

MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HELD AT 5:30 p.m., WEDNESDAY, JULY 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 nine (9) Commission members present at roll call. Quorum was declared.

Commissioners Present:

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

Commissioners Absent:

None

Executive Director:

Dan Repay

Attorney:

David Wickland

Staff:

Jodi Lambert

Visitors:

Gary Lee – Gary
Dave Taborsky - Gary
Paul Daniels – CCxPD LLC
Vicki Williams – Munster
Laurie Czulno – Hammond
Eric Wolverton – StructurePoint
Matt Lake – Merrillville Stormwater
Tim Hollandsworth - VS Engineering
Bryan Lane – Town of Dyer
Thomas Burke – CBBEL
Doug Brite – City of Crown Point
Greg Falkowski – City of Crown Point
Jeff Huet – Town of Schererville (via zoom)
Kristi Johnson – IDNR (via zoom)
Siavash Beik – CBBEL (via zoom)

Approval of Minutes -

Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion to approve the minutes from June 20, 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 9-0.

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 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 are something only history knows about. Of note, Chairman Baker also stated that the Commission in partnership with the USACE, recently held a ceremony to

commemorate the close-out of the federal portion of our project that has been ongoing for almost 34 years. He further added that when the new revised Commission started after the flood of 2008, we were indebted to the federal government almost \$17 million dollars. Through hard work, we were able to turn that debt into a \$1.2 million dollar credit, being one of the only projects in a country to get funds back from the federal government, which can truly be considered an economic development win for the watershed.

Finance –

Chairman Baker referred to the July 2024 claims in the amount of \$1,266,064.57. Commissioner Ware made a motion to approve the claims as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Mr. Repay explained a few of the claims, starting with payment to Austgen Equipment in the amount of \$739,616.20 for work on Phase 3 of the Hart Ditch Stabilization Project. This segment is just over 50% complete and runs from Fran-Lin Parkway to 45th Street. Reimbursements to the Hammond Sanitary District and Town of Highland for Pump Station maintenance were paid. Each community is reimbursed for Pump Station maintenance after they pass the annual USACE Inspections. \$182,000.00 was paid to the Hammond Sanitary District and \$42,000.00 was paid to the Town of Highland. Reimbursement to the Town of Griffith is still outstanding, pending their USACE inspection scheduled for the end of July. \$27,500.00 was paid to C&H Mowing for their 3rd mowing of the season. Wiltjer Excavating submitted a claim in the amount of \$22,000.00 for their work clearing a log jam on Deep River. Martin Mechanical submitted claims totaling \$33,077.32 for the Burr Street Pump 2 rebuild. Finally, \$38,001.50 was paid to HWC Engineering for their continued design work on the Bank Stabilization project.

Chairman Baker asked if there were any questions on the claims and called for a roll-call vote. Motion passed 9-0.

Executive Director's Report –

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

- The PLC replacements at the Burr North and Grant East and West Pump Stations have been delayed as some components are on backorder.
- USACE inspections for the Griffith and INDOT segments are scheduled for July 25 and 26. The new raker in Griffith is scheduled to be inspected for the first time. After we receive the passing inspection from the USACE, the retainage for the project can be released.
- Over the past few weeks, we have experienced several rounds of storms in our area. As of now, it appears we came out with very minimal damage, but it may take a few days for us to determine if any new blockages exist.
- We did an emergency clearing at the Kennedy Avenue Bridge with Northern Indiana Mechanical in anticipation of the tropical storm.
- Wiltjer Excavating helped clear a blockage on Deep River at Ripley Street prior to the anticipated tropical storm.
- The Deep River Watershed Modeling Study is available on our website. The study is a great asset to us and will be used in making decisions on our Watershed Applications. Communities within the watershed will also be able to take advantage of this study as we move forward.

- The Close-Out Ceremony was held on June 24th. It was great to see all of the people who worked on this project over the years. There were many former commission members as well as former USACE personnel in attendance.
- We had a meeting with City of Gary Mayor Melton and his team. We discussed items that were important to the city and what they want to accomplish as well as gave them a tour of the system.
- The Town of Dyer, Town of Merrillville and City of Crown Point will present their Watershed applications later at tonight's meeting.
- Advertisement for sealcoating and parking lot paving will be advertised starting next week. The information will also be available on our website. We plan to sealcoat and fill the Gary South Levee, Highland Levee, and Hammond Levee between Northcote and Indianapolis Blvd as well as pave the parking lots at Hobart Marsh. The bids will be opened at our August meeting.

Chairman Baker asked if the video of the Close-Out Ceremony was available on the website. Mr. Repay stated that a recording of the entire ceremony is there as well as the 10-minute historical video that was created for the occasion. He also added that the Commission plans to expand on the historical video soon.

Commissioner Gozdecki asked for an update on the beaver dam off of County Line Road in Hobart. Mr. Repay stated that we did a drone survey of the area and met with the Mayor of Hobart. At this point it is up to the Mayor and his administration on how they handle the matter moving forward.

(Commissioners Whittaker and Nimetz left the meeting)

Presentations –

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

- Town of Merrillville – Matt Lake, Executive Director, Merrillville Stormwater Utility and Tim Hollandsworth, VS Engineering presenting:
[Storm Sewer Network Improvement Plan](#) (Construction)
Funding Request: \$239,747.00 (50%)
Video: <https://youtu.be/Ze0Ha0gmvDc?si=cRetoryNVsZrsQ1k>
- Town of Dyer – Bryan Lane, Director of Stormwater and Thomas Burke, Christopher B. Burke Engineering presenting:
[Hart Ditch Floodplain Storage at Briar Ridge](#) (Engineering)
Funding Request: \$84,660.00 (50%)
Video: <https://youtu.be/lymau9jtAi8?si=aH4KBxW2orzdbISd>
[Hart Ditch Floodplain Storage at US Route 30](#) (Engineering)
Funding Request: \$59,650.00 (50%)
Video: https://youtu.be/R_Z7_6EipXc?si=3d9jLrGd-llM9hOz
- City of Crown Point – Eric Wolverton, American StructurePoint presenting:
[Edgewater Flooding Mitigation](#) (Engineering)
Funding Request: \$40,000.00 (80%)
Video: <https://youtu.be/XgWXRh1BEPA?si=gumYza1J0dUWslZ5>

Other Issues/New Business –

Commissioner Ochi made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-09 and an Interlocal Agreement with Lake County Parks for 2024 funding for the Little Calumet Conservation Collaborative in the amount of \$295,000.00, subject to final draft and approval by Attorney, Executive Director and Chairman; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. Mr. Repay stated that this is the 3rd year for this funding request. The Little Calumet Conservation Collaborative includes groups such as the Lake County Parks, Audubon Society, the Wetlands Initiative and the Nature Conservancy. The group gave a presentation on their plans at our April meeting. 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 Ochi thanked the communities for their informative Watershed presentations.

Commissioner Gozdecki commended the communities for their solid presentations this evening.

Commissioner Wichlinski thanked the presenters and said they were well prepared for the questions the Commission asked regarding their applications.

Commissioner Ware thanked the communities for their detailed presentations. He also complimented the staff on the great job on the Close-Out Ceremony and said he was proud to be a part of this Commission.

Commissioner Broadnax thanked the communities for appearing before us to present their applications.

There being no further business, the next regular meeting was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 21, 2024.