

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**HELD AT 6:00 p.m., WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 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 seven (7) 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  
Derek Nimetz

**Commissioners Absent:**

Robert Ochi  
Anthony Broadnax

**Executive Director:**

Dan Repay

**Attorney:**

David Wickland

**Staff:**

Jodi Lambert

**Visitors:**

Gary Lee – Gary  
Thomas Burke - CBBEL  
Paul Daniels – CCxPD LLC  
Vicki Williams – Munster  
Daniel Suarez – Audubon Great Lakes  
Paul Botts – The Wetlands Initiative  
Harry Kuttner – The Wetlands Initiative  
Craig Zandstra – Lake County Parks  
Sivash Beik – CBBEL (via Zoom)  
Sandy O'Brien – Hobart (via zoom)

**Approval of Minutes -**

Commissioner Nimetz made a motion to approve the minutes from March 20, 2024, as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 7-0.

**Chairman's Report –**

Chairman Baker 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. He added that the yellowing pictures that are seen at every meeting are a true reminder of why we are here. We have a collaboration with all the communities within the watershed to be able to put boots on the ground should 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 April 2024 claims in the amount of \$636,322.23. Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion to approve the claims as presented; motion

seconded by Commissioner Whittaker. Mr. Repay explained a few of the claims, starting with several claims from VVP Enterprises, LLC totaling \$53,100.00 for work clearing the Cady Marsh Ditch. They started at Hart Ditch and are working east. Another contractor will start at Cline Avenue and work west on the clearing. Payment was made in the amount of \$62,600.00 to Duperon Corporation. This is the final installment on the Screen Raker equipment for the Cady Marsh Screen Raker Project Watershed Project. The Town of Schererville was paid \$251,712.00 for continued work on the Sunset Blvd. Flood Control Weir Watershed Project. This project is nearing completion, with just a few punch list items to complete. Christopher B. Burke Engineering submitted claims totaling \$28,790.50 for the Deep River Watershed Modeling. This project is nearing completion, and we hope to have a presentation on their findings at the May or June meeting. Finally, \$10,380.00 was paid to Wessler Engineering for their continued work on the Georgia Street (Malcom X) Design Project.

Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions on the claims and called for a roll-call vote on the claims as amended. Motion passed 7-0.

### **Executive Director's Report –**

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

- USACE annual inspections for the East Reach were began earlier this month. The biggest concern noted was rutting from ATV's on top and at the toe of the levee. In fact, the USACE Inspection crew had a brief interaction with the ATV's in Marshalltown. INDOT inspections were postponed because of the Governor's emergency declaration during the solar eclipse. They will be rescheduled for a later date.
- USACE annual inspections for the West Reach are scheduled to begin the week of April 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Along with all the recent rains, we've had a lot of debris that has blocked some culverts, and we are working to clear them. Yesterday, we cleared the culvert off of Martin Luther King Drive, where beavers had created a dam about 38 feet inside the culvert. We also cleared the four culverts underneath the expressway off of Georgia Street (Malcom X) in Gary. There is a blockage on Calhoun that needs to be addressed, however, the load limit on the bridge does not allow for the necessary equipment to cross. We are working with the Lake County Highway Department to address the issue.
- Equipment for the next phase of the Hart Ditch Bank Stabilization Project has been mobilized at Stewart Park. There will be a delay in starting the work due to the amount of rain received recently.
- Two Contractors are currently working on clearing dead or leaning trees in Cady Marsh Ditch. One group started at Hart Ditch and began working east, the other group started at Cline Avenue and is working west. This work will continue until the beginning of May. In the fall, we plan to tackle Cline Avenue to Grant Street.
- Prior to inspections, we cleaned the Pump Station wells of silt and debris. We were also able to determine the noise at the Burr North Station was caused by a flap gate, once the weather cooperates, we will have the gate repaired. We expect the repairs to Pump 2 will be completed in late May.
- The Cady Marsh Trash Rack is complete. The next step is a USACE inspection to determine whether the project fulfilled the requirements of the 408 permits.

- We are still waiting for power to be connected at the Natural Spring. Initially NIPSCO had coordinated the date of April 8<sup>th</sup> with the Railroad, as a flagger is needed to control the train traffic on the line. However, we were informed that due to the inclement weather, the flagger is no longer available, and the install date needed to be rescheduled. We are still working on a new date with NIPSCO scheduling. Additionally, the metal grate at the Natural Spring was stolen, it will be replaced with a plastic grate.
- Plans have been put together for parking lot paving at the Hobart Marsh and sealcoating of the levee tops in various locations in Hammond, Highland, and Gary. We anticipate bid opening at our June meeting.
- I recently met with the Mayor and his staff from Lake Station on various options to best complete the riverfront area from Liverpool to our current parking lot. Currently it looks like we will be adding some walking paths and natural plantings to the area.
- We continue to work with Christopher B. Burke Engineering on creating a model of Deep River and its tributaries. We anticipate a presentation of their findings at either our May or June meeting.

**Presentations –**

The following update on the Lake County Parks Conservation Collaborative was presented at the meeting. The link to the video presentation is included below:

- Lake County Parks Conservation Collaborative – Craig Zandstra, Lake County Parks, Paul Botts, The Wetlands Initiative and Daniel Suarez, Audubon Great Lakes presenting.

Video: <https://youtu.be/QH96jYoU-tc?si=QrrDvsX-J2Y3oZNc>

**Other Issues/New Business –**

Commissioner Nimetz made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-06 and an Interlocal Agreement with the Lake County Drainage Board for the Turkey Creek Ditch Lateral 1 Drainage Study Watershed Project in an amount not to exceed \$131,280.00. Subject to final draft and approval by attorney, Executive Director and Chairman; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Mr. Repay noted that this study will ultimately link into the Watershed Study of Deep River that is almost complete. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 7-0.

Commissioner Ware made a motion to table the following Agenda items: Resolution 2024-07 and an Interlocal Agreement with the Town of Griffith for the Wood Street Stormwater Lift Station Improvements Watershed Project, and Resolution 2024-08 and an Interlocal Agreement with the Town of Griffith for the Wood Street Storm Water Improvement Watershed Project; motion seconded by Commissioner Gozdecki. Mr. Repay stated that there was some clarifications and adjustments that need to be made to the applications and these projects should be back on the agenda for consideration at a future meeting. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 7-0.

Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion to approve the 8<sup>th</sup> Addendum to the Employment Agreements of the Executive Director and Office Manager, pending legal review; motion seconded by Commissioner Wichlinski. Chairman Baker stated that the two employees of the Commission have done an outstanding job and we hope they will stay with us for a while. Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 7-0.

**Statements to the Board –**

No Statements to the Board

**Statements from the Board –**

Commissioner Whittaker thanked the Collaborative for their informative presentation. He appreciated the different types of data they utilized and would like to see more presentations like this in the future.

Commissioner Wichlinski thanked the Collaborative for their presentation and looked forward to future updates from them.

Commissioner Gozdecki thanked the Lake County Collaborative for their excellent presentation. He also reminded the public about all the information that can be found on our website, including the various streamgages throughout the system.

Commissioner Castellanos thanked the Collaborative for their great presentation. He also thanked Commissioner Wichlinski for taking time to appear on the last WLTH AM 1370 radio show. Additionally, he added that there is a clean-up this Saturday to paint over graffiti on Broadway Avenue and they can always use volunteers.

There being no further business, the next regular meeting was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 15, 2024.