

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION HELD AT 6:00 P.M. WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 2014**

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

Chairman William Baker called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. An Executive Session/Work Study Session was held prior to the public meeting. All six (6) Commission members were present at roll call. Quorum was declared.

Commissioners:

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

Executive Director:

Dan Repay

Attorney:

Dave Wickland

Staff:

Sandy Mordus

Visitors:

Ruth Mores – Southmoor, Hammond
John/Laurie Czulno - Hammond
Charles Svitko - Hammond
John Beckman – Izaak Walton League
Mike Echterling – Friends of the Little Cal
Fred Baginski – Hammond
Mark Kaiser – Chris. Burke Engineering
David Nellans – Munster Town Council
Bill Emerson Sr – 4th Dist, Hmd Councilman
Bonnie Vavrek – State Line, Hamd
Jayson Reeves – Gary
Sandy O'Brien - Hobart
Col. Drummond - USACE
T. Cholipski – River Drive, Munster

- Chairman Baker referred to the minutes of the April 9th meeting. Commissioner Broadnax made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Wichlinski; motion passed 6-0 with a roll call vote.

Chairman's Report - Chairman Baker stated that looking at the flooding pictures is the reason we are here. We are charged with maintaining a \$275 million man-made asset in the community. We will continue to move forward with all deferred maintenance. About \$4 million savings realized and put back into the community with the reduced flood insurance promotes economic development.

Executive Director's Report –

- **Finance** - Mr. Repay referred to the claims for the month of May. Tom Wichlinski made a motion to approve the May claims in the amount of \$475,045.52; motion seconded by Anthony Broadnax. Mr. Repay proceeded to explain some of the claims. The highest claim is for Lowell Concrete to cover the cost of the cement blocks for Stateline tie-back. Grimmer Construction's claim consists of construction cost of installation the blocks on Stateline. Gariup Construction has submitted a claim for the Kennedy Ave. recreation trail repair. There are also claims from Wiltjer Excavating for clean up and blockage removal in several areas.

Chairman Baker stated that the trees along the river ended up being quite a challenge. They were removed and now we will plant smaller, more acceptable trees outside the levee system.

LCRBDC Minutes – May 14, 2014 – Page 2

Commissioner Wichlinski asked what the original amount was that was allocated for tree purchase. Mr. Repay replied that the original amount was \$60,000. Some money was spent for tree purchase at Wicker Park and some of the money will be spent in Riverside Park and Riches Park. We've spent about half of the allocation. Motion passed with a 6-0 roll call vote.

O&M/Engineering -

Mr. Repay reported the following:

- Blocks have been put in place at State Line. Blacktop on street will be done on Friday. Project should be completed then. We submitted a plan for flood fighting to the Corps and are awaiting their approval. In a flood event, there are about 25' of sand bags that will be used to close off the walkways in between the blocks.
- We couldn't really find anything that caused the sink hole at Kennedy Avenue but we had it repaired and are keeping a close eye on it.
- The Harrison Street closure exercise in Gary was held a couple of weeks ago. It was very successful and had a very good turnout of about 30-40 helpers. About 1,500 sand bags were filled and placed that day.
- Annual inspections of the levees were completed on Monday. Everything went very well and no major problems were found.
- The Hobart Marsh report summarizing a plan of what needs to be done there will be received soon.
- The Kennedy Avenue bike trail has been repaired and completed.
- At the Monon railroad tracks, 3 piers have been removed; 1 is remaining to be removed. Chairman Baker added that it will be very helpful for maintenance after the piers are removed.
- The small pump at Grant Street in Gary needs to be repaired.
- Chairman Baker inquired about the meeting held today with the municipalities. Mr. Repay said it was a good meeting, talking about how we can do things even better than we do.
- We're in the process of trying to finish up the design for Gary North rehabilitation project so we will be able to bid out soon.
- We've been receiving numerous phone calls regarding the Little Cal maintenance fee placed on Lake County property taxes. A lot of the calls were from not-for-profit organizations, as well as churches, that were missed at the Auditor's Office.
- Colonel Drummond spoke. He commented that Bill Rochford was very impressed with how well the inspections went seeing the levees brought back up to speed. After serving at the Chicago Corps office for 3 years, the Colonel is off to Afghanistan. He will be replaced with Colonel Christopher Drew. He encouraged us to work with him to complete this entire project to 100%. This project has been challenging and working with some of the residents, he saw firsthand the passion and perseverance they showed. He thanked the audience and thanked the Board members. Like the Chairman, he never wants to see a flooding event like 2008 – ever again.
- Chairman Baker stated that this project has been a learning experience for everyone. He thanked the Colonel for attending the monthly meetings and always being available to us. He personally thanked him and wished him well in his next assignment.

Other Issues/New Business -

- Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion to accept the Lake County Parks & Recreation Dept. application for Beaver Dam project at a cost of \$194,468 and authorized the Executive Director to enter into an agreement, with the attorney drafting the agreement; motion

seconded by Commissioner Broadnax. Mr. Repay explained that this project is identified as in the unincorporated area of the Little Cal watershed and will improve storage capacity and provide better water quality. The Parks Dept. will put in \$100,000 for a total cost of \$294,468. Location is 101st Avenue/Clark Street in unincorporated Crown Point. Motion passed 6-0 with roll call vote.

- Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion authorizing the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with Christopher Burke Engineering for a study of hydrologic modeling of the east branch of the river at a cost of \$14,500, with the attorney drafting the agreement; motion seconded by Commissioner Broadnax. Mr. Repay explained that there are some existing issues that we need to have qualified and this report will address those issues. Area location is from Indianapolis Blvd. eastward. Motion passed with 6-0 roll call vote.

- Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion to re-bid the project of replacement of culverts at Grant Street; motion seconded by Commissioner Broadnax. The original project was to replace 4 of the culverts; the re-bid will consist of replacement of 8 culverts. We haven't received a permit yet. Chairman Baker added that every time we have a project, we have to obtain a permit. Motion passed with 6-0 roll call vote.

Statements from the Floor

- Jason Reeves from Gary expressed his desire to see Chase Street re-opened so that area residents are able to use it. There are still existing water problems throughout Gary and he would hope that they are addressed before we consider spending money on bike trails.

- Mike Echterling, Friends of the Little Cal, reminded everyone that the Little Calumet River Festival will be held Saturday, May 17. The length of the anticipated canoe trip will be shortened due to high water levels. One new eagle chick was born this spring; that makes a total of 8 chicks born along the river.

- Laurie Czulno, Forest Avenue in Hammond, thanked the Colonel for being receptive and listening to her concerns and wished him safe travel. She indicated the blocks down State Line look good and she is pleased how they turned out.

- Councilman Bill Emerson from the 4th District in Hammond thanked the Commission for all the improvements he has seen since he has started office 3 years ago. He inquired about the placement of the ornamental light at 172nd Street. Mr. Repay replied that he has been coordinating with 1st Group Engineering and they should be installing it very soon.

- Sandy O'Brien, Hobart, wished the Colonel good luck. She thanked the Commission for moving forward with a feasibility study for mitigation and asked which properties would be addressed. Mr. Repay answered that we are meeting with the company in a week and will know more after that. We asked that the plan be consistent with the areas already identified to accomplish the mitigation that is necessary.

- John Beckman, Izaak Walton League in Porter County, was happy to hear we are looking at projects for upland storage. He also stated his support in the Commission pursuing Longwood Lake in Dyer for storage even if it is a couple of years down the road. It would have good congressional support also.

There being no further business, the next meeting date is Wednesday, June 11 at the Munster Town Hall.

