

MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HELD AT 6:00 p.m., WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2026
Location: LCRBDC OFFICE, Munster, IN

Chairman Baker 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.

Commissioners Present:

William Baker, Chairman
Tom Wichlinski, Vice-Chairman
Tom Gozdecki, Treasurer
Levon Whittaker, Secretary
David Castellanos
Ron Ware
Anthony Broadnax (via zoom)

Commissioners Absent:

Robert Ochi

Executive Director:

Dan Repay

Attorney:

Nicole Bennett

Staff:

Jodi Lambert

Visitors:

Gary Lee – Gary
Dave Taborski – Gary
Laurie Czulno – Hammond
John Czulno – Hammond
Paul Daniels – CCxPD LLC

Zoom Participants:

Isabella Foster - DNR
Jeff Huet – Town of Schererville
Patty Mellon
Siavash Beik – CBBEL
Peggy Shephard – CBBEL
A.J. Fricke – CBBEL
Paul Dawley – CBBEL
Tom Everett – Barnes & Thornburg
Joe Wilk – CBBEL
Jay Anderson – Gary Sanitary District
Melissa O

Public Hearing on Additional Appropriations –

Mr. Repay introduced Resolution 2026-07 stating this will allow us to bond mainly for the purpose of completing the Kennedy Avenue Bridge. Attorney Tom Everett of Barnes & Thornburg and bond counsel for the Commission noted that this Resolution and the public hearing on the Resolution relate to the authorization of the issuance of special assessment revenue bonds of the Commission in an amount not to exceed \$30million, with an interest rate not to exceed 6% and a maximum term of twenty years. The bonds would fund the construction of the Kennedy Avenue Bridge and other projects throughout the territorial jurisdiction of the Commission. The bonds would be repaid solely through the special assessments that are imposed on each taxable parcel within the watershed of the Little Calumet River and Burns Waterway pursuant to the Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission statute. Attorney Everett added that this Resolution also appoints Stiefel Nicolaus and Company to act as placement agent and underwriter to assist with selling the bonds to the public or another purchaser. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in both the Post-Tribune and Northwest Indiana Times.

Chairman Baker opened the Public Hearing and invited anyone who would like to speak to the podium.

Gary Lee, Gary Indiana – Mr. Lee lives in the watershed and pays the special assessment on his property tax bill. He is neither opposed to nor in favor of the bond, but he does have a few concerns. The Kennedy Avenue Bridge project is essentially \$16.5 million, with the remainder allocated to unspecified miscellaneous projects. He questions why the Commission would borrow money for projects that have not yet been identified. As a payer of the special assessment, he would like information on the financial position of the Commission, as well as details about how the additional \$13.5 million will be spent. Finally, if bonds are to be issued, he believes the people of the watershed should be given an opportunity to invest in the work being done.

No one else from the public rose to speak, and the Public Hearing was closed by Chairman Baker.

Statements to the Board –

No statements to the board.

Approval of Minutes -

Commissioner Ware made a motion to approve the minutes from March 18, 2026, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a vote. Motion passed with 7 aye votes.

Chairman's Report –

Chairman Baker welcomed everyone to the meeting. He stated that this Commission oversees a \$275 million man-made flood control project, and, if it isn't maintained, what you see in those pictures from September 2008 is what happens. Working with the communities, everybody within the watershed has skin in the game to make sure this doesn't happen again. But keep in mind, this is trying to manage Mother Nature, and when you manage Mother Nature, if you get 10 gallons of water for your 5-gallon bucket, you're going to have a real issue. However, it's important to realize that we're far better prepared today than we were prior to September 2008. This is also an economic development project. By doing what we've done and being able to secure this thing, we've removed 4,000 properties from having to pay mandatory flood insurance as a part of their mortgages. By doing that, that money goes right back into the community.

Finance –

Chairman Baker addressed the April 2026 claims totaling \$422,302.82. Commissioner Wichlinski moved to approve the claims as presented, and Commissioner Gozdecki seconded the motion. Mr. Repay provided an explanation of several claims, starting with reimbursement to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources in the amount of \$102,500.00 for maintenance of the Hobart Marsh Mitigation site. \$99,472.50 was paid to Headworks Inc. for the trash rack at the US 41 Lift Station project. This is a partial

payment; the remainder will be payable after delivery, which is anticipated by September 1st. JM Industrial Services submitted a claim totaling \$18,200.00 for the demolition and removal of the house at 2845 Wyoming Street in Lake Station. Finally, \$24,285.00 was paid to Christopher B. Burke Engineering for continued work on the survey and hydraulic analysis project. Their findings will be presented later during the meeting.

Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions or comments and called for a roll-call vote. Commissioners Baker, Wichlinski, Gozdecki, Whittaker, Castellanos, Broadnax and Ware vote in favor. None vote against. Motion passed 7-0.

Executive Director's Report –

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

- USACE inspections for the City of Gary and INDOT started on Monday. However, due to the projected rain, the remaining dates were postponed until the first week of May.
- A preliminary design report on the Hobart Dam will be presented to the board at the May meeting
- The Two-Stage Ditch Project in Dyer has been canceled as matching funds for the project are no longer available.
- Christopher Burke Engineering will present their hydraulic model later during the meeting. This information will also be valuable to the City of Gary and their LOMR application.
- The Kennedy Avenue Bridge Project is tentatively scheduled to begin on May 11th. We are coordinating with the City of Hammond, Town of Highland and INDOT on the construction.
- Recent rain events have caused some delays in work on the Hart Ditch Stabilization Project. We are hoping for some dry weather so the contractor can continue working.
- We held bid openings in our office yesterday for the Kennedy Avenue Sandbar Remediation and the Little Calumet Riverbank Stabilization Projects. Both projects are up for consideration later this meeting. The following bids were opened and taken under advisement:

Kennedy Avenue Sandbar Remediation Project

<i>Northern Indiana Mechanical</i>	\$415,982.00
<i>Austgen Equipment</i>	\$499,162.00
<i>Earthwerks Land Improvement & Development Corp.</i>	\$723,590.00
<i>Dunnet Bay Construction</i>	\$1,046,379.00

Little Calumet Riverbank Stabilization Project

<i>Earthwerks Land Improvement & Development Corp.</i>	\$564,376.00
<i>Grimmer Construction</i>	\$1,277,822.00
<i>Gariup Construction</i>	\$1,972,500.00

Commissioner Whittaker asked for clarification on the areas to be stabilized for the Little Calumet Riverbank Stabilization Project. Mr. Repay stated there are four sites, Hohman

Avenue, east of Northcote Avenue near the Baring Avenue Pump Station, Wicker Park and the Grant Street Marsh.

Commissioner Castellanos asked if the businesses near Kennedy Avenue Bridge have been notified of the construction. Mr. Repay stated we are in the process of doing that now. We have already communicated with Hammond, Highland and the SSCVA and those entities are going to assist in getting the information out.

Commissioner Wichlinski asked for information on the length of the agreement with DNR for the Hobart Marsh Mitigation maintenance. Mr. Repay stated that the agreement covers a two-year period. We are required by USACE to maintain the area for five years after project completion.

Other Issues/New Business –

Commissioner Wichlinski made a motion to approve Resolution 2026-07 regarding Bonds and Additional Appropriations. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Whittaker. Chairman Baker asked if we need to issue the entire \$30 million bond. Attorney Tom Everett of Barnes & Thornburg stated that resolution authorizes the Commission to issue bonds in one or more series, so the initial bond could be for the Kennedy Avenue Bridge Project and then, as additional projects come into focus, bonds could be issued later, with the total amount of bonds issued not exceeding \$30 million. Mr. Everett also noted that the public would have the opportunity to purchase the bonds on the secondary market after the initial sale. Commissioner Whittaker questioned if we could start the project even though the bonds have not been finalized. Mr. Repay stated that we can move forward and reimburse the general fund from the bond proceeds. Chairman Baker asked if there were any further questions or comments and called for a roll-call vote. Commissioners Baker, Wichlinski, Gozdecki, Whittaker, Castellanos, Broadnax and Ware vote in favor. None vote against. Motion passed 7-0.

Commissioner Ware made a motion to approve the Certificate of Total Compensation and Benefits for the Executive Director and Office Manager. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions or comments and called for a roll-call vote. Commissioners Baker, Wichlinski, Gozdecki, Whittaker, Castellanos, Broadnax and Ware vote in favor. None vote against. Motion passed 7-0.

Commissioner Whittaker made a motion to award a contract to Northern Indiana Mechanical in the amount of \$415,982.00 for the Kennedy Avenue Sandbar Remediation Project, subject to legal review. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Mr. Repay stated that we have been waiting for about five years for permitting to remove the sandbar on the east and west side of Kennedy Avenue. We will start with the west side first. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions or comments and called for a roll-call vote. Commissioners Baker, Wichlinski, Gozdecki, Whittaker, Castellanos and Broadnax vote in favor. None vote against. Commissioner Ware abstained. Motion passed 6-0.

Commissioner Castellanos made a motion to award a contract to Earthwerks Land Improvement & Development Corporation in the amount of \$564,376.00 for the Little

Calumet Riverbank Stabilization Project, subject to legal review. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wichlinski. Mr. Repay noted this project was brought to our attention when the USACE identified areas of erosion during inspections in 2022. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions or comments and called for a roll-call vote. Commissioners Baker, Wichlinski, Gozdecki, Whittaker, Castellanos, Broadnax and Ware vote in favor. None vote against. Motion passed 7-0.

Commissioner Wichlinski made a motion to approve an agreement with HWC Engineering for construction observation on the Little Calumet Riverbank Stabilization Project in an amount not to exceed \$90,000.00, subject to legal review. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions or comments and called for a roll-call vote. Commissioners Baker, Wichlinski, Gozdecki, Whittaker, Castellanos, Broadnax and Ware vote in favor. None vote against. Motion passed 7-0.

Presentation -

The following update was presented at the meeting. A link to the video presentation is included below.

Christopher B. Burke Engineering – A.J. Fricke, Paul Dawley, Peggy Shepherd and Siavash Beik presenting:

Little Calumet River Levee System 2D Hydraulic Modeling Update

Video: <https://youtu.be/iTkfUmSf2c8?si=mnVEkHUeVizvKY8z>

There being no further business, the next regular meeting was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 20, 2026.

Appointing Authority Disclosure:

William Baker, Chairman, Appointed by: Governor, Term of Appointment: 10/01/2008 to 12/31/2021

Thomas Wichlinski, Vice Chairman, Appointed by: Governor, Term of Appointment: 08/01/2009 to 12/31/2021

Thomas Gozdecki, III, Treasurer, Appointed by: Governor, Term of Appointment: 08/30/2012 to 12/31/2021

Levon Whittaker, Secretary, Appointed by: Governor/City of Gary, Term of Appointment: 06/30/2014 to 06/30/2018

Anthony Broadnax, Commissioner, Appointed by: Governor, Term of Appointment: 05/01/2026 to 04/30/2030

David Castellanos, Commissioner, Appointed by: Governor/ Lake County Commissioners, Term of Appointment: 06/30/2014 to 06/30/2018

Ronald Ware, Jr., Commissioner, Appointed by: Governor/Lake County Commissioners, Term of Appointment: 12/01/2017 to 12/31/2021

Robert Ochi, Commissioner, Appointed by: Governor/City of Hammond, Term of Appointment: 05/01/2026 to 04/30/2030

Jenny Orsburn, Commissioner, Appointed by: Governor/INDR, Term of Appointment: 05/01/2026 to 04/30/2030