

MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HELD AT 6:00 p.m., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 2025
Location: LCRBDC OFFICE, Munster, IN

Vice-Chairman Wichlinski presided and called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. There were seven (7) Commission members present at roll call. Quorum was declared.

Commissioners Present:

Tom Wichlinski, Vice-Chairman
Levon Whittaker, Secretary
Tom Gozdecki, Treasurer
Dave Castellanos
Robert Ochi
Ron Ware
Anthony Broadnax (via zoom)

Visitors:

Gary Lee – Gary
Dave Taborski – Gary
Mike Zoeller – Conservation Law Center
Michael Novotney – Wessler Engineering
David Nellans – Town of Munster
Darren Olson – CBBEL
Joe Wilk – CBBEL

Commissioners Absent:

William Baker, Chairman

Executive Director:

Dan Repay

Attorney:

Nicole Bennett

Staff:

Jodi Lambert

Zoom Participants:

Siavash Beik - CBBEL
Jeff Huet – Town of Schererville
Jacob Ballah – BF&S Eng.

Statements to the Board –

David Nellans, Town of Munster, commented on the new office space, stating that the meeting room is beautiful and well laid out. He added that he appreciates all that the Little Calumet River Basin has done by keeping an eye on the water that flows through our community and making it better than it was twenty years ago.

Approval of Minutes -

Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion to approve the minutes from February 19, 2025, as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Ochi. Vice-Chairman Wichlinski asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-vote. Motion passed 6-0 (Commissioner Broadnax abstained).

Chairman's Report –

Vice-Chairman Wichlinski thanked everyone for attending the meeting, despite the severe weather conditions. He added that we have several presentations scheduled for this evening, so we will be moving forward with the agenda.

Finance –

Vice-Chairman Wichlinski addressed the March 2025 claims totaling \$221,924.04. Commissioner Ware moved to approve the claims as presented, and Commissioner Castellanos seconded the motion.

Mr. Repay provided an explanation of several claims, starting with a claim amounting 69,886.80 from Hasse Construction for the 80/94 Culvert Clearing Project. This project involves the cleaning and inspection of the four culverts underneath the expressway. \$24,218.98 was paid to American StructurePoint for design work on the Lake Station Rock Riffle trail. This project will connect the trail that is currently a part of the Rock Riffle Project with an existing Lake Station trail that will provide more access to the river. Our electrical contractor, Great Lakes Electrical Maintenance, submitted a claim in the amount of \$10,210.00 for their inspection and maintenance of several Pump Stations. Garcia Consulting Engineers provided construction management services in the amount of \$15,560.00 on the 80/94 Culvert Clearing Project, coordinating with INDOT and the contractor for this difficult project. Finally, 1st Response Maintenance was paid \$13,349.40 for completing repairs to a service road off of Chase Street.

Vice-Chairman Wichlinski asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 7-0.

Executive Director's Report –

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

- Hasse Construction has cleared and inspected one of the four culverts that run underneath the expressway. As you move to the east the culverts become easier to clean because there is less sediment to remove. So far there have been no concerns.
- Grimmer Construction is nearly 50% complete with the cleaning and inspection of the Gary North and South segments. These inspections need to be completed every 5 years per USACE standards.
- I met with INDOT regarding the possibility of the Commission clearing the ditches that run between I-94 and the levee of phragmites and debris. We are waiting to hear back from INDOT on moving forward with this project.
- I also discussed potential future projects with INDOT that would help the expressway drain better. Two potential projects include a lift station at I-65 and an additional lift station at the northwest corner of Indianapolis Blvd. and the river. These projects were suggested in a 2009 INDOT report.
- USACE inspections for the Griffith, Burr Street, Gary North, Gary South and Marshalltown segments are scheduled to start on April 7th. We do not have dates for Hammond, Highland and Munster and are unsure if they will be inspected this year.
- We are still waiting for a 408 permit on the Kennedy Avenue Sandbar Modification Project. Responses have been submitted to the USACE's latest questions on the Sluice Gate Modification project, and it is anticipated that a 408 permit will be issued soon. We also anticipate receiving our permit for the Bank Stabilization/Boat Ramp project in the near future.

- We contracted with Christopher Burke Engineering some time ago to do the geotechnical work on the levees in Gary. In order to get the proper permits, the USACE is requiring that we have a licensed structural engineer or geotechnical professional on site for the 80+ borings that will be taken throughout the Gary levee. Despite numerous discussions with USACE over the past eight months, and offering various alternatives, they will not move from this position. The information that we get from these borings is more important than trying to fight a losing battle. In April I will be bringing a proposal for geotechnical oversight for consideration by the board.
- I met with the City of Gary on several issues. The City still needs an appointment to our Advisory Board. We are waiting for a letter from the Mayor's office with their appointment. We discussed storm water concerns in the Black Oak neighborhood. We are reviewing a preliminary study completed by the USACE to see if there is something we can do to help. We spoke with the City again on the importance for us in getting an ordinance in place that prohibits the discharge of firearms inside city limits. Finally, I had a discussion with Brenda Scott-Henry on the best way to manage our in-project mitigation as we have new contractor.
- The next phase of the Hart Ditch Bank Stabilization Project is scheduled to start around May 1st. This phase is estimated to cost \$1,600,000.00. We have already begun to remove some trees within the project area. We have asked Christopher Burke Engineering to give us an estimate on expediting the next phases of the project so we can potentially complete another phase of stabilization this fall.
- We are working with the Lake County Drainage Board to do clearing and snagging work in Dyer Ditch from 77th to US 30.
- Now that the weather is improving, we will be removing several large beaver dams in Hobart.
- We are again working with the Lake County Drainage Board to cut down some trees in Schererville Ditch before the Indiana Bat regulations take place.
- The last two PLC's at the Grant West and Marshalltown Pump Stations are scheduled to be installed starting this week and wrapping up by April 1st.
- We received four submittals for the Watershed Study. We are in the process of reviewing them and hope to award the contract within the next few weeks.
- We recently had an Advisory Board Meeting where six applications were presented. You will hear four presentations today and two at our April meeting.
- We've updated some of our Commission procedures including moving public comment to the beginning of the meeting.
- The final phase of the drone survey took place at the Marshalltown and 80/94 corridor. The information will be helpful to us as well as important to the Gary LOMR application.

Presentations -

The following Watershed Applications were presented at the meeting. The link to the video presentation is included below:

- Town of Merrillville – Darren Olson, Christopher B. Burke Engineering presenting:
[Stormwater Master Plan Update](#) (Engineering)
Funding Request: \$39,265.00 (50%)
Video: <https://youtu.be/XMvpykcs9QY?si=1DdQnyR9aWi7m8e3>
- Lake County Drainage Board – Joe Wilk, Christopher B. Burke Engineering presenting:
[Turkey Creek Maintenance – Phase 1](#)
Funding Request: \$444,000.00 (60%)
Video: <https://youtu.be/CSVe1NtUxSo?si=5erO2KMiUQ67j4uN>
- Town of Dyer – Joe Wilk, Christopher B. Burke Engineering presenting:
[Storm Water Improvements at Sandy Ridge Park](#)
Funding Request: \$240,408.30 (60%)
Video: <https://youtu.be/1Tw8-g0GUJs?si=P-8sKeZQsXuk02Cl>
- Lake County Drainage Board – Joe Wilk, Christopher B. Burke Engineering presenting:
[Schererville Ditch Streambank Maintenance](#)
Funding Request: \$528,250.61 (60%)
Video: <https://youtu.be/sEk3vGJCRbA?si=GLszsNs5TiO9Jvxx>

Other Issues/New Business –

No Other Issues/New Business.

There being no further business, the next regular meeting was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 19, 2025.