

MINUTES OF THE LITTLE CALUMET RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

HELD AT 6:00p.m., WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2017

Location: MUNSTER TOWN HALL, Munster, IN

Chairman Baker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. An Executive Session/Work Study Session was held prior to the public meeting. There were seven (7) Commission members present at roll call. Quorum was declared.

Commissioners:

William Baker, Chairman
Tom Wichlinski, Vice-Chairman
Dave Castellanos
Tom Gozdecki
Levon Whittaker
Anthony Broadnax
Derek Nimetz

Executive Director:

Dan Repay

Attorney:

Dave Wickland

Staff:

Jodi Lambert

Visitors:

Natalie Mills – USACE
LuAnn Franklin – NWI Times
Laurie & John Czulno – Hammond
Ruth Mores – Hammond
David Nellans – Munster Town Council
Tom Silich – Hobart Township Trustee
Jeff Yatsko – Garcia Consulting Engineers
Shannon Pollard – PNW Student
Evan Laviolette – PNW Student
Craig Hendrix – S.E.H. of Indiana
Sandy O’Brien – Hobart
Paul Daniels – Advisory Board
Mark Gordish – City of Hammond
Salvatore Di Bernardo – Ciorba Group
Mike Yacullo – Ciorba Group

Chairman Baker referred to the minutes from the October 11, 2017 meeting. Commissioner Whittaker made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos; motion passed with 7 aye votes.

Chairman’s Report –

Chairman Baker, referencing the yellowing pictures of the 2008 flood event, reminded everyone that we are here to ensure that something like that flood event does not happen again. The Commission is tasked with the ongoing and deferred maintenance of this \$275 million man-made flood project. While we cannot control Mother Nature, we are far better prepared now than we have been in the past. This is the first year that the entire system has been certified as acceptable by the USACE. The reorganization of the Commission and the work done by many to obtain a funding mechanism has allowed us to continue to move forward and remove over 1,400 properties from the mandatory flood insurance requirement. This puts \$4 million dollars annually back into the economy, making this project an economic development project.

Finance –

Chairman Baker referred to the October claims in the amount of \$1,026,895.98. Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion to approve the claims as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Whittaker. Chairman Baker called for discussion on the motion. Mr. Repay

explained several of the claims, beginning with a \$50,000.00 payment to the Town of Griffith for reimbursement on the O&M of Cady Marsh Ditch down by the town. The Merrillville Stormwater District and Town of Winfield were reimbursed \$7,920.00 and \$20,243.54 respectively for tree plantings done in their communities. \$250,643.00 was paid to the Town of Griffith for the Levee Certification Watershed Application that was approved by the Commission in August. Great Lakes Electrical Maintenance submitted a claim for \$7,893.50 for monthly pump station inspections and maintenance at the Burr South Pump Station. Security Industries replaced and repaired several security fences at a cost of \$16,160.00. R.A. Oros was paid \$7,840.00 to clear blockages at the Kennedy Avenue Bridge and \$16,350.00 as the final payment on the Chase Street Manhole Rehabilitation Project. Walsh & Kelly submitted two claims in the amounts of \$280,745.69 for the Gary North Levee Paving Project and \$116,532.14 for the Hammond Levee Paving Project. \$62,700.00 was paid to Patrick Engineering for continued work on the G&W/CF&E Railroad Study. The study is approximately 80% complete with permitting requests currently being submitted. \$23,781.00 was paid to DLZ for design of the Kennedy Avenue Bridge. This project is expected to be ready for bidding in the spring of 2018. The construction cycle of the project is expected to last 2 years. This is necessary to avoid shutting down Kennedy Avenue completely during construction.

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

Executive Director's Report –

- Maintenance and repair work was completed at the Burr South Pump Station. A log needed to be removed from one of the pumps.
- The Kennedy Avenue Bridge Project is under design with projected bid for construction in summer of 2018.
- The Harrison Avenue Bridge Project is under design with projected bid for construction in winter of 2018. This project will eliminate a closure within the City of Gary.
- The 35th & Chase Grade Adjustment Project should be ready to advertise for bids by the December meeting.
- The G&W/CF&E Railroad Bridge work is in the permitting stage.
- Damaged fences around the pump stations were repaired and scraping and painting of gates will be started soon.

Commissioner Wichlinski requested status on the Broadway Avenue Sewer Crossing Study and the Kennedy Avenue Bridge Design. Mr. Repay stated that the Broadway Avenue Sewer Study was about 20% complete with the original timeline given by the engineering firm of 9-10 months. The Kennedy Avenue Bridge Design is approximately 20% complete with projected bid for construction in summer of 2018. Discussion was held on the amount of work completed to date for the projects and whether the original timelines are still accurate. Commissioner Wichlinski requested Mr. Repay discuss these issues with DLZ, Inc. and American StructurePoint and get an updated timeline for the December meeting.

Update from the USACE –

Natalie Mills from the USACE gave the following updates:

The contractor continues to make progress on the Hobart Marsh Mitigation Project. Herbicide application and plantings are in progress. There are 2 pending modifications on the project. The first is for tree removal and pruning. These trees were found to be a safety hazard and needed to be addressed. Commissioner Nimetz stated that he had an opportunity to view the project and agreed with the assessment regarding the tree removal. The cost is estimated to be \$150,000.00, but the proposal has not yet been received by the contractor. The second pending modification is for additional gullies found at Quail Hollow. No cost estimate is available yet for this modification.

The LOMR was submitted on October 6th. The USACE received acknowledgement of the submittal from FEMA on October 17th. FEMA stated they would have a response within 90 days of acknowledgement.

Crediting continues to progress with several large credits approved recently. \$800,000 in administrative credits and \$3.3 million in utility relocation crediting were approved.

Other Issues/New Business –

Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion to approve a proposal from SEH for the Lake Station Flood Mitigation Study in the amount of \$162,950.00 with the option of modifying the contract by expanding the project area beyond County Line Road, subject to review by attorney and staff; motion seconded by Commissioner Broadnax. Mr. Repay stated that this proposal will study the confluence of the Little Calumet River and Deep River. The current proposed study would encompass an area from Grant Street to County Line Road. The study is also necessary for the design of the Lake Station levee that will help protect hundreds of homes in Lake Station. The potential to expand the scope of the project to study the waterway until it reaches Lake Michigan in Porter County is being reviewed. Vice Chairman Wichlinski asked if there was any further discussion and called for a roll call vote. Motion passed 6-0. (Chairman Baker abstained.)

Commissioner Broadnax made a motion to approve a request from the Town of Munster for \$50,000.00 to assist in the purchase of a SCADA System for their Pump Stations; motion seconded by Commissioner Wichlinski. Mr. Repay stated that the Town of Munster currently does not have any way to monitor the back-up generators on their Pump Stations as they are unable to utilize the Hammond Sanitary District SCADA system. The LCRBDC would also be able to access and view only the proposed SCADA system. Commissioner Whittaker asked if this proposed system was similar to the recent SCADA system approved by the commission. Mr. Repay stated that this proposal is to monitor the back-up generators only. Chairman Baker asked if there was any further discussion and called for a roll call vote. Motion passed 7-0.

Commissioner Broadnax made a motion to approve the Lake County Parks Tsirtsis and Curtis/Costakis Land Acquisition Watershed applications in the combined amount of \$93,875.00; motion seconded by Commissioner Nimetz. Mr. Repay stated that the Lake County Parks gave a presentation last month regarding the two land acquisitions. The Parks Department did all the necessary leg work to acquire the properties and also sought additional

funding to assist in the purchase. Lake County Parks requested \$82,250.00 for the Tsirtsis Land Acquisition and \$11,625.00 for the Curtis/Costakis Acquisition. Chairman Baker asked if there was any further discussion and called for a roll call vote. Motion Passed 7-0.

Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion to accept a proposal from Aerial Solutions in the amount of \$38,500.00 for visual asset management of the river from the state line to I-65; motion seconded by Commissioner Castellanos. The proposal is to use a drone to create a baseline aerial view of the river to assist in operation and maintenance of the project. Chairman Baker asked if there was any further discussion and called for a roll call vote. Motion passed 7-0.

Commissioner Gozdecki made a motion the Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission utilize license agreements as the only acceptable method of transferring control of development for all properties owned by the Commission; motion seconded by Commissioner Wichlinski. Chairman Baker stated that we currently have long term billboard leases and farming leases in place on LCRBDC owned properties. Attorney Wickland further clarified that this motion states the Commission will not be accepting offers to purchase any LCRBDC owned land. Commissioner Broadnax asked that the motion be read again as the words are important. This is new territory for the Commission, but long term leases have been utilized in various successful development scenarios. Commissioner Castellanos stated that he objected to the motion. He felt the topic of LCRBDC owned properties warranted additional discussion as there were still outstanding issues to be addressed. Commissioner Castellanos also stated the sale of certain LCRBDC owned properties is important to economic development within the City of Gary and potential developers would want to own the property rather than consider a long term lease situation. Commissioner Whittaker said that he was not in favor of the motion. Developers have expressed interest in properties that we own, and have sought ownership, not leasing. While our main objective is watershed management, it is also important that the Commission support economic development. Commissioner Whittaker also felt that more time was needed to review and discuss the motion at hand before a final decision was made. Commissioner Wichlinski stated that the USACE instructed the Commission to acquire these properties for a reason and that utilizing long term license agreements will allow to maintain ownership of the properties. Commissioner Broadnax added he can appreciate wanting to spur economic development in the City of Gary and can understand the concerns presented. Commissioner Broadnax further stated that he has reservations selling any land owned by the Commission. Chairman Baker asked if there was any further discussion and called for a roll call vote. Motion passed 5-2. (Commissioners Castellanos and Whittaker nay.)

Statements from the Floor –

Tom Silich, Hobart Township Trustee, thanked the Commission for their participation in clearing the culverts at Turkey Creek/Lateral 6. Mr. Silich stated that County Surveyor Emerson was also on site for the work and it was a great day to finally see the work in progress.

There being no further business, the next meeting was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, December 13th, at the Munster Town Hall.