

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION HELD AT 6:00 P.M. WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 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
Anthony Broadnax
Ron McAhron
Tom Gozdecki

Executive Director:

Dan Repay

Attorney:

Dave Wickland

Staff:

Sandy Mordus

Visitors:

James/Kalliope Dedelow – Munster
Erik Sprenne – N.W. IN Paddling Assoc. &
South Shore Trails
Gregory Sanchez – Lake County Surveyor's
Office
Sandy O'Brien – Hobart
LuAnn Franklin – The Times
Dave Wellman - RDA
T. Ahearn – Forest Ave., Hammond
Mike Echterling – Friends of the Little
Calumet River
Fred Baginski - Hammond
John Mulesa - Munster
John Eliopoulos – Ellas Construction
John Beckman – IWLA-PCC
LeVon Whittaker
Steve Jadrnak – Forest Ave., Hammond
Bill Emerson – Hammond Councilman

Chairman Baker referred to the minutes of the April 17th meeting. Commissioner Broadnax made a motion to accept the minutes as presented; motion seconded by Ron McAhron; motion passed 5-0 with a roll call vote.

Chairman Baker stated that they never want to see a flooding event like we had in September 2008 again. That is the reason the Board & staff is continuing to do everything they can to minimize that possibility. Ongoing maintenance of the levee system and future maintenance that will be done will be much easier now that there will be funding in place to perform the work necessary to ensure the system works properly.

Chairman Baker referred to Executive Director Dan Repay to give a report. Mr. Repay referred to the May claims approval sheet and explained several of the claims. Wiltjer Excavating has been cleaning out several blockages in various areas; Pro-Pump had to repair the pump 35th & Cleveland. There were several claims from municipalities that we will reimburse for manpower hours spent monitoring and installing proper closures when river levels reached action stage. Total claims for May were \$113,357.70. Mr. Repay then referred to the June claims approval sheet which amounted to \$57,992.02. Commissioner Gozdecki asked why the town of Highland wasn't listed on the claims sheet & Mr. Repay explained that there was little impact to Highland. Commissioner Broadnax made a motion to approve the May claims in the amount of \$113,357.70; motion seconded by Commissioner Wichlinski; motion passed with a 5-0 roll call vote.

Commissioner McAhrn proceeded to make a motion to approve the June claims in the amount of \$57,992.02; motion seconded by Commissioner Wichlinski; motion passed with a 5-0 roll call vote.

Executive Director proceeded with his report. He reported that there was a problem with the Burr Street pump again. We will be meeting with the manufacturer, who will guarantee his work for us. He will be pulling the pump out for repair.

- We had a problem with the pump at 32nd & Grant and the pump at Broadway. Both are up and running now.
- The contractor has just finished cutting the grass on the levees. With the rain we have been having, it will probably have to be cut more often.
- The Army Corps has recently inspected the levees and we are awaiting their report.
- The first of the three tree clearing contracts started today. That area will start at Northcote and proceed west to Columbia. The second contract will start around June 15 and will be from Kennedy Avenue to Hohman. Cities and towns have been notified of the work. About 85% of the trees, all damaged, will be cut down.
- The Lake County Watershed Study is ongoing. They are assembling the gathered information; report is due in July.
- Regarding the maintenance fee placed on real estate tax statements, we understand that it is about 83% collected. The final report from the Auditor's office should be coming in late June.
- We will be meeting with and touring the National Weather System facilities in Romeoville IL. We need to have a better contact and better monitoring of the gages on the river.
- Mr. Repay reported that the April rain event was not as bad as it could have been; most of the rain went west of us. Everyone was out in force and was prepared for the worse. They did have to close both Columbia Avenue and Northcote. There were some minor issues, but river was constantly monitored. A geyser at 35th & Chase had to be taken care of and the flap gate was stuck at OxBow and the Hammond Fire Dept. had to cut the lock. The levee at State Line had to be closely monitored.
- Columbia Avenue bridge reconstruction/raising will be bid out in June and awarded in July.
- The bike trail by the railroad trestle was blocked near Hammond and Munster. Several large trees near the piers have been taken out.
- Bids were received for the Gary South Levee maintenance project. A motion was made by Tom Gozdecki for Mr. Repay to open the bids; motion seconded by Anthony Broadnax; all in favor.
- Commissioner Broadnax asked whether the contract for gage monitoring with OMMYX was terminated. Mr. Repay stated that the contract expired and we would not be renewing it. We will look into the U.S.G.S. gage monitoring and the National Weather System. We need to gain a better understanding of what we want from the monitoring. The gages are still on the web site but are not working.
- Mr. Repay gave an overview of what the Gary South Levee maintenance project will consist of. It will be the rehabilitation of the levees from Chase Street and 35th to Martin Luther King. The trail on top of the levee will be redone and gravel will be placed there. Debris will be removed and animal burrows will be addressed. The last Army Corps inspection was in 2007. Chairman Baker added that the work is being done to bring that portion of the levee system back up to "acceptable" status by the Army Corps.
- Mr. Repay announced the four (4) bids received for the Gary South Levee project. They are (1) Grimmer Construction at \$351,504; (2) Ellas Construction at \$440,700; (3) Dyer Construction at \$513,425; and (4) Gariup Construction at \$415,000. The attorney will

review the bids to make sure they are complete and responsive. Commissioner Wichlinski made a motion, after review for completeness by attorney, to authorize the attorney and Executive Director to draft and enter into a contract to the lowest and responsive bidder, stating date to start, date to complete, including a time line; motion seconded by Commissioner Broadnax; motion passed with a 5-0 roll call. Chairman Baker added that we have had past experience with some of these contractors and the bids are relatively close in amounts. Staff will notify the Commission members of their selection before awarding the contract.

- Commissioner Wichlinski asked when the Gary North levee design would be completed. Mr. Repay answered that plans & specs are currently being developed and it is anticipated that it should be ready for bidding in the fall. The Gary North Levee maintenance project is from the Griffith golf center by the railroad to Martin Luther King. It is a longer segment; about twice the size of the Gary South portion.

- Ron McAhron asked Mr. Repay to explain the leaf disposal proposal. Mr. Repay reported that we have been approached by the Lake County Solid Waste District for them to use a portion of Commission land to develop leaf rows and have offered us an agreement to that effect. Mr. Repay stated that the advantages would be that we would have someone on site and we would be helping out another agency. This is property that is usually farmed. The area adjacent to the location of the leaf farm will still be farmed. Attorney Wickland added that the contract could be terminated by either party without notice. They had asked for a 3-year lease but Chairman Baker recommended a 1-year lease to see how it works out. He stated the leaf farm would consist of rows of leaves that are collected from residents' yards in the fall and this would be the disposal site. Commissioner Gozdecki added that the contract stipulates of payment of \$1,000 to the Commission for the year.

Commissioner Broadnax made a motion for enter into a 1-year agreement with the Lake County Solid Waste District for the development of a leaf farm on a specified piece of property owned by the Commission that is made part of the agreement; motion seconded by Commissioner Gozdecki. Contract would be modified to stipulate payment to us upon execution of agreement and then January 31 of every year afterwards, if renewed. Motion passed with a 5-0 roll call vote.

Statements from the floor:

- Mike Echterling from Friends of the Little Calumet thanked everyone for their help and cooperation with the Little Calumet River festival. It was a huge success and they had a good crowd. He also thanked the Commission for reconsidering the proposal for the leaf farm.

- John Mulesa from Munster talked about the last rain event we had. He viewed the river from Hohman to Georgia St. He described a large tree on the side of Hohman Avenue bridge that he thought should be removed. He talked about the extreme flow of water going to the west and whether the diverter structure was doing what it was suppose to do. After discussion on the diverter, staff will talk to the Army Corps about it. He noticed that Columbia and Northcote and one lane on Calumet Avenue had to be closed and spoke about two frontage roads in Gary east of Grant that need to be removed. Out of the 5 culverts there, 4 of them were plugged. Mr. Repay stated that INDOT had built the roads there but, since there is no further need for them, we will get permits and have them removed. He also stated that, as of early today, there are no blockages.

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- Erik Sprenne from Northwest IN Paddling & South Shore Trails, thanked the Commission for removing logs/debris upstream of Chase Street. He also suggested upgrading the trail surface on the Gary South levee rehab. Mr. Repay answered that Burr Street is not part of this levee system. The trail system is limestone fines and is not meant for vehicles.
- Sandy O'Brien from Hobart announced that there will be a hike on the trails at Robinson Lake off 61st Avenue in Hobart this Saturday at 9:00. The trails have been rehabbed with dollars from the Great Lakes. It is a good opportunity to see the improvements. She also inquired about the Hobart Marsh mitigation project. Chairman Baker stated that deferred maintenance is the priority right now. The mitigation project is on the radar but no definitive time line is identified at this point.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. Chairman Baker announced that the next meeting is scheduled for the second Wednesday of the month, which will be Wednesday, July 10th at the Munster Town Hall at 6:00.