

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HELD AT 6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2001
AT THE COMMISSION OFFICE
6100 SOUTHPORT ROAD
PORTAGE, INDIANA**

Chairman William Tanke called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. Nine (9) Commissioners were present. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Quorum was declared and guests were recognized.

Development Commissioners:

George Carlson
Charles Agnew
John Mroczkowski
William Tanke
Curt Vosti
Bob Huffman
Emerson Delaney
Steve Davis
Mark Reshkin

Visitors:

Don Ewoldt – Lake Erie Land Company
Sandy O’Brien – Dunelands Sierra Club
Jomary Crary – IDNR, Div. of Water
Jim Flora – R.W. Armstrong Company

Staff

Dan Gardner
Sandy Mordus
Lou Casale
Jim Pokrajac
Judy Vamos

Commissioner Emerson Delaney made a motion to approve the minutes of January 10, 2001; motion seconded by Chuck Agnew; motion passed unanimously.

Chairman’s Report – Mr. Tanke stated he would like to hold off on the committee structure until after the retreat meeting on February 6th at Innsbrook Country Club. He will announce committee structure at that time. He went on to say that he sees this year as being the most critical year ever as far as funding goes. He suggested that each Commission member adopt a legislator to keep him informed and updated on the funding situation. Further discussion will take place at the retreat meeting. Mr. Tanke proceeded to present a plaque to outgoing Chairman Emerson Delaney.

Executive Director’s Report - Mr. Gardner updated the Board members with the project wetland mitigation report and implementation of the plan. We have now received a letter from the COE directing us how to proceed and what properties to pursue. Mr. Gardner said that receiving the COE letter now gives us direction. Attorney Casale added that since the Commission only has a one-mile jurisdiction, a third party would have to be contracted with in order to pursue acquiring the mitigation property. And although the COE letter identifies properties to pursue, it still does not allow for as much acreage that we would need to satisfy IDNR and IDEM.

Mr. Gardner has called the new director (Ron Trigg) of the Shirley Heinze Environmental to schedule a meeting with him and their Board president. He invited any Commission members who were interested in attending the meeting once it is scheduled.

Mr. Gardner informed the Board members that he has written a letter to the Lake County Commissioners notifying them of Marion Williams attendance record.

Land Acquisition/Management Committee – Committee Chairman Chuck Agnew made a motion for staff to proceed with condemnation on DC497; motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously. Mr. Agnew announced that we have paid the remaining \$10,000 owed by River Forest School to the playground company in advance of the development of the handicapped park. This money will be reimbursed to us by Lake Erie Land when development starts. Mr. Agnew also announced the passing of Dale Nimetz, who has been a long time lessee on property that we own and has also done small jobs in maintenance and contracting for us. Mr. Agnew then made a motion authorizing appraiser Dale Kleszynski to proceed with hiring a golf course architect/developer (contractor) as needed in order for him to complete his appraisal; motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously.

Project Engineering Committee – Committee Chairman Bob Huffman gave the engineering report. He reported that a meeting would be held at the Gary City Hall on February 6th to review preliminary plans for the Stage III Remediation contract at Grant Street and to assure that all existing impacts and utilities are addressed. He further announced that the Stage VII engineering review was given to the COE on February 2nd. The plans and specs the COE had given us did not address over 50% of our preliminary comments. Staff also presented a local point of contact (Viking Engineering) to the COE for the rebuilding of pumps. The bid opening for the North 5th Avenue pump station is scheduled for February 6th (estimated cost is \$3.1 million).

Legislative Committee – Committee Chairman George Carlson gave the report. He referred to the Post Tribune editorial article contained in the packet. After having met with the Editorial Board, they did a very nice article in the paper. We are still awaiting The Times article. We had met with their Editorial Board also. He complimented Mr. Gardner on his excellent presentation to the respective Boards. Mr. Gardner added that he understands that the budget has gone to the legislators. We understand that we are in the Governor's recommended budget for \$4.5 million (\$3 million from General Funds and \$1.5 million in Build IN Funds). Mr. Gardner has talked to Mike Landwer, House Ways & Means staff, and he indicated that there is no hearing scheduled and there is no need for the Commission to be represented at this time. Mr. Gardner will continue to talk to area legislators and he encouraged, as did the Chairman, for all Board members to do the same. He will be writing a letter to Representative Earl Harris regarding the possibility of an increase in the \$1.5 million BIF monies. The Commission's original budget request was for \$12 million so even the \$4.5 million leaves us short if we want to keep on schedule with the COE office. Chairman Bill Tanke suggested that we have copies made of the Commission's 7-minute video of the flood control/recreation project and mail them with a cover letter to all of Indiana legislators so they have an understanding of what the project is.

Recreational Development Committee – Committee Chairman Curt Vosti informed the Board members that a response letter from the Lake County Highway Dept. was received on January 23, 2001 in regards to the possibility of attaching a walkway to the Kennedy Avenue bridge over the river in Highland. The letter states that it is probably possible to do but the feasibility of doing it would have to be answered first. Any costs incurred in regard to an engineering review of the project would be at Commission cost. Further discussion on this topic needs to be addressed to the COE first. After discussion, Mr. Vosti made a motion authorizing staff to pursue contracting with an engineering firm to do a feasibility study for the pedestrian walking bridge at Kennedy Avenue for a cost not to exceed \$7,000; motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously. Mr. Vosti then referred to the letter from INDOT to RANI Engineering (firm doing engineering for Stage VI –2) regarding the recreational trail on INDOT R/W and a pedestrian crossing at Cline Avenue. INDOT's letter stated that they do not construct/maintain recreational trails and that it would be our responsibility to do so. The trail may have to be relocated further south, to the next stoplight on Cline because of INDOT's disapproval of pedestrians interfering with busy traffic flows. Imad will be scheduling a meeting shortly with RANI and INDOT to further discussions on this topic.

Marina Committee – Committee Chairman Bill Tanke informed the Board members that he understood there was no state funding available for the Lake Michigan Marina Development Commission. Mr. Gardner said that was correct; it does not look real positive right now for any further development monies for the remaining 100 slips to be built out at the marina. We need to develop a strategy on how to go forward from here. Discussion was held regarding the Portage Port Authority raising the ramp launch fee from \$3 to \$5 this coming season. Mr. Gardner stated it was a condition of IDNR grant monies received to build the launch ramp to keep the fee at \$3 for 5 years. That 5-year period is up. Some repair work needs to be done on the ramp. Discussion was held on the possibility of another grant being available to do repair work. The issue will be looked into. Discussion was held on Lake Michigan lake levels. Commissioner Steve Davis distributed several charts depicting lake levels in graphic form and that the lake is almost at a record low. He explained the graphs to Board members.

Finance Committee – In Committee Chairperson Arlene Colvin's absence, Mr. Gardner gave the finance report. A revised claim sheet was distributed. Mr. Huffman made a motion to approve the financial status report and claim sheet for January in the amount of \$60,677.67; motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously. Mr. Gardner then referred to the COE's request letter of \$671,410 to be placed in the escrow account. He distributed a draft letter to Col. Roncoli stating our inability to do so at this point in time and request for a meeting with him. After several minor changes were made to the draft letter, George Carlson made a motion approving the letter and worksheet depicting existing monetary obligations and directing staff to send it to the Colonel; motion seconded by Curt Vosti; motion passed unanimously.

Minority Contracting Committee – There was no report.

Other Business – Chairman Bill Tanke asked Judy Vamos about doing a press release for the media. She will start doing press releases of the Commission's public meetings from now on.

Statements to the Board – There were none.

There being no further business, the next regular Commission meeting was scheduled for **5:00 p.m. for a Work Study session and 6:00 for the regular Board meeting on Thursday, March 1, 2001.**

/sjm