

MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
HELD AT 6:30 P.M. THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1997  
AT THE COMMISSION OFFICE  
6100 SOUTHPORT ROAD  
HIGHLAND, INDIANA

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Chairman Bob Huffman called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. Seven (7) Commissioners were present. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Quorum was declared and guests were recognized.

Development Commissioners:

Robert Huffman  
Emerson Delaney  
Robert Trelo  
Arlene Colvin  
Roger Chiabai  
Charles Agnew  
George Carlson

Visitors:

Jim Flora - RWArmstrong  
Denis Buksa - Munster  
Ken Smith - IDNR, Div.of Water  
Pete Zak - South Shore Marina  
R. L. Frum - Lefty's Coho

Staff:

Dan Gardner  
Lou Casale  
Melissa Stefanovich  
James Pokrajac  
Judy Vamos  
Sandy Mordus

The minutes of the January 7, 1997 meeting were approved by a motion from Bob Trelo; motion seconded by Arlene Colvin; motion passed unanimously.

Chairman's Report - Chairman Bob Huffman referred to the Committee assignment sheets distributed to Board members. If there are any changes or additions, please see staff.

Executive Director's Report - Mr. Gardner informed the Board that we are still engaged in ongoing communications with the city of Gary. He referred to the December 30th meeting in which staff met with several Council members; the COE also attended. Thank you letters were written to the Council.

Mr. Gardner referred to a letter staff wrote to Deputy Mayor Suzette Raggs giving her a schedule and synopsis of the upcoming construction projects.

Mr. Gardner also referred to the February 4th meeting with Mayor King. Several Commissioners attended, as well as the Colonel. He thanked Commissioners Huffman, Davis, Agnew and Colvin; he especially thanked Arlene Colvin for being the point of contact with the administration. Col. Gerber gave a slide presentation and

stressed the importance of the project being completed. Mr. Agnew added that in all the meetings he has ever attended with the city, this was the most positive. He said the Mayor said he sees the levee project as a benefit to the city and wants it completed without delay. Chairman Huffman added his appreciation to fellow Commissioners and Mr. Gardner for preparing the right documentation to use in our meeting. He added that the COE has been very responsive to use every time we have asked them to attend a meeting. The Colonel's appearance, he felt, plays an important role in our dealings with the city. Mr. Carlson added that he was impressed with the Colonel's presentation, especially for the short amount of time he has been involved with the project. He stated that the Mayor agreed to support the recreation agreement. He knows we have had a problem with the City Council and he pledged he would do whatever he could to help us.

Commissioner Emerson Delaney made a motion for staff to draft a letter to Council members (similar to the one sent to the Deputy Mayor) giving them up-to-date project information; motion seconded by Chuck Agnew; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Gardner brought the Board members up to date on the Burr Street pump station. We had previously committed to an amount of \$384,399. After finding out that the cost was going to be higher, Mr. Gardner conferenced with several Commissioners and a 1/28/97 letter to Gary Sanitary District was sent stating a maximum amount of \$575,399 would be contributed (the original \$384,399 presently available; the difference of \$191,000 would be made available at a later date). Local share cost of the project is \$1.65 million. Mr. Agnew made a motion to ratify the commitment of \$575,399 for the LCRBDC share of the cost; if bids come in lower, the amount would be reduced; motion seconded by Roger Chiabai; motion passed unanimously. A meeting will be held on 2/14 to discuss the bids received.

Land Acquisition Committee - Committee Chairman Chuck Agnew made a motion to approve increasing the purchase price on two parcels: DC147 increase to \$1500 and DC387A increase to \$1250 and if the increased price is not acceptable to the owner, staff is to proceed with condemnation; motion seconded by Arlene Colvin; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Agnew also made a motion to approve the replacing and laying of a 8" pipe across Commission's property at Clay Street between 15th Avenue and Burns Ditch contingent upon all needed permits and licenses being obtained; review by Jim Flora; and appropriate agreement from attorney; motion was seconded by Arlene Colvin; motion passed unanimously.

Project Engineering Committee - Committee Chairman Bob Huffman referred to Jim Pokrajac, who gave a short synopsis of the upcoming recreation project. The attorney has prepared resolutions for Commission approval regarding these recreational features and he is also preparing Interlocal Agreements to be signed with each entity receiving the recreation benefits.

(1) Lake Etta Park - Mr. Pokrajac gave a brief description of the recreational features that include a parking area, overlooks and a canoe launch. Since the Commission already owns the property and has an Interlocal Agreement with the Lake County Park Board, an addendum has been prepared for their approval and they will pass a similar resolution. The County Parks will maintain the features. Attorney Casale read Resolution 97-1 (attached hereto as Exhibit A) allowing us to sign an Addendum with the Lake County Park Board. Resolution is approved by a motion from Arlene Colvin; seconded by Roger Chiabai; motion passed unanimously.

(2) Gleason Park area - Mr. Pokrajac gave a brief description of the recreational features that include a parking lot, trails, fishing pier, observation deck and picnic shelter. The Gary Park Dept. will deed the real property to us and we will, in turn, lease it back to them at \$1 for a 50-year lease (COE federal regulations state that all recreational areas must be in local sponsor ownership). The Park Dept. will maintain the features. Attorney Casale read Resolution 97-2 (attached hereto as Exhibit B); resolution is approved by a motion from George Carlson; seconded by Roger Chiabai; motion passed unanimously.

(3) Chase Street Trails - Mr. Pokrajac gave a brief description of the 10' strip of property needed for the recreation trail system. The Gary Board of Public Works will give us fee simple title and we will lease it back to them. Attorney Casale read Resolution 97-3 (attached hereto as Exhibit C); resolution is approved by a motion from Roger Chiabai; seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously.

(4) OxBow Park - Mr. Pokrajac gave a brief description of the recreational features that include a boardwalk, parking lot and at-grade trails. The Hammond Park Board will deed the property to us in fee; we will lease back to them; they will maintain. Attorney Casale read Resolution 97-4 (attached hereto as Exhibit D); resolution is approved by a motion from Arlene Colvin; seconded by Emerson Delaney; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Carlson then spoke on the January 29th meeting held in Hammond regarding the OxBow park. The COE was present at that meeting. It was agreed that the Hammond Park Board will sign right-of-entrysts that are needed for ingress and egress onto the site.

Mr. Carlson made a motion to obtain approval and signature of Hammond Sanitary District and Park and sign right-of-entrysts; motion seconded by Emerson Delaney; motion passed unanimously.

Legislative Committee - Committee Chairman George Carlson informed the Board that the legislative session is continuing and there is "0" funding in the Governor's budget for the LCRBDC. Mr. Gardner added that this is not unusual; we have only been in the budget one biennium. Mr. Gardner talked to Representative Chet Dobis who said that recommendations for funding are usually made in conferences they have. He suggested that we may want to do another mailing to our legislators; he offered his assistance if we would want any meeting scheduled.

Mr. Gardner added that the Lake Michigan Marina Development Commission has requested \$1.5 million for the Portage Public Marina. It also has no funding at this time.

There are new people that we are working with at the State Budget Agency. Mark Brown is the Commission's new contact person and Mr. Gardner talked to him today and informed him that as soon as the session concludes, the Commission needs to be on the agenda at their first budget meeting to request appropriated funds from 91/93 biennium for draw-down. Our draw-down funds are very low and we will need to access new funds as soon as possible.

Marina/Breakwater Committee - Dan Gardner gave the committee report in Committee Chairman Bill Tanke's absence. He met with John Hannon, Abonmarche and Mike Doyne regarding some marina issues. Mr. Gardner read a letter written by John Hannon addressed to Abonmarche relaying their concern that some of the wood fender piles installed by the contractor are rising out of the ground and feels this should be redone under the construction warranty. Audience attendee Bob Frum also added that the basin piling is also loose and the lights are being left on 24 hours a day. Mr. Gardner stated he would be talking again with Mr. Hannon and that we were aware that the lights are always on but there is an agreement with NIPSCO to allow for that.

Discussion was held on what was needed to allow Phase 2 development of the marina. Mr. Gardner referred to a letter from Abonmarche summarizing the conditions that need to be met.

Bob Frum added that there has been no accidents or injuries on Burns Waterway since 1962.

Finance/Policy Committee - Treasurer Chuck Agnew gave the financial report. Mr. Agnew made a motion to approve the financial status statement for December and approve the claims for payment totaling \$210,231.59; motion seconded by Roger Chiabai; motion approved unanimously.

Chairman Huffman inquired about two claims listed for Northwest Indiana Water Company totalling \$170,419.44. Mr. Pokrajac clarified this billing is for the completed work in the utility relocation of the north and south transmission mains at I80/94.

Mr. Agnew made a motion approving the NIRPC contract for administrative services; seconded by Roger Chiabai; motion passed unanimously. Changes include a modest increase for staff salaries for Dan Gardner and Sandy Mordus (increase from \$6,240 to \$6,400 per month); space rental increase from \$520 to \$540; and accounting service increase from \$450 to \$465.

Mr. Gardner talked briefly on the news articles that Lake County government is considering dropping NIRPC from allowing it to participate in their insurance plan. NIRPC is looking at their options.

Mr. Agnew, after stating the attorney has not raised his fee to the Commission for about ten years, made a motion to increase the attorney's hourly rate by \$10; motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously.

Other Business - No other Commission business at this time.

Statements from the floor - Bob Frum from Lefty's CoHo, commented that he will work with the Commission but will be a watchdog for the private industry to make sure the public marina does not go against the private marinas. He commented further that in our recreation plans, we have not included fishing piers. Mr. Pokrajac added that we will have fishing piers at OxBow and several other areas. Commissioner Delaney emphasized that the levee construction for flood control has to come first; once that is in place, we can concentrate on the recreational aspects, which includes fishing facilities. Mr. Frum stressed, and Ken Smith from IDNR agreed, that tapping into the fishing enthusiasts for lobbying efforts would be a real benefit and help to the Commission.

Denis Buksa, Munster resident, commented on the terrible condition that the Hohman Avenue bridge is in. The elevation is OK but there are structural problems with the bridge. Mr. Gardner says the bridge is county-owned. He will have to check into it to see if any repair/replacement work is scheduled. Commissioner Delaney commented that he has seen engineers out there looking the bridge over. Mr. Gardner will see what he can find out for the next meeting.

There being no further business, the next regular Commission meeting was scheduled for Thursday, March 6, 1997 in Portage.