner Ware made a motion to approve Resolution 2020-06 to Establish Responsible Bidding Practices and Submission Requirements for Submitting Bids to Perform Construction Work. The motion died for lack of a second.

**Statements to the Board –**

Kay Westhues, IU South Bend, asked about water testing for the Natural Spring. She also asked about the possibility of signage in the area. Finally, she stated that she would like to conduct a clean-up event and requested assistance with obtaining a dumpster.

Sandy O'Brien, Hobart, stated that she enjoyed seeing the progress of the Deep River Rock Riffle Project. She also stated her support for the Lake County Parks GEO Land Acquisition Watershed Project.

Laurie Czulno, Hammond, wished all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and hoped to see everyone in person during the next year.

Public comments received via e-mail from:

Cathy Csatari

Christopher Kosovich

Dave Woronecki-Ellis

Barbara Usher Sullivan

are attached and made part of the record.

**Statements from the Board –**

Commissioner Ware wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Commissioner Wichlinski wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and was excited about the projects slated for the coming year.

Commissioner Whittaker wished everyone Happy Holidays. He further stated that the Commission has a lot of work ahead and encouraged the Commission to do all we can to include minority and local business participation.

Commissioner Ochi wished everyone a Happy Holidays and best wishes for the New Year.

Commissioner Nimetz thanked all for attending and stated he was very interested in learning more of the history of the Natural Spring. He wished everyone Happy Holidays.

Commissioner Castellanos wished everyone Happy Holidays and best wishes for the New Year. He was also interested in exploring Commission owned land that could be used or donated to Community Groups to grow food.

Commissioner Broadnax wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. He thanked the public for their interest in the work of the Commission.

There being no further business, the next regular meeting was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, January 20, 2021.

## Dan Repay

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**From:** cathy csatari <csatari\_c@yahoo.com> on behalf of cathy csatari  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 16, 2020 11:45 AM  
**To:** drepay@littlecalumetriverbasin.org  
**Subject:** Acquisition of the GEO property in Hobart

I am writing to ask that the Commission fund the GEO property acquisition. This property would be a great asset to the Hobart Nature District. It would enable a path to be made to the north and south trails and link several natural areas. As envisioned several years ago in the Hobart Marsh Plan, by making this link, visitors to these natural area would be able to spend more time on the trails and access different habitats without the danger of walking in a road with no sidewalk or having to drive from site to site.

Thank you

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android



Jodi Lambert &lt;jlambert@littlecalumetriverbasin.org&gt;

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**For reading at Dec. 16 meeting during appropriate public comment time**

1 message

**Christopher Kosovich** <chris@kosovich.com>

Wed, Dec 16, 2020 at 12:15 PM

To: drepay@littlecalumetriverbasin.org, jlambert@littlecalumetriverbasin.org

Dear Members of the Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission,

I am writing in support of the initiative by Lake County Parks and Recreation to acquire property within the Hobart Marsh Area because it is an important contributing resource within the Little Calumet River Watershed. This proposed initiative is an important resource that enhances quality of life of residents throughout Northwest Indiana through recreation and flood control opportunities.

I am also writing to respectfully request the Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission to financially support the acquisition of this property as part of the original mission of the Commission as it was created in 1980 by the Indiana General Assembly to serve as the required local sponsor for the Little Calumet River, Indiana Flood Control and Recreation Project.

As the project website for "Little Calumet River - Flood Control & Recreation" maintained by the US Army Corps of Engineers notes, "Construction is currently underway for Hobart Marsh and In-Project Mitigation contracts."

The Hobart Marsh Area is clearly an important resource within the Little Calumet River Watershed based upon the decades of work and great financial investment to date.

The property Lake County Parks and Recreation seeks to acquire is centrally located within the Hobart Marsh Area. With the leadership of Lake County Parks, more than half of the funding is currently confirmed and in place for property acquisition and it is critical for the Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission to financially support this initiative in order to protect the investments that have been made to date while enhancing flood protection and recreation for generations to come.

As a lifelong resident of Northwest Indiana and a resident of Hobart living near the proposed property Lake County Park and Recreation seeks to acquire, I know this project not only helps protect me from future flooding by ensuring the land will be available in its natural state, it helps protect my neighbors and those downstream from me. It also helps protect those upstream by making sure the water here stays here on natural ground which enables more water to flow to safety through appropriate channels from existing areas of development.

The fact that the property will be under the stewardship of such a well recognized organization as the Lake County Parks and Recreation is an added benefit to the flood protection that safeguards lives and economic security of so many in our region.

Development in our region is absolutely going to continue growing in the future. The decisions you make today in protecting natural areas as part of greater flood control initiatives is a priceless investment in all of our futures.

Please support Lake County Parks and Recreation in their initiative to acquire the property currently owned by the GEO Group in the Hobart Marsh Area.

Respectfully,

Christopher Kosovich  
3610 West 49th Avenue  
Hobart, IN 46342

[chris@kosovich.com](mailto:chris@kosovich.com)  
219-902-1014

## Dan Repay

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**From:** Dave Woronecki-Ellis <ellisd012@gmail.com> on behalf of Dave Woronecki-Ellis  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 16, 2020 2:18 PM  
**To:** drepay@littlecalumetriverbasin.org  
**Subject:** Comment in Support of the Acquisition of GEO Property in Hobart

To The Little Calumet River Basin Development Commissioners and Executive Director,

Please provide the remaining funds necessary for the purchase of the GEO property on 49th Avenue in Hobart. The property is a valuable, globally rare oak savanna that is a key piece in connecting protected areas and parkland in the Hobart Marsh. It also provides water storage during rain events and spring thaw. These ecosystem services can be improved with a bit of work removing the existing parking area and other fill. As such, it is a quality natural area for hiking and wildlife observation; and it has the capacity to store stormwater runoff and relieve flood pressure on Turkey Creek Lateral 6 and Lake George. Please approve funding to purchase this excellent natural area for the benefit of everyone in the basin.

Thank you,  
Jen and Dave Woronecki-Ellis  
2833 W. 38th Pl  
Hobart, IN 46342  
219-730-7913  
[ellisd012@gmail.com](mailto:ellisd012@gmail.com)

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*"It takes five years for a willing person's mind to change. Have patience with yourself and others when treading in an area protected by a taboo." - Garrett Hardin, Ecologist*

## Dan Repay

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**From:** Barbara Usher Sullivan <barbarausher.sullivan@outlook.com> on behalf of Barbara Usher Sullivan  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 16, 2020 3:42 PM  
**To:** drepay@littlecalumetriverbasin.org  
**Subject:** Little Cal Commission Meeting Concerning 49th Avenue Property

*Dear Director Repay,*

*I'm sorry to be sending this so late and hope you will consider my email for your consideration for tonight's meeting.*

*Please consider providing the needed funds to purchase of the GEO property on 49th Avenue in Hobart. This is an ecologically important property, with valuable, rare oak savanna that is part of the connecting protected areas in the Hobart Marsh. It also provides needed water storage during the spring thaw. It is a beautiful natural area for hiking and watching wildlife.*

*Please approve the final funding to purchase this wonderful natural area for the enjoyment of both local residents and visitors to our area.*

*Thank you,*

*Barbara Usher Sullivan  
4117 Mississippi Street  
Hobart, IN 46342  
(219) 942-0579*