

**MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**HELD AT 5:30 p.m., THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 2024**  
**Location: Munster Town Hall, Munster, IN**

Chairman Baker presided and called the meeting to order at 5:30 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  
Robert Ochi  
Anthony Broadnax  
Derek Nimetz  
Ron Ware  
Dave Castellanos (arrived late)

**Visitors:**

Gary Lee – Gary  
Dave Taborsky - Gary  
Paul Daniels – CCxPD LLC  
Vicki Williams – Munster  
Michael Novotney – Wessler Eng.  
Robert Fulton – City of Hobart  
Hodge Patel – Abonmarche  
Quinn Patel - Abonmarche  
Jacob Ballah – BFS Engineering  
Siavash Beik – CBBEL (via zoom)  
Peggy Shephard – CBBEL (via zoom)  
Thomas Burke – CBBEL (via zoom)

**Commissioners Absent:**

None

**Executive Director:**

Dan Repay

**Attorney:**

David Wickland

**Staff:**

Jodi Lambert

**Approval of Minutes -**

Commissioner Whittaker made a motion to approve the minutes from May 15, 2024, as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Wichlinski. Chairman Baker asked if

there were any questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 7-0. (Commissioner Broadnax abstained).

**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 shown at every meeting are a true reminder of why we are here and an example of what happens when you don't maintain a system that was designed to control mother nature. If we get 10 gallons of water for our 5 gallon bucket, we are going to have some issues. But we are far better prepared today than we were before the flood of 2008. We have a continued collaboration with all the communities within the watershed to make sure the events of 2008 is something only history knows about.

**Finance –**

Chairman Baker referred to the June 2024 claims in the amount of \$606,527.04. Commissioner Ware made a motion to approve the claims as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Broadnax. Mr. Repay explained a few of the claims, starting with payment to F.H. Paschen in the amount of \$234,200.48 on the Cady Marsh Screen Raker Project. The trash rack is complete and operational; however, we are still waiting for the USACE to inspect the project. There are a few additional invoices expected from the contractor as well as retainage which will be released once the USACE signs off on the project. C&H Mowing completed 2 mowing cycles already this year, submitting claims totaling \$55,000.00. We anticipate a 3<sup>rd</sup> mowing soon because of the humid & wet conditions we have had recently, and that mowing should happen before the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday. \$18,450.00 was paid to Christopher B. Burke Engineering for continued work on the Deep River Watershed Modeling. They will be giving a presentation on their findings later in this meeting. Great Lakes Electrical Maintenance submitted a claim in the amount of \$13,708.75 for monthly Pump Station inspections. \$74,638.51 was paid to Lake County Parks on the Little Calumet Conservation Collaborative Watershed Project. The Collaborative gave a presentation at our April meeting, and they will have another request coming up in July for additional funding for the continuation of this project but also other projects they identified in their presentation.

Commissioner Broadnax requested clarification on the claim from Vazquez Development for \$5,000.00. Mr. Repay stated that they will be doing a live stream of the Close-Out Ceremony as well as a video history of the project.

Commissioner Whittaker questioned who maintains the Cady Marsh Screen Raker now that the project is complete. Mr. Repay reported that the Town of Griffith will be in charge of maintenance of the Raker. Further discussion was held regarding the USACE inspection and maintenance of Screen Raker and if the current agreement with the Town of Griffith for annual maintenance of Cady Marsh Ditch should be amended to include the new Raker.

Commissioner Whittaker asked which parking lots and trail areas are included in the agreement with United Consulting. Mr. Repay stated there are 3 parking lots at the Hobart Marsh Mitigation site that will be paved. Additionally, the trails along the river will be sealed in areas including: in Hammond between Columbia and Indianapolis

Blvd., in Highland between Kennedy Avenue and Cline Avenue on the south side and in Gary from Chase Street to Martin Luther King Blvd.

Commissioner Gozdecki asked for status with HWC Engineering's progress with the Bank Stabilization and Boat Ramp Project adding that it has been in the works for quite some time. Mr. Repay stated that the project is being expedited. With the recent USACE Inspections it was determined that soil borings were not required along the entire project area, only for the boat ramp east of Kennedy Avenue.

Chairman Baker asked if there were any additional questions on the claims 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:

- We continue to work with the USACE to get final approval on the Kennedy Avenue Sandbar Project. There are multiple divisions within the USACE that need to sign off on the 408 permit which can take some time. We are still hopeful to get the project bid out this summer.
- Maya Energy did not make their annual payment which was due on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Our attorney has already sent them a letter to inform them of the delinquency.
- The PLC replacements at the Burr North and Grant East and West Pump Stations have been delayed as some components are on backorder.
- We've had a lot of rain this past month. With that, we have spent a lot of time and effort in cutting the grass and removing debris. The system has functioned as required and we have had no issues and have plenty of capacity.
- The INDOT and Griffith Cady Marsh inspections will be conducted in July. The inspections needed to be moved due to USACE scheduling conflicts.
- The Hart Ditch Stabilization Project is progressing quickly. Our office has fielded a few questions from some residents, but overall, the project is running smoothly.
- We continue to work with Wolverine Pipeline to coordinate access to our property as they look to make some repairs. They anticipate doing the work in four locations starting in August.
- We have several ideas regarding improving the drainage at Malcom X in Gary. We will talk to the City about our ideas and how to improve the drainage.
- There were several encroachments such as gardens and fences on the levee in Hammond and Munster that need to be addressed. Letters will be sent out informing the homeowners that they need to be 15 feet from the toe of the levee.

(Commissioner Castellanos arrived at Meeting)

**Presentation –**

The following update on the Deep River Watershed Modeling and Project Evaluation Tool was presented at the meeting. The link to the video presentation is included below:

- Siavah Beik, PE, CFM, DWRE and Peggy Shephard, PE, CFM of Christopher B. Burke Engineering, LLC presenting:  
Video: <https://youtu.be/urVMfAgLpPY?si=ozBCopA0dsNeiAR4>

**Other Issues/New Business –**

Commissioner Nimetz made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-07 and an Interlocal Agreement with the Town of Griffith for the Wood Street Stormwater Lift Station Improvements Project in an amount not to exceed \$825,000.00. Subject to final draft and approval by attorney, Executive Director and Chairman; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Mr. Repay stated this station services about 475 acres of land and Griffith is looking to add a back-up generator. Commissioner Whittaker asked if it is standard for municipalities to have back-up generators on their Pump Stations. Mr. Repay stated it a case-by-case basis if the municipality has one, but that many communities do have them, and the Commission has one on the Burr North Pump Station. Chairman Baker asked if there were any further questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 9-0.

Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-08 and an Interlocal Agreement with the Town of Griffith for the Wood Street Storm Sewer Improvements Watershed Project in an amount not to exceed \$690,000.00. Subject to final draft and approval by attorney, Executive Director and Chairman; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Mr. Repay stated that this project will install a 36-inch storm sewer approximately 1,400 feet to an area that currently does not have storm sewers and also provides a second point of discharge. Commissioner Whittaker asked if the project was in an unincorporated area. Jacob Ballah of Butler, Fairman & Seufert provided further information stating that this project begins at the intersection of Wood and Main Street and heads north approximately 1,400 feet. It provides an outlet for Main Street which currently does not have a stormwater outlet as well as improvements to the overall neighborhood along the Wood Street corridor. Commissioner Castellanos asked once the project is complete, will it provide any economic benefit to Town of Griffith. Mr. Ballah forecasted that this may be the case as the area is in some disrepair, mainly due to the fact that there is no drainage. Chairman Baker asked if there were any further questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 8-1 (Commissioner Whittaker votes nay).

Commissioner Ochi made a motion to approve a proposal with Superior Engineering for engineering services to upgrade the controls at the Marshalltown Pump Station in an amount not to exceed \$101,400.00, pending legal review; motion seconded by Commissioner Broadnax. Mr. Repay stated that this will upgrade the PLC for the Marshalltown Pump Station. He added that the current PLC fails sometimes, and the pumps need to be run in hand, this will eliminate the problem. Chairman Baker asked if there were and questions and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 9-0.

**Statements to the Board –**

No Statements to the Board

**Statements from the Board –**

Commissioner Ware thanked Christopher Burke Engineering for their informative and much overdue engineering study for this portion of the Watershed that is so critical. He further thanked everyone for taking their time to come to the meeting.

Commissioner Whittaker thanked the public for attending our meeting. He also commended the Christopher Burke Engineering team for Deep River Modeling Presentation adding that it is one of the best presentations we have seen. He further stated the Commission is moving in the right direction with Watershed Applications and we've gotten better at the requirements and criteria that we use. He added that there is still a lot of subjectivity with the applications and our goal should be to remove as much emotion as possible so we can make better and informed decisions. He ended by wishing everyone a Happy Juneteenth and Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July.

Commissioner Gozdecki thanked Christopher Burke Engineering for their presentation and the public for attending our meeting. He wished everyone a safe and happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July.

Commissioner Broadnax stated that it's good to be home. He thanked the Christopher Burke Engineering team for their informative study. He added that he agreed with Commissioner Whittaker in saying that data is important and that we have to do our best in judging each project on its merits at the time. He further stated that this is a really good study that will help us move forward.

Commissioner Castellanos stated that its good to see Commissioner Broadnax in person. He also added that Executive Director Dan Repay recently gave a tour of the Little Calumet River Watershed to an overflow crowd of people who were born and raised in the area. He added that they loved the tour and the opportunity to understand the project a little better and there is talk of doing another tour.

There being no further business, the next regular meeting was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 17, 2024.