

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION HELD AT 6:00 P.M. WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2013**

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

Chairman William Baker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. An Executive Session/Work Study Session was held prior to the public meeting. Five (5) Commission members were present at roll call. Quorum was declared.

Commissioners:

William Baker, Chairman
Tom Wichlinski
Debbie Long
Anthony Broadnax
Tom Gozdecki

Executive Director:

Dan Repay

Attorney:

Dave Wickland

Staff:

Sandy Mordus
Judy Vamos

Visitors:

Ruth Mores – Southmoor, Hammond
John/Laurie Czulno - Hammond
Charles Svitko - Hammond
Mike Echterling
Fred Baginski – Friends of the Little Cal
T. Ahearn – Forest Avenue, Hammond
David Nellans – Munster Town Council
Joe Simonetto – Munster Town Council
Bonnie Vavrek – State Line, Hammond
LuAnn Franklin – The Times
Col. Drummond – Army Corps
Peter Yackanich - Hammond
T. Cholipski – River Drive, Munster
Craig Hendrix – S.E.H.

- Chairman Baker referred to the minutes of the November 13th meeting. Commissioner Broadnax made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Wichlinski; motion passed 5-0 with a roll call vote.

Chairman's Report - Chairman Baker stated that we are going into the sixth year of the flooding event of 2008. Some of the original concerned residents at that time are still coming to our monthly meetings; he thanked them for that. Looking at the flooding pictures remind us why we are here. We have come together as a community but there is still a lot of work ahead of us. This \$275 million man made project has its challenges but with a perpetual funding source now in place, we will do the necessary deferred maintenance and projects within the watershed. We cannot control Mother Nature but we can eliminate the opportunities for severe flooding. We will plan our work and then we will work our plan.

Executive Director's Report -

- Dan Repay reported that Walsh & Kelly have completed the construction of the concrete pad down Stateline; it now has to "cure" awhile. We will be incurring an additional cost for the additive added into the concrete for temperature control. He has met with Grimmer Construction and Lowell Concrete to discuss project. Because of cold weather conditions at present, there is not much activity going on but they are planning all blocks to be installed by February 1.
- The second pump at Burr Street is back in service. Both pumps are currently working. Pump 1 will still need additional service to it and that should be complete by the end of the month.
- There was an issue with the backup power on the pump at 32nd & Chase but that has been addressed and is now working.

- We expect to receive \$19,755 this year for the farm leases. Last year we had received \$17,240.
- We have talked with INDOT about the culverts that run underneath Martin Luther King Drive near the I-65 ramps. Initially we were going to do the work but INDOT is making this repair instead; they are already in the area working so they will fix the culvert.
- Gary North rehabilitation project will be bid out in the spring.
- Mr. Repay announced three watershed project proposals have been received. (1) Beaver Dam Ditch detention. This is a project for upland storage and they are asking for \$40,000 for a feasibility study. He thinks it is a good project and would recommend proceeding with it. (2) Grand Avenue Storm Sewer - Town of Winfield is looking for \$17,000 for the entire project. Mr. Repay would recommend we participate in this project. (3) Hidden Creek Ditch bank clearing – This project is also in Winfield and is at a cost of \$36,900. Permits and easements are already in hand. This is a project that perhaps the Commission could contract out to do and then we could control the cost.
- Mr. Repay announced that the tree planting we intended to do did not happen. We will plant new trees in the spring.

Chairman Baker asked the other Commissioners if there were questions regarding any of the projects.

- Commissioner Broadnax asked about INDOT doing the culvert repair. Mr. Repay explained that two culverts have collapsed and it was affecting the area drainage. Since the issue also affects INDOT, they have taken the responsibility of fixing them to avoid a drainage issue relative to the I-65 interchange at I-80/94.
- Chairman Baker talked about the potential of receiving 3 “ of rain in the forecast. With the snow on the ground and the ground being frozen, he asked Mr. Repay if we would have any problem. Mr. Repay replied that he continues to meet with partner communities to discuss this type of situation, should it occur. That is one of the reasons we have to make sure the pumps are always working; we will be prepared.
- Chairman Baker asked if the gages are being addressed by USGS. Mr. Repay replied that a couple of the gages are not currently working but USGS is aware and will have them back on line soon. We have signed an agreement with USGS that we will pay for the gages that the Corps has been paying for and they will fix the gages as needed.
- Mr. Repay stated that we have met with Corps to address the inspection reports. We recognize some of the problems and we will continue to work on that. Final inspection reports should be coming very soon.
- Commissioner Wichlinski asked if we were satisfied with the Columbia Avenue Bridge completion. Mr. Repay replied that there were a couple of issues brought up. The water bladder and sand bags may still have to be used. The bike trail was also damaged but will be addressed. They finished on time and did a good job. We have to supply a bridge engineer to certify that the bridge is structurally sound. Commissioner Wichlinski asked the Colonel if the Army Corps needed anything from us. Chairman Baker added that we could give the Corps a letter saying that this meets Corps specs. The Colonel replied that he thought something should already be in the file when it was turned over to us. Commissioner Broadnax inquired about our 25% share of the cost. Mr. Repay stated that we signed an agreement with the city of Hammond that we would pay 25% of total cost. Original agreement was for \$350,000 but there were a few change orders. We have not been billed yet. It will be listed on Claims Payable sheet when received.
- Commissioner Gozdecki asked about the standardization of the gages. Mr. Repay replied that we have just signed the agreement with USGS. We will be doing standardization of the gages but not in the immediate future. Mr. Gozdecki also asked why we weren't installing the State line blocks now. Mr. Repay stated that the contractor said it was more economical

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to wait so the blocks abut to the pads more securely. Contractor wants to do it all at one in about 4 days straight the last week of January. Mr. Repay will talk to the contractor again.

- **Finance** - Mr. Repay referred to the December claims in the amount of \$215,847.19 and explained some of the higher claims. Grimmer Construction has submitted the final claim on the Gary South rehabilitation project and then the first invoice for the State line work; Garcia's charges consist of engineering oversight on various projects; several claims are from Wiltjer Excavating for cleaning up of debris and blockage removal; and we've also purchased a private property on Forest Ave. for easier access to the area. Anthony Broadnax made a motion to approve the claims in the amount of \$215,847.19; motion seconded by Tom Gozdecki; motion passed with a 5-0 roll call vote.
- Discussion ensued on the project of clearing out the island in the area immediate west of Kennedy Avenue. The application to IDNR/IDEM needs to be resubmitted for approval. The original plan was to completely remove the island but now the plan is to move the silt and dirt to the south bank to build up the bank but it will still clear out the center of the river and the water flow would move quicker and easier to the east.
- Commissioner Broadnax inquired about a claim from the city of Hammond. Mr. Repay replied that city personnel helped out in Stages VII, VIII and V-2 with some filling, minor work before the pending Army Corps inspections took place.
- Mr. Repay stated that a draft budget will be circulated for passage at the next Commission meeting. A management plan for 2014 will be in place so we can be ready for the next construction season.

New Business - Director Repay presented the 3 watershed proposals for consideration.

- (1) Beaver Dam Ditch detention - The Lake County Surveyor's Office and DLZ submitted the application for storing up to 1400' of water during a flood event which will help people downstream, mainly Schererville, St. John and Dyer area. They are asking for \$40,000 for a feasibility study on whether or not they can store that amount of water in that location. Storage area is 101st on the north and 109th on the south. This will help with upland storage.
- (2) Grand Avenue Storm Sewer – This proposal was submitted by the town of Winfield. It is at Grand Blvd and 109th. In a high water event, water flows over the Grand and the road usually needs to be closed. They have asked for \$17,000 to do the entire project. It will solve the drainage problem in that area.
- (3) Hidden Creek Ditch bank clearing – This area is from Merrillville to Benton Street in Winfield and would cost about \$35,000. It is possible that we could contract it out so we can control the cost that way.

Discussion ensued on how much the Commission should contribute. Chairman Baker stated that he has looked at some other watershed projects in Porter County and the Army Corps where an 80/20 % ratio was used. We could consider our contribution of 80% and the municipality contributing the 20%. That way, they are involved in the process. He stressed that we need to be consistent with projects.

Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion to authorize the Director to enter into an agreement at a cost of \$40,000 for a study to see if the upland storage is feasible; motion seconded by Commissioner Wichlinski. A lengthy discussion ensued. Issues brought up dealt with the engineering of the project, the value of upland storage, paying for a "study" versus actual construction, regulated drains and unregulated drains, whether or not we should fund entire amount, the reality of the Commission having the money and the need to deliver results, and the consistency on how we move forward.

Original motion was withdrawn. Commissioner Gozdecki made a new motion authorizing the Director to enter into an agreement with Lake County whereas the Commission will pay 80% of the total cost of the feasibility study, not to exceed \$40,000, of Beaver Dam Ditch detention, with the balance of the 20% coming from a local match. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Wichlinski; motion passed with a 4-1 roll call vote, with Commissioner Broadnax voting against.

Commissioner Broadnax made a motion authorizing the Director to enter into an agreement with the local municipality for the Grand Avenue Storm Sewer project at a 80% contribution up to \$25,600, with the municipality contributing the remaining 20% cost. Motion seconded by Commissioner Wichlinski; motion passed with a 5-0 roll call vote.

Hidden Creek Ditch – Town of Winfield is requesting \$36,900 to do bank clearing. Mr. Repay stated that perhaps we could hire a contractor to reduce the cost or do the 80/20 split not to exceed. Commissioner Broadnax made a motion authorizing the Director to enter into an agreement with the respective municipality for an 80% contribution not to exceed \$36,900; motion seconded by Commissioner Gozdecki. Discussion followed. Commissioner Wichlinski brought up the issue of whether or not it was bad development and whether it is a private sub-division. After discussion, it was agreed to withdraw the motion as presented. Commissioner Wichlinski proceeded to make a motion to table this proposal and directed Mr. Repay to come back with more detailed information. Motion passed with a 5-0 roll call vote.

Chairman Baker added that each proposal we receive will have its own challenges and will have to be evaluated individually. He recommended that on future proposals, we should have a representative of the community to come before the Board to explain their proposal. Until an Advisory Committee is put in place, as called for in the statute, we have to be that committee.

• Commissioner Broadnax made a motion to approve Resolution 2013-3 allowing the Commission the ability to participate in meetings telephonically. Attorney Wick land added that a new public law becoming effective January 1 allows members to participate in a meeting via telephone call. Motion seconded by Commissioner Gozdecki; motion passed with a 5-0 roll call vote.

Other Business – Anthony Broadnax congratulated LuAnn Franklin from The Times on her upcoming retirement. Chairman Baker added that he appreciates her attendance at our meetings each month and keeping our name in the newspaper. He thanked her as well as the Colonel, who drives down from Chicago for our meetings. Tom Wichlinski added he thanked the residents for coming out and keeping us accountable.

Statements to the Board

• **Laurie Czulno** from Forest Ave. in Hammond thanked the Commissioners for their service this year. She had hoped to see the completion of State line protection this year but she encouraged the Commission to continue to push the contractor. She added that she thinks a plan should already be in place for a watershed project; we shouldn't be funding plans.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. Chairman Baker announced that the next meeting is scheduled for the third Wednesday of the month which will be Wednesday, January 15th at the Munster Town Hall at 6:00. MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.