

MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HELD AT 6:00 p.m., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2022
Location: Munster Town Hall

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

Commissioners Present:

William Baker, Chairman
Tom Wichlinski, Vice Chairman
Levon Whittaker, Secretary
Robert Ochi
David Castellanos
Ron Ware

Visitors:

Laurie Czulno – Hammond
Gary Lee – Gary
Dave Taborski – Gary

Commissioners Absent:

Tom Gozdecki, Treasurer
Anthony Broadnax
Derek Nimetz

Executive Director:

Dan Repay

Attorney:

David Wickland

Staff:

Jodi Lambert

Approval of Minutes -

Commissioner Ware made a motion to approve the minutes from March 16, 2022 as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a vote. Motion passed with 6 aye votes.

Chairman's Report -

Chairman Baker thanked the public for attending our meeting. 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. He stated that 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. Despite this, the Commission is far better prepared than we were in the past. We continue to work with Communities within the watershed so that events such as the flood of 2008 does not happen again.

Finance –

Chairman Baker referred to the March 2022 claims in the amount of \$192,270.60. Commissioner Ware made a motion to approve the March claims as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos.

Mr. Repay explained a few of the claims starting with payment to Hasse Construction Company in the amount of \$35,738.76 for flap gate, ladder and grate repairs. These issues were noted in the last USACE inspection report and were repaired prior to the upcoming annual inspections. \$33,621.63 was paid to Norfolk Southern Railway Co. for completion of the Burr Street Railroad Flood Control Closure. This project eliminates another closure within the City of Gary. Finally, Christopher Burke Engineering was paid \$16,269.25 for continued work on the Griffith Levee Rehabilitation Project.

Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 6-0.

Executive Director's Report –

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

- The Commission is currently seeking proposals for a long term license agreement on land off of Grant Street in Gary. We were contacted by our facilitator, the Lake County Economic Alliance stating that they felt they weren't able to answer all the questions of interested parties in a timely manner and thought it was best to delay the opening of the proposals until May 18th. Proposals will now be due in our office at noon on May 18th, 2022.
- Although the bad weather kept us away from the ceremony, we received an award from the Illinois Chapter of the ACEC for the Deep River Rock Riffle Project. Additionally we are in the running for a national award.
- We contracted with a local landscape company to ensure we cut and maintain the grass near the Deep River Rock Riffle Project.
- Commissioner Nimetz invited me to view the first controlled burn at the Hobart Mitigation site since the project was turned over to the IDNR. We are still looking to memorialize a long-term agreement on the best way to maintain the site in accordance with USACE standards.
- The Spring Park Project was awarded to Gariup Construction at our February meeting. We have issued the notice to proceed and will keep you updated on the construction schedule.
- Last month we initiated a clean-up of the area around the Chase St. pedestrian bridge, this has been an area noted for chronic dumping. In late April, several service organizations are going to clean-up this area again as well as near Clark Road. We will be providing dumpsters for the debris and tires.
- The first round of USACE inspections will begin on April 11th and should last all week. This round of inspections includes Hammond, Highland and Munster. I will also take this time to identify any paths that may need sealcoating or repairs to the pavement. The second round of inspections is scheduled for June and will cover all areas east of Cline Avenue.
- Wessler Engineering is continuing to do work on the Beaver Dam Ditch Study. They plan to give a presentation at the April meeting on their findings thus far.

- We continue to work with the Lake County Drainage Board on the Hart Ditch Stabilization Project. Currently, we are waiting for permits, but the project will most likely be bid in the spring and awarded during the summer.
- I participated in a meeting with United Consulting about improving the two inadequate secondary closures located in Hammond and Highland. Additionally, they will look into improving the drainage at Wicker Park when the golf course is used as storage during large rain events. United Consulting had previously designed the INDOT Indianapolis Blvd. Pump Station.
- We will be seeking proposals on a new Flood Control Closure Structure for Munster side of the Northcote Bridge. The Town of Munster currently uses cement blocks, which are time consuming and unsafe. The Town opted to switch to a post and panel closure.
- Once the weather breaks, we will begin clearing and snagging work in Deep River. We plan to continue where we left off a few years ago. Lake Station and the Lake County Surveyor's Office will assist in this project.
- Work progresses on the Griffith Levee Improvements design. Christopher Burke Engineering is addressing some of the changes brought up during the 50% design meeting.
- I met with Hammond Sanitary District officials about the final Pump Station easement required by the USACE. Hammond Sanitary District agreed to convey the easement to us at their next meeting. This leaves 4 remaining parcels to conclude all real estate activities for the project.
- We have engaged Czaplicki and Lopez to determine the possibility of raising the Norfolk Southern Railroad Bridge that runs over the river. The bridge is located between Indianapolis Blvd. and Kennedy Avenue within the pipeline corridor.

Other Issues/New Business –

Commissioner Wichlinski made a motion to approve Resolution 2022-01 and an Interlocal Agreement with the Town of Griffith for the Cady Marsh Ditch Diversion Sewer Intake Screen Raker Replacement Watershed Project, for engineering only, in the amount of \$140,000.00, subject to final draft and approval by attorney, Executive Director and Chairman; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 6-0.

Commissioner Whittaker made a motion to approve Resolution 2022-02 and an Interlocal Agreement with the Town of Merrillville for the Kaiser Ditch East Tributary Flood Control Improvement Project, in the amount of \$345,000.00, subject to final draft and approval by attorney, Executive Director and Chairman; motion seconded by Commissioner Wichlinski. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 6-0.

Commissioner Ware made a motion to approve Resolution 2022-03 and an Interlocal Agreement with the Town of Merrillville for the Hickory Ridge Apartments Flood Control Improvements Project, in the amount of \$81,000.00, subject to final draft and approval by attorney, Executive Director and Chairman; motion seconded by Commissioner

Whittaker. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 6-0.

Commissioner Ochi made a motion to approve Resolution 2022-04 and an Interlocal Agreement with the Town of Dyer for the Dyer Ditch/Hart Ditch Streambank Stabilization Project in the amount of \$81,000.00, subject to final draft and approval by attorney, Executive Director and Chairman; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 6-0.

Commissioner Castellanos made a motion to authorize the Executive Director to seek proposals on a new flood control closure structure for the Munster side of the Northcote Bridge; motion seconded by Commissioner Ochi. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 6-0.

Statements to the Board –

Laurie Czulno, Hammond, questioned why the City of Hammond chose not to take part in a new closure structure at Northcote Bridge. Additionally, she asked if the Commission paid for the new post and panel closure and would they be willing to participate with the City of Hammond if they decided to change their closure at the bridge.

Jim Wieser, attorney for Bradford Equities, stated he respects and understands the reasons for the extension to accept proposals for the Grant Street Property. However, he wanted to point out that it was only because of a chance text message to Mr. Repay that his client was made aware of the extension. The concern is that there was a publicly noticed process that appears to have been administratively extended without any action being taken by the Commission. Mr. Wieser stated he appreciates Mr. Repay's quick response and explanation to his questions. He further added that his client was fully prepared to submit a proposal today under the requirements that were publicly advertised.

Terry Steagall, Highland, stated that the Commission is the steward of the watershed and it needs to be taken seriously. The Commission needs to rethink the disposal of any land it currently owns. We do not know what our watershed needs will be 40-50 years out, considering all the climate change issues. He also would like the Commission to do what it can to terminate the agreement with Maya Energy.

Statements from the Board –

Commissioner Whittaker thanked all for attending the meeting. He further stated that he is still opposed to the Maya Energy agreement. He stated this type of industrial business is not something the City of Gary needs.

Commissioner Castellanos added that he is in agreement with Commissioner Whittaker in his opposition to Maya Energy.

There being no further business, the next regular meeting was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 20, 2022.