

MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HELD AT 6:00 p.m., WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2024
Location: Munster Town Hall, Munster, IN

Chairman Baker presided and called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. There were eight (8) Commission members present at roll call. Quorum was declared.

Commissioners Present:

William Baker, Chairman
Tom Wichlinski, Vice-Chairman
Levon Whittaker, Secretary
Tom Gozdecki, Treasurer
Dave Castellanos
Ron Ware
Robert Ochi
Derek Nimetz

Commissioners Absent:

Anthony Broadnax

Executive Director:

Dan Repay

Attorney:

David Wickland

Staff:

Jodi Lambert

Visitors:

Gary Lee – Gary
Dave Taborsky – Gary
Frank Stewart – DLZ
Sandra Lyons – Munster
Vicki Williams – Munster
Thomas Burke - CBBEL
Chad Nondorf – Town of Schererville
Andrew Hansen – Town of Schererville
Sivash Beik – CBBEL (via Zoom)
Mark Gordish (via Zoom)
C. Greenburg (via Zoom)
Alex Dalton (via Zoom)
B. Scott Henry (via Zoom)

Election of Officers –

Commissioner Wichlinski made a motion to re-elect the current slate of officers for the upcoming year: William Baker – Chairman, Tom Wichlinski – Vice-Chairman, Tom Gozdecki – Treasurer and Levon Whittaker – Secretary; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 8-0.

Approval of Minutes -

Commissioner Nimetz made a motion to modify the minutes from January 17, 2024, adding Commissioner Wichlinski as present at that meeting. Commissioner Whittaker additionally requested that his comments regarding committee meetings be reflected in the minutes; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 7-0 (Commissioner Gozdecki abstained).

Chairman's Report –

Chairman Baker thanked the board for the vote of confidence and welcomed all to the meeting. He stated that the Commission is tasked with the continued maintenance of a \$275 million man-made federal flood control project. There are numerous issues with the original design and decades of deferred maintenance that we are in the process of addressing. Despite this, the project has been constructed to manage Mother Nature and at some time there will be an issue when we get 10 gallons of water for our 5-gallon bucket – but we are better prepared today for that situation than we were before the flood of 2008.

Finance –

Chairman Baker referred to the February 2024 claims in the amount of \$902,758.39. Commissioner Whittaker made a motion to approve the claims as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Wichlinski. Mr. Repay explained a few of the claims, starting with several payments on various Watershed Projects including: \$345,000.00 to the Merrillville Stormwater for the Kaiser Ditch East Tributary Flood Control Watershed Project, \$299,060.70 to the City of Crown Point for the 113th Avenue Culvert Replacement Watershed Project and \$1,866.80 to the Town of Griffith on the Cady Marsh Screen Raker Watershed Project. Superior Engineering submitted a claim in the amount of \$74,400.00 for continued work on drawings plans for rehabilitation at the Burr North, Grant West and Grant East Pump Stations. Finally, \$29,106.00 was paid to U.S. Geological Survey for the quarterly operation and maintenance of multiple stream gages throughout the system.

Commissioner Ware requested clarification on the invoice from Tyrone Integrated Systems as there were multiple individuals and contractors listed on the documentation. Mr. Repay stated that some of the work was subbed out to a second party, IVS Hydro, as additional dewatering pumps were needed to complete the work at the Burr North Pump Station.

Commissioner Wichlinski asked if the Schoon Ditch clearing was complete. Mr. Repay stated that the work is complete, and Cady Marsh Ditch is next to be completed.

Commissioner Gozdecki asked for additional information on the billing from United Consulting. Mr. Repay stated that once we receive approval for the 408 permit, the project will be bid out and the amount listed on their invoice is a budget amount.

Chairman Baker asked about Levee Security and if we are finished with it for the season. Mr. Repay stated that the additional security was helpful with regards to deterring hunting. We are working with the City of Gary on some ordinance changes that may help with the hunting concerns.

Commissioner Ware asked for status on the Pump Station Rehabilitation plans that Superior Engineering is working on as they are nearing 50% in billing. Mr. Repay stated that he has a meeting scheduled with their team next week to review the SCADA system and the preliminary plans.

Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 8-0.

Executive Director's Report –

Mr. Repay gave an update on several of the projects:

- The Sauerman Wood's Drainage Improvements Project is on hiatus for the winter months. The contractor still needs to lay the final infrastructure to connect it to the pond. We continue to monitor the progress.
- Superior Engineering has completed the initial drawings and plans for construction and rehabilitation of the PLC's at Burr North Grant East and Grant West. A meeting with myself, Superior Engineering and our contractor, Great Lakes Electrical Maintenance is scheduled for later this month to review the plans.
- Plans for the Sandbar Modification Project have been submitted to the USACE for their review and comments.
- We have submitted our application to the Northwest Indiana Forum for consideration of a READI2 Grant on construction of the Kennedy Avenue Bridge. We should find out if our application is successful in April.
- We are working with the City of Hobart and the Lake County Surveyor's office regarding a large beaver dam on private property in Hobart. Currently we are reviewing the options to address this issue.
- Later this month I have a meeting with INDOT legal and LaPorte District officials to discuss the potential turnover of the Indianapolis Blvd. and Kennedy Avenue Pump Stations to the Commission. This would allow us to update the Indianapolis Blvd. Station to include a trash rack and lower the inlet, which would reduce the number of gates we need to secure in Highland.
- The Interlocal Agreement with the Lake County Drainage Board for the Hart Ditch Stabilization Project is on our Agenda later in the meeting. The Agreement also gives us a contingency amount in case we run into an emergency while the contract is active.
- We are in discussion with Wolverine Pipeline regarding some repair work to their pipeline. I will have further information regarding this in upcoming meetings.
- As a reminder to the public, the Commission hosts 2 local radio shows – WJOB 1230am at 8:00 a.m. on the 1st Tuesday of each month and WLTH 1370am at 9:00 a.m. on the 2nd Monday of each month.
- We are still working to get power to the Natural Spring. Currently, NIPSCO is coordinating with the Railroad as the rail line will need to be shut down for a period of time while the line is run over the tracks.
- Our partners with the Lake County Collaborative have submitted their funding request for 2024-25. I anticipate they will give a presentation on their request at our April Meeting.

Chairman Baker asked if the Sandbar Modification Project would be completed this construction season. Mr. Repay stated that we are hoping for work to begin in the fall.

Other Issues/New Business –

Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion to table an agreement with Christopher B. Burke Engineering for the Independent Levee System Evaluation Project; motion

seconded by Commissioner Whittaker. Mr. Repay stated that this evaluation will be needed for future LOMR's and will also be useful for communities that currently have approved LOMR's. There were several options provided and additional time is necessary to review the information. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 8-0.

Commissioner Nimetz made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-01 and an Interlocal Agreement with the Lake County Drainage Board for the Hart Ditch Bank Stabilization Project Segment 3, in the amount of \$1,300,000.00. Subject to final draft and approval by attorney, Executive Director and Chairman; motion seconded by Commissioner Ware. Mr. Repay stated that the Lake County Drainage board has already approved the Interlocal Agreement. Additionally, this agreement will also close out the previous segments of the project as complete and in compliance with permits and regulations. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 8-0.

Commissioner Whittaker made a motion to extend billboard license agreements #1050 and #4800 with Lamar Companies to expire on November 30, 2025, pending legal review; motion seconded by Commissioner Ochi. Mr. Repay stated that with this action, all 19 billboard license agreements will now expire at the same time. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 8-0.

Presentations –

The following Watershed Applications were presented at the meeting. The links to the video presentations are included below:

- Town of Schererville – Andrew Hansen, Director of Operations, and Chad Nondorf, Director of Public Works presenting:
[Grand Canyon](#) (Construction)
Funding Request: \$64,000.00
Video: <https://youtu.be/OQPMj1ldZ0?si=XW6BONdMsri3n5XY>
- Town of Merrillville – Frank Stewart, DLZ Engineering presenting:
[Grand Boulevard Drainage Improvements](#) (Construction)
Funding Request: \$345,000.00
Video: <https://youtu.be/zGkUS9aLEwQ?si=7UmMHsbbhSOO5aWs>
- Town of Dyer – Thomas Burke, Christopher B. Burke Engineering presenting:
[Highpoint Prairie Detention Basin Restoration](#) (Construction)
Revised Funding Request: \$32,800.00
Video: <https://youtu.be/AaaMRt5l68l?si=Ndfj4-VTbujfMQQP>

Statements to the Board –

No Statements to the Board

Statements from the Board –

Commissioner Ware thanked the Community presenters for their informative presentations on potential Watershed Applications and thanked the public for continuing to attend our monthly meetings.

Commissioner Whittaker thanked the public for attending our meetings both in person and on Zoom. He stated that several community members expressed concerns regarding our Commission and took the time to send correspondence to us. Director Repay responded to their concerns and offered to take them on a tour of the Watershed. He added that as public servants, we have an obligation to be transparent with the public. Additionally, he commended the Communities on the quality of their presentations.

Commissioner Wichlinski thanked those for attending our meeting. He further commented on the great Watershed Application presentations.

Commissioner Gozdecki thanked the presenters for their quality and informative Watershed Presentations.

Commissioner Castellanos commended the communities for their excellent Watershed Presentations and said the Commission looks forward to working with them. He also added that he has been working with a few community groups and looks forward to them attending future meetings to request information and help for their communities.

There being no further business, the next regular meeting was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 20, 2024.