

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HELD AT 6:00 P.M. WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2001
AT THE COMMISSION OFFICE
6100 SOUTHPORT ROAD
PORTAGE, INDIANA**

In Chairman Emerson Delaney's absence, Vice Chairman William Tanke called the meeting to order at 6:00 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
Arlene Colvin
Steve Davis
Mark Reshkin

Staff

Dan Gardner
Sandy Mordus
Lou Casale
Jim Pokrajac
Judy Vamos

Visitors:

Don Ewoldt – Lake Erie Land Company
Sandy O'Brien – Dunelands Sierra Club
Jay Scriba - Hobart
Mona Scriba - Hobart
Michael Gee - Hobart
Howard Anderson – Griffith
Donna Gonzalez - Griffith
Peter Wilkin – Sierra Club
Jim Sweeney – Izaak Walton League
Jim Piekarczyk – Sierra Club
Betty Blossey – Sierra Club
Lorraine Karwowski – Sierra Club
Jim Flora – R.W. Armstrong Company
Jomary Crary – IDNR, Div. of Water
Dale Gick – IDNR, Div. of Water

Commissioner Chuck Agnew made a motion to approve the minutes of December 13, 2000; motion seconded by Curt Vosti; motion passed unanimously.

Chairman's Report – Chuck Agnew, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, gave his report. The Nominating Committee met several times and he proceeded to recommend the following slate of officers for 2001:

Mr. Agnew made a motion to elect John Mroczkowski as Secretary; motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously. Mr. Agnew made a motion to elect Curtis Vosti as Treasurer; motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously. Mr. Agnew made a motion to elect Bob Huffman as Vice Chairman; motion seconded by John Mroczkowski; motion passed unanimously. Mr. Agnew made a motion to elect William Tanke as Chairman; motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously. There were no other nominations.

Although Commissioner George Carlson voted in favor of the 2001 officers, he proceeded to remind the Board members of a motion made in 1997 to set a goal to try to have as many members as possible serve in the

capacity of officers and committee chairmen in order to provide each member with an opportunity to serve annually on an equitable basis.

Vice Chairman Bill Tanke took the seat as Chairman and proceeded with the meeting. He stated that he thinks this is probably the most critical year the Commission has every faced, in terms of anticipated construction and a funding crisis at the same time. He asked staff to set up a retreat meeting with the Board members to discuss the key issues and develop a targeted strategy to meet the year's challenges.

Executive Director's Report - Mr. Gardner updated the Board members with the project wetland mitigation report. Discussion centered on acquiring a permit and the matrix we've received from the COE. No construction will begin in the west reach until a DNR permit is secured and we have met IDEM 401 water quality certification. The work on a mitigation plan has been ongoing for quite awhile now with no perfect answer yet. Mitigation must be pursued in an expeditious manner. A public working session was held today at 3 p.m. in which the COE and DNR were present. The matrix was studied and the "Team" recommendation is Hobart Marsh area for forested wetlands. The COE is responsible for designing the plan that will be submitted to IDNR. We are the "Submitter" but the COE will write it. Discussion ensued on a "third party" that would maintain the mitigation area once selected. The matrix lists candidate properties that are ranked by a number of categories. Review is still ongoing. Mr. Gardner distributed letters that we have been receiving from area environmentalists that were in strong support of the Hobart Marsh. Mr. Vosti asked Mr. Gardner what he thought of the letters. Mr. Gardner replied that the Commission has always acted in a responsible way and all meetings regarding this subject have been public meetings and media has been noticed. And with having less than \$1.2 million and not being a taxing body, we have to move ahead guardedly. Chairman Tanke concluded the discussion by saying that whatever this Commission has done, it has always been in the best interest of the citizens.

Land Acquisition/Management Committee – Committee Chairman Chuck Agnew announced that there were no increased offers or condemnations this month. Mr. Agnew informed the Board members that staff is in the process of acquiring 2 parcels of land in the ERR area, with each property possessing a Lamar billboard sign lease. Once acquired, no new sign agreements will be signed until Lamar finalizes the old sign agreements that are existing. Mr. Agnew reported that we have asked the COE to eliminate acquisitions on the University Park Medical Center because of topographical changes. We are awaiting a response. Appraisal on Woodmar County Club is ongoing.

Project Engineering Committee – Committee Chairman Bob Huffman gave the engineering report. He reported that a pre-bid meeting was held January 4th for the North 5th St. pump station. Bid due date will be extended from January 10th to February 6th. Staff sent a letter to the COE that we concur with Town of Highland that the new electric service for the North 5th St. pump station should be a project cost. Mr. Huffman also reported that the Stage III remediation contract from Chase to Grant will include miscellaneous "clean-up"

work for the East Reach, including recreational trail relocations, paving of ramps, gates, and signage. Also reported was that we have received a letter from Highland indicating that they do not want ownership of pumps that are being removed as part of the west reach pump station project. Mr. Huffman referred to a preliminary compilation of contractual costs that have been completed showing original COE costs estimates, estimates at time of bid openings, contract cost, and final contract costs.

Legislative Committee – Committee Chairman George Carlson gave the report. At the last Legislative Committee meeting, it was decided to engage in a more vigorous program to obtain State funding support. He talked about how difficult it has been to keep up with the COE schedule. Although the project has been going on for 20 years, the actual construction is only half-complete. It is critical to obtain more state money to complete the entire project. The Governor has submitted his budget and we understand that a recommendation of \$4.5 million (\$3 million in the General Fund and \$1.5 million from the redirected Build Indiana Fund) for the Development Commission. We have meeting times with the Editorial Boards at The Times and Post Tribune for January 16th and 18th, respectively. Mr. Gardner invited Board members to accompany him. Mr. Huffman inquired whether the Governor's budget has to be voted on. Mr. Gardner replied that the Governor's Budget is only a recommendation. The House Ways & Means will do a mark-up and then the Senate will do a mark-up. From that point, they will negotiate a final complete budget. It is hoped that the final budget would be known by the end of April. It would probably be July before any new money can be drawn upon. Concern now is to not only try to increase this amount but definitely not have the \$4.5 million amount decreased.

Recreational Development Committee – Committee Chairman Curt Vosti informed the Board members that a letter was sent to the Lake County Highway Dept. on December 28th requesting permission and comments to cantilever a walkway on the east side of the Kennedy Avenue bridge to allow the trail to be contiguous. Mr. Vosti also reported that a supplemental contract will be released in late spring of 2001 as part of the Stage III remediation project in that will include the paving of all ramps.

Marina Committee – There was no report.

Finance Committee – Committee Chairperson Arlene Colvin gave the finance report. In order to stay within the year 2000 budget, a budget transfer of funds is necessary. She proceeded to make a motion to approve the transfer of \$12,000 from Line 5838 to Line 5812; motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously. She referred to the monthly financial status sheet and claims in the amount of \$92,498.24 and proceeded to make a motion approving the claims; motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously.

Minority Contracting Committee – There was no report.

Other Business – Commissioner Curt Vosti made a motion directing staff to send a letter to the Lake County Commissioners' Office with the attendance sheets for the years 1999 and 2000 to make them aware of their appointee's attendance record; motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Vosti questioned staff as to the Woodmar Country Club appraisal not being completed yet. The appraiser has asked approval to hire a golf course architect and a golf course construction expert to assist him in finalizing his appraisal. After discussion, Mr. Vosti made a motion not to approve hiring any additional experts until the appraiser can meet and provide additional information (who, why, and how much money); motion seconded by George Carlson; motion passed unanimously. Concern was expressed that hiring additional people may delay the appraisal process even more but it was felt that the issue is important enough that it warrants further investigation. Mr. Vosti has requested some detailed information on this subject several times and expressed dismay that he has not received it. Attorney Casale has had a concern on the legality of releasing information before the appraisal is complete. Land Acquisition Agent Judy Vamos stated she would copy the complete file for review. It was decided that the attorney would write a letter to the appraiser stating that he was not to hire any additional people until they could meet and discuss this issue. Attorney will copy the letter to Board members.

Statements to the Board – Sandy O'Brien and Jim Sweeney both indicated that many of the environmentalists would help in voicing a concern for increased state funding, especially if they were assured that Hobart Marsh would be the selected mitigation site. Chairman Tanke thanked them for their offer of assistance.

Further discussion ensued on how we optioned some of our property to Lake Erie Land Company in order to develop a fund for future operation and maintenance of the wetlands.

Don Ewolt said it would be helpful to the Commission if a dollar value on the properties was known. At least you could compare the dollar value to determine which would be more economically feasible – land that would cost you nothing versus land that would be very expensive.

Judy Vamos offered to put together some preliminary cost estimates for these properties. We could do a sample appraisal that would give us an indication of the dollar value. Chairman Tanke indicated this would be a good idea. Staff will report back.

Staff was asked to look at dates to set up a retreat meeting.

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, February 1, 2001.**

/sjm