

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HELD AT 6:00 P.M. THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2002
6100 SOUTHPORT ROAD
PORTAGE, INDIANA**

Chairman William Tanke called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. Eight (8) Commissioners were present. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Quorum was declared and guests were recognized.

Development Commissioners:

Robert Marszalek
Marion Williams
Mark Reshkin
William Tanke
Steve Davis
Bob Huffman
Curt Vosti
Arlene Colvin

Visitors:

Bill Petrites – Highland resident
Ray Coughenour - ACOE
Jomary Crary – IDNR, Div. of Water
Ursula Cano – Hobart
Sandy O'Brien - Hobart
Jim Flora – R.W. ARMSTRONG CO.
Mark Lopez – Congressman Visclosky's office
Deb Lawrence - IDNR
D. Taborski – Black Oak resident
Glenn & Pat Stotts – Black Oak residents
Dorreen Carey – City of Gary
Imad Samara - ACOE

Staff:

Dan Gardner
Sandy Mordus
Jim Pokrajac
Judy Vamos
Lorraine Kray
Lou Casale

Commissioner Arlene Colvin made a motion to approve the minutes of January 3, 2002; motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously.

Chairman's Report - At the last meeting, the Commission voted to retain the existing officers for a second year term with the exception of the Treasurer's office. A motion was made by Arlene Colvin to elect Curt Vosti as Treasurer; motion seconded by Mark Reshkin; motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Tanke introduced Ray Coughenour, Deputy District Engineer replacing John Sirles. Mr. Coughenour and Imad Samara met with some of the Board members prior to the regular Commission meeting to discuss some ongoing issues and project status. The meeting went well and we hope that a new line of communication was established. Mr. Coughenour said he appreciated coming to the meeting and hoped that the renewed momentum will continue through the project; he will attend again at the March meeting.

Executive Director's Report - Executive Director Dan Gardner reported on the Indianapolis meeting with the Governor's staff on January 16th. Accompanying Mr. Gardner to the meeting were Bob Huffman, Curt Vosti and Lou Casale. They met with Jeff Viohl, Deb Lawrence and Beth Compton to review crediting, local participation, using our monies to the best advantage, mitigation, etc. They will continue

to periodically meet and update. Mark Lopez, Congressman's staff, was in attendance tonight and Mr. Gardner expressed our continuing desire to work closely with the Congressman's Office. Mr. Gardner thanked Imad for the V.E. cost savings review meeting held in Chicago on February 1, 2002.

Mr. Gardner stated that we tried another meeting format tonight with the meeting in the same room so a continuity was established. We will also try to make the Work Study Session more of a technical meeting than the Board meeting, where more policy issues would be addressed. We have also listed "Old Business" items (so we can make sure a follow-up is completed when needed) and "New Business" items on the agenda. Deb Lawrence stated the Governor's office is here to help us in any way they can and she is happy to be part of that.

Mr. Gardner referred to the letter from Shirley Heinze Environmental Fund (SHEF) stating that they cannot commit the property they own for mitigation use, as proposed in the Hobart Marsh area. Although SHEF offered to serve as landowner for newly acquired project properties, they noted that IDNR has also made a similar offer, so the project can move forward. Mr. Gardner stated that Judy Vamos would be available to act as the land acquisition agent and work under the direction of the DNR. The National Lakeshore has indicated that they would be willing to take on an active role in management of the properties once they are acquired. Mark Reshkin stated he was very pleased with this plan and proceeded to make a motion that we move in this direction; motion seconded by Curt Vosti; motion passed unanimously. Mr. Vosti added that, after attending the meeting with the Governor's staff in Indianapolis, he views the state's interest in this project as essential. He felt that communication may have been a problem in the past but feels that, with having Deb Lawrence involved, it is a very positive step forward. He also thanked Mark Lopez for the strong support from the Congressman's office. Commissioner Huffman inquired whether the properties listed out on the DNR letter would be enough to accomplish our mitigation requirements; Mr. Gardner answered that it probably would not be but we will keep a running total list of acreages and wetland credits by type (enhancement or restoration) so we will know what the acreages are at all times. Imad Samara added that Greg Moore is doing a letter to us about the acreages that we will be receiving very soon.

Mr. Gardner stated that a public meeting for affected and/or adjacent property owners in Stage VII was held at Wicker Park Center on January 30. It was well attended and well received. Maps were available so residents could see exactly what was proposed at this time. Several elected officials were in attendance, as well as several of our Commissioners. Commissioner Vosti added that Melcy Pond from Earth Tech (COE's A/E) gave an excellent presentation.

Mr. Gardner gave a presentation at Sand Creek regarding regional trails. Over 200 people were in attendance.

Land Acquisition/Management Committee – Committee Chairperson Arlene Colvin gave the committee report. She made a motion to approve some increased offers in which the property owners are willing to sell in fee but not just for an easement. They were DC 715 (\$1500 fee take from \$530); DC 786 (\$1800 fee take from \$690); DC 765 (\$2000 fee take from \$530); DC 754 (\$2200 fee take from \$680); motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Vosti asked if this would avoid condemnation and what the total acreage is of these parcels. Judy Vamos replied that it would avoid condemnation and the total acreage is 4 acres.

Mr. Taborski and Mr. & Mrs. Stotts from the area between Colfax and Calhoun were in attendance at the meeting. They own property adjacent to a ditch that runs through and cuts off the back portion of their land to the point that they cannot maintain it because of water in the ditch. Because the COE only needed a ditch easement, we did not buy the property in fee (we would not have gotten credit for additional monies spent). Commissioner Colvin made a motion that the Commission take responsibility for mowing that remnant and cleaning the ditch; motion seconded by Bob Huffman. Mr. Vosti asked the attorney what legal implications were involved if we did not own the property. After discussion, Chairman Tanke asked staff for more information and to present this at the next meeting. Ms. Colvin withdrew the motion. Mr. Huffman withdrew the second.

Project Engineering Committee – Committee Chairman Bob Huffman gave the engineering report. He reported that a meeting was held with the COE on February 1, 2002 to review the V.E. proposals submitted to them. Written responses have been received regarding outstanding issues but did not adequately address or resolve all the issues we feel need addressing. Engineering Committee meetings will be scheduled in the very near future to discuss both the V.E. issues as well as the outstanding issues and responses to GSD concerns.

In regard to the letter received on December 13, 2001 from Hanson Professional Services (INDOT consultant for I-80/94 construction), we have written a response letter asking them to address our concern for runoff and what measures would be taken to handle environmental concerns.

Discussion ensued on the COE's response letter regarding GSD issues/concerns. Until GSD is satisfied that all their concerns have been met, they will not discuss future O&M of the pump stations.

Legislative Committee – In Committee Chairman George Carlson's absence, Mr. Gardner reported that the legislature is in session and dealing with the tax restructuring situation and the state's budget deficit. He also reported that the speaker of the House, John Gregg, has indicated he will not seek re-election. One of the leading candidates to replace him is Representative Chet Dobis from Merrillville.

Recreational Development Committee – Committee Chairman Curt Vosti stated there was no Recreation Report at this time. He did thank the Chairman for setting a direction on how the Recreation Committee should go forward.

Marina Committee – Committee Chairman Bill Tanke stated the Commission has received a financial accounting of monies taken in and disbursed from the Portage Public Marina. He reported that the attorney is talking to Portage's attorney and will check with the bank what it would take to build out the marina.

Finance/Policy Committee – Treasurer Curt Vosti gave the Finance report. Mr. Vosti referred to several meetings that the Finance Committee has held. He proceeded to distribute a draft Travel Policy for the Commission's review and input. Committee will meet again to finalize the Travel Policy and propose it to be adopted at the next meeting.

Mr. Vosti talked about the proposed changes in committee structure. It will be proposed that the Finance/Policy Committee be separated into 2 committees. Also, Minority Contracting Committee will be folded into the Engineering Committee and a new Environmental Committee and Public Relations Committee will be formed. Chairman Tanke added that members can select their own committees and then choose their own Chairman of that particular committee.

Mr. Vosti then made a motion to approve the monthly financial report and the claim sheet as presented in the amount of \$46,638.31; motion seconded by Bob Marszalek; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Vosti reported that the State Board of Accounts is currently auditing the Commission's finances. They are auditing 4 years (1997 through 2000). Upon completion, an exit interview will be scheduled. Mr. Gardner added that he will notify the Chairman and Treasurer of that date when set.

Minority Contracting Committee – Committee Chairman Marion Williams stated that since construction is not ongoing right now, he feels that it probably would serve the Commission best include this committee as part of the Engineering Committee. Mr. Williams proceeded to make a motion to that effect; motion seconded by Curt Vosti; motion passed unanimously.

Old Business – Attorney Casale stated that he has drafted a letter to go to Hammond Planning Dept in regards to the 75' drainage easement. We are waiting for a set of real estate maps from the COE to accompany the letter. It will go out as soon as they are received. A similar letter will be sent to Highland and Munster, that will include the most recent Army Corps real estate mapping. Attorney Casale reported he sent a letter to Krosan. Jim Pokrajac also sent a letter requesting information from him but we have not received it as of today.

New Business – Bob Huffman asked the attorney about the Lyles property. Attorney Casale responded that the property was not cleaned up as the court had directed them. Staff has taken pictures of the area. The next step is to meet with Lyles to direct him what needs to be done, and if he does not meet this direction, the next step would be to go to court.

Chairman Tanke then proposed the new committee structure. Steve Davis made a motion to separate the Finance/Policy Committee into 2 committees. Treasurer Curt Vosti amended the motion by adding that it would take affect after next month; motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously. Steve Davis then made a motion to create a new Public Relations Committee; motion seconded by Bob Marszalek; motion passed unanimously. Mr. Davis then made a motion to create a new Environmental Committee; motion seconded by Bob Huffman; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Vosti thanked Jim Pokrajac for the photos he took of the debris buildup in the river east of the Monon RR tracks in Hammond/Munster area. Mr. Vosti is hopeful in getting the river cleaned up there; he has talked with the town of Munster and NICTD (who owns the tracks).

Statements to the Board – Sandy O'Brien, Hobart, stated she recognized the need for good public relations regarding the Hobart Marsh area but we need to wait until the land is bought before we do a press release saying that we are interested in purchasing land there; otherwise, price will go up. She recommended we send letters to area environmental groups first and not the landowners.

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, March 7th at 6:00 p.m.

/sjm