

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION  
HELD AT 6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, MARCH 4, 1999  
AT THE COMMISSION OFFICE  
6100 SOUTHPORT ROAD  
HIGHLAND, INDIANA**

Chairman Emerson Delaney called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. Eight (8) Commissioners were present. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Quorum was declared and guests were recognized.

**Development Commissioners:**

Emerson Delaney  
Charles Agnew  
William Tanke  
George Carlson  
Robert Huffman  
Marion Williams  
Steve Davis  
Arlene Colvin

**Visitors:**

Jim Flora – R.W. Armstrong Co.  
Frank Gray – Gary resident  
Denis Buksa – Munster resident  
Herb Read – Izaak Walton  
Jomary Crary – Div. of Water, DNR  
Walter Church – Boy Scout Troop 280

**Staff:**

Dan Gardner  
Lou Casale  
Sandy Mordus  
Jim Pokrajac  
Judy Vamos

The minutes of the February 4th, 1999 meeting were approved by a motion from Bill Tanke; motion was seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously.

**Chairman's Report** – Chairman Emerson Delaney announced the receipt of the re-appointment letter of Marion Williams, a Lake County Commissioners' appointment, for a term of four years.

Discussion ensued on the video presentation that was viewed in committee. Mr. Tanke suggested that some marina shots be included. Some changes are necessary for the final video so some marina could be added. Judy will work with Bill on developing what will be used. Chairman Delaney stated that he thought the video was very well done and will be an excellent tool in public relations; i.e. distributing it to libraries, cities and towns, the local TV station, interested parties, etc.

Chairman Delaney introduced Troop #280 Boy Scout leader and 2 scouts from Hammond. This troop will be taking on a beautification project and cleaning up/planting along the river from Northcote to Calumet Avenue in Hammond. They have secured a \$5,000 grant from the city's community grant program to work with. A few questions were directed to the scouts. They will be working toward an environmental management merit badge. The board members commended the troop for their efforts.

Mr. Carlson passed around a magazine from the Union of Chemical & Atomic Energy in which he was featured. While at the NAFSMA conference in Denver, he visited their headquarters where Mr. Carlson had been a member of many years back.

**Executive Director's Report** – Executive Director Mr. Gardner spoke on the PAC situation. He distributed a draft letter w/accompanying justification to go back to David Sanford, COE in Washington. Mr. Huffman made a motion approving and directing staff to send the letter; motion was seconded by Mr. Carlson; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Gardner also referred to a letter in the packet addressed to the COE stating our financial capability to proceed with the ERR area.

Mr. Gardner also referred to the attorney's letter to the COE that is included in the packet regarding scheduling – what is available and what is needed in order to sign off on the right of entry with the COE. He stressed that a problem exists with the COE Engineering Dept. that continually changes the plans and specifications. The COE has a concern that the federal dollars need to be spent in their biennium so they run the risk of losing them; but we cannot sign a right-of-entry with them until we have all that is needed and we can't get what we need if they consistently change the specs. Discussion was held.

Mr. Gardner also informed Board members that he attended a In-IL study session with the Calumet Ecological Park people on February 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Land Acquisition Committee** – Committee Chairman Chuck Agnew stated that no motions are needed. Real Estate meeting was held February 25<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Agnew referred to the Gary Sanitary District agenda in which they approved the flood warning system base station. Mr. Agnew also set a meeting date of March 18<sup>th</sup> for a committee meeting. At that meeting, several companies will give presentations on their handicapped park equipment.

Mr. Frank Gray in the audience questioned why his lots were needed for purchase and requested that they be removed. He was informed that we are requested to obtain land that the COE deems necessary for the project. They have, on occasion, been able to remove some property from purchase that they originally thought necessary. The land is zoned floodplain but where needed as a flowage easement, there still is some limited use. Staff will check with the COE and work with Mr. Gray as much as possible.

Commissioner Williams asked whether anyone has requested a public hearing relative to the DNR permit application for the east reach remediation area. Although there is a 25 day period to file for a hearing, no one has yet to do so.

**Project Engineering Committee** – Committee Chairman Bob Huffman referred to the letter from Gary Sanitary District listing concerns/issues they have in regard to their acceptance and operation of the pump stations. Once items are addressed, a final pump station inspection will be made. On the betterment levee, we requested and the COE concurred that we will tie into the Griffith levee. On the East Reach Remediation area, Mr. Huffman reported that the COE plans to advertise the end of March. Construction cannot begin until the IDNR permit is in hand.

**Legislative Committee** – Committee Chairperson Arlene Colvin referred to the letter in the packet that accompanied the Construction Book that was sent to the area delegation. She then referred to the House Ways & Means listing of projects slated for receiving money this biennium. The Little Cal project was not included for funding. It is still hoped that money will be obtained in Conference committee. All Board members were urged to contact any public official/ legislator they know to enlist support. It was suggested that a strategy session may be necessary. It was pointed out that the Federal money Congressman Visclosky had obtained would not be spent if state funding is not achieved.

**Marina Committee** – Committee Chairman Bill Tanke informed the Board that Lake Michigan lake levels are down. Commissioner Steve Davis distributed several charts on the water levels. Although it is not boating season yet, a lot of complaints have been received because of low channel depth. The fear is that the big boats will not be able to get out of the marinas. Since the marina is not yet complete and recreation harbors have a low Federal priority, the COE has not dredged the waterway.

Mr. Tanke then referred to year-end figures provided to us by Mike Doyne from the marina. Staff has not scheduled a city meeting yet to discuss marina items.

Mr. Gardner added that there is a pending bill to add 3 legislators onto the Lake Michigan Marina Development Commission. It has passed in the House.

**Finance Committee** – Committee Chairman Arlene Colvin presented the financial status report and claims for approval and made a motion to accept the financial report and approve claims; motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Colvin also stated that the auditing of 1996 and 1997 claims has been completed and an exit interview will be scheduled shortly.

**Recreational Development Committee** – Committee Chairman George Carlson stated that we have received a modified mapping for the recreational trail/facility map from the COE. Staff will review and make comments. It is available for members to review.

**Minority Contracting Committee** – Committee Chairman Marion Williams inquired whether we had all specs in regard to minority participation for the east reach remediation area. As soon as they are received from the COE, a meeting will be scheduled.

**Other Business** – There were none.

**Statements to the Board** – Herb Read inquired whether the Calumet Ecological Park members have approached the Commission for information on the project, the park developments, wetland area, etc. He stated that some of the Indiana groups did not completely support the group. It was felt that some of their information was incomplete.

There being no further business, the next regular Commission meeting was scheduled for **6:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 7, 1999. Please note this is not the normal first Thursday of the month meeting date.**