

MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION HELD AT 6:00 P.M. WEDNESDAY, JULY 14, 2010

Held at
Munster Town Hall,
1005 Ridge Road, Munster, IN

Chairman Dan Dernulc called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. An Executive Session and Work Study Session was held prior to the public meeting. A roll call vote confirmed all five members present. Minutes of the June 2 stand as posted.

Development Commissioners:

Dan Dernulc, Chairman
William Baker, Vice Chair
Anthony Broadnax, Treasurer
Tom Wichlinski, Secretary
Ron McAhron

Executive Director:

Dan Repay

Staff:

Sandy Mordus
Judy Vamos

Attorney:

Dave Wickland

Visitors:

Roberto Peredes – Army Corps
Doug Anderson – Army Corps
John Plusch - Crestwood
T. Cholipski – River Drive, Munster
Ruth Mores – Southmoor Road, Hmd.
Bill Rochford – Army Corps
Paul Dombrowski – Hammond
James Node
Charles Elrod – Hammond
Bill Emerson
Jesse Reyes
Paul Taylor – Forest, Hammond
Craig/Bea Hanusin – Munster
Lynn Barnes
Michael Golden
Karen Lorenz – Southmoor, Hmd.
Kristen Hill - Hammond
Kathleen Hill – Hammond
Mike Zarantonello – Hammond
B. Rumberg – Hawthorne
Jesse Reyes – Hammond

Visitors:

Don/Josie Seagraves - Munster
LuAnn Franklin – The Times
Fred Baginski - Hammond
Trudy Wasik - Hammond
Lisa Miller – Hammond
Elizabeth Johnson-Congressman's Office
Karla Hunt - Munster
John Mogle – Baring Avenue, Munster
Vanessa Villarreal, USACE
Jeff Groen - Hammond
Bonnie Vavrek - Hammond
Judy Knapp - Hammond
John Beckman – Lake Co. Fish & Game
Frank Mrvan - Senator
Tina Kutkoski - Hammond
Jim Linstrom - Hammond
Linda Cook - Griffith
Bill Petrites – Highland
Peter Yakanich - Hammond
John Mulesa – Munster
Susan Miller - Hammond
Leanne Sandrick – Forest, Hammond
Jim Renwick – Forest, Hammond
John/Laurie Czulno - Hammond
James Dedelow - Munster
Jim Wisniewski - Hammond
John Harrigan - Hammond
Bob/Kathy Nix - Hammond
Evangeline Stanford - Hammond
Paul/MaryLou Daniels - Munster
David Nellans – Munster Councilman
Philip Golden - Hammond
Kim Poland – Hammond Councilwoman
Mike Echterling – Lake Co. Fish & Game
Liz Howard - Munster
Ron Johnson – NINB News
Bill Emerson Sr. – Hammond
Lynn/Sandy Barnes – Munster

Chairman's Report – Chairman Dernulc announced that the Commission's legislation calls for a yearly election of officers, and since officers were elected in July 2009, the Commission proceeded with election of officers for the period of July 2010-2011. Commissioner Tom Wichlinski made a motion to retain all current officers – Dan Dernulc as Chairman, William Baker as Vice Chairman, Anthony Broadnax as Treasurer, and Tom Wichlinski as Secretary. Motion was seconded by Anthony Broadnax; motion passed with a 5-0 roll call vote.

- Chairman Dernulc thanked the Board for electing him to serve as Chairman. He proceeded to add a couple of items to the agenda. He asked for a motion to allow the Executive Director to seek bids for a survey contract for survey work regarding the Forest Avenue easements, not to exceed \$12,000. William Baker made a motion to that request; motion seconded by Tom Wichlinski; motion passed by a 5-0 roll call vote. Ron McAhron asked Judy Vamos if there was any other survey work besides these 12 owners at Forest; she confirmed there was not.
- Chairman Dernulc asked for a motion that the normal meeting date of the first Wednesday of every month be changed to the second Wednesday of each month. Anthony Broadnax made a motion to change the meeting date; seconded by Tom Wichlinski; motion passed with a roll call vote of 5-0.

Executive Director's Report – Mr. Repay reported that he has been working with OMMYX in regard to adding an additional six monitoring stations, with installation being almost complete.

- Mr. Repay stated that he met with Lake Shore Chamber of Commerce on June 30th and they toured the levee system.
- A Watershed Management meeting was held in Dyer for all communities. Mr. Repay will continue to meet in smaller groups to continue discussion.
- Mr. Repay also reported that the Commission's web site is about 85% complete. He gave residents the website address – littlecalumetriverbasin.org. Any suggestions or comments are welcomed any time. He also stated that he took a canoe trip on the river and those pictures will be posted on the web site.
- Mr. Repay apologized to Stage VIII residents. He had hoped to have a final answer on exactly what would be proposed as a flood protection mechanism in their area but plans from the Corps were delayed and he felt those plans needed to be approved by Mayor McDermott first. Once he meets with Hammond, he will meet with residents.

Army Corps Status Report:

- SV-2 – Roberto Peredes from the Army Corps informed the Board members that the contractor is substantially complete; a few punch list items remain. Final inspection is scheduled for the last week of July.
- SVII – Stage is about 60% complete. The lines of protection date of completion is still on schedule. Contractor has completed sheetpile except for Northcote bridge. The bridge will reopen on the 26th. Project is on schedule.
- SVIII – Currently working on levee work in Hammond. Construction is about 45% complete. The strike has slowed the construction timetable. December 9, 2010 was the identified completion date of the lines of protection. Project is now behind schedule. Corps will investigate/discuss if there is a mechanism to help them get back on schedule. We'll see where they stand in August.
- Pump station contracts are nearing completion.

Ron McAhron asked the Corps if they could develop a bar chart of weather delay/strike delay.

Action Required – Chairman Dan Dernulc presented items for action.

- He referred for the claims for July to be approved in the amount of \$72,985.58. Commissioner Broadnax made a motion to approve the claims; motion seconded by Bill Baker; motion passed with a roll call vote of 5-0.
- Mr. Broadnax then made a motion to approve the O&M claims in the total amount of \$6,843.36; motion seconded by Tom Wichlinski; motion passed with a roll call vote of 5-0.
- Mr. Broadnax made a motion to transfer \$6,247.74 (leftover funds from the Burr St. account) into the O&M account; motion seconded by Tom Wichlinski; motion passed by a 5-0 roll call vote.
- Mr. Broadnax made a motion to approve \$2,000 to be paid to Purdue Calumet to help fund the hydrology students study of the Little Calumet River; motion seconded by Tom Wichlinski; motion passed with a 5-0 roll call. Mr. Repay further explained that 10 Purdue Cal students majoring in hydrology took a tour of the river system. Working with some of the Army Corps data, they have made the river their senior project. They will develop models, mark and note all pump station locations & sluice gates, work with the GIS system, identify high profile maintenance locations, etc. Their final report will be posted on the website.

Finance – Chairman Dernulc referred to the May Financial Statement and the May NIRPC invoice. Mr. Repay added that future monthly invoices from NIRPC will reflect less charges because of reduced office space/storage space.

Land Acquisition/Land Management – William Baker informed the Board members that this month we will be putting out a request for proposals to local billboard companies to see if there is a potential funding source for new billboards. He is looking at alternate funding sources for lands that the Commission owns; may have more information next month.

Engineering - Mr. Repay stated that there is a utility pole in Stage III that needs relocating. We will be signing an agreement with NIPSCO for that relocation.

Operation & Maintenance – Mr. Repay stated that we will have Austgen Electric check the pumps once a month and give us a report. There was an emergency situation in Marshalltown where the pump had to be repaired by Austgen. Austgen has a checklist they monitor; we will perform emergency repair work only. We will provide their reports to members.

Legislative – Commissioner McAhron stated that the State Budget Committee met on July 7 where he and Dan Repay requested approval to draw on a new appropriation of \$7,369,728 (which is a little less than the balance of the original \$14 million allocated in the last biennium). Once again, it was made clear to the Commission that the State would not provide any additional funding to us. Chairman Dernulc thanked Senator Mrvan for his support.

Other Issues/New Business – Tom Wichlinski referred to the big rain event that we had on June 23rd. He felt that the ongoing O&M meetings that Mr. Repay has had with the communities had a positive affect on the communities working together. There were some issues with Cady Marsh Ditch not receding quickly and the cooperation of Highland and Griffith working together really helped. There are still kinks to be worked out, but it was a good opportunity to see where those kinks were. Mr. Wichlinski also inquired about the town of Griffith having a monitor installed on Cady Marsh.

- William Baker thanked residents for attending the meetings and being interested in the entire “system”; not just their back yard. O&M funding still remains the first priority.
- Ron McAhron mentioned that in his capacity as a DNR employee working on floodplain management, he is meeting with Illinois to get a better understanding of their flood control system. Their system is different from ours; update will be displayed on the website.

Statements from the Floor -

- John Mulesa from Munster asked whether the Commission has a solution to flood proof the homes at Southmoor since they have decided not to put a floodwall in that vicinity based on a decision by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District to not upgrade the levee system in Illinois. Ron McAhron replied that he will be meeting with Illinois to get a better understanding of their system; dialogue is currently going on.
- Laurie Czulno from Hammond inquired how long it would take for a RFP for survey work. Mr. Repay replied that he will immediately solicit for the survey work. Once the 15' easement is identified, we can proceed from there. We will work from the Army Corps inspection report and the survey to identify tree clearing, brush removal, personal effects, fencing, etc. that needs to be removed within the 15'. Ron McAhron added that the levee itself is structurally sound; no settlement is noted given its age.
- John Beckman from Lake County Fish & Game has been talking to the Army Corps about a watershed management plan. They have written a letter to Col. Quarles detailing the importance of a watershed management program and have invited the Corps to meet with them. Copies of the letter will be given to Commissioners.
- John Zolnar from Hammond asked how much of the \$7 million is projected for State line. Mr. McAhron replied about \$2 million from NICTD to the State line. The Commission does not have good numbers for earthen work yet; they are still in discussions with the Corps. The Commission does have a concern about having enough money to finish the work that is committed to at this time, which is from State line to I-65. The levee that is at Forest now is functional and in relatively good shape. Because it is the breeding season of an endangered bat, some work cannot be done until after the breeding season or March 15. The Commission is obligated to prioritize in order to stretch all available money.
- Peter Yakanich from Hammond stated that the ultimate goal is getting the area out of the floodplain. He asked whether we have come up with a solution yet for flood protection. Mr. Repay did not receive pertinent information as early as he thought he would. Once he did receive it, he wanted to present it to the city of Hammond first to approve before meeting with area residents. He will be meeting with the Mayor next week. Once the best plan is approved, he will proceed to meet with residents. Ron McAhron added that they want 2 things from this plan – (1) competent system that protects people to at least the 100 year level and (2) reduced flood insurance relief for everyone as soon as possible. The Commission is working with their Federal partners to accomplish this.

- **Jim Renwick from Hammond expressed his concern about another flood event coming before any additional work would be done. Mr. Repay answered that is why we are committed to finding the best solution for flood protection. As soon as he meets with the Mayor, he will meet with residents. In the mean time, in a flood event, Hammond city engineer Stan Dostatni has committed to flood fight in their area.**
- **Karla Hunt from Munster expressed concern about the news article regarding a Michael Jackson memorial being built in Gary and in a flood plain. She encouraged the Commission to object to the plans. Mr. Repay answered that there are no plans yet that anyone has seen. It ultimately will be the Corps who has to review and object.**
- **Jeff Groen in Hammond inquired what it actually means for the levees to be certified. Mr. McAhron stated that the Army Corps inspection reports lists out deficiencies they find and they must be corrected before the Corps “certifies” that the levees meet their Corps standards. FEMA demands all levees to be certified before any reconsideration is given for removal from flood plain. They will not accept a levee system until the Corps certifies it.**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting was scheduled for the second Wednesday of the month, which will be Wednesday, August 11, 2010 at the Munster Town Hall at 6:00.