

**MINUTES OF THE KANKAKEE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
HELD THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2011 AT
9:30 AM CDT
KANKAKEE FISH AND WILDLIFE AREA HEADQUARTERS
4320 W. TOTO ROAD
NORTH JUDSON, IN 46366**

Chairman Chris Knochel called the meeting to order and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Secretary Jim Lambert called the roll.

Members present

Eric Blad	Kevin Breitzke	Dan Bridegroom
Dennis Estok	Myrna Harder	Tony Hendricks
Chris Knochel	Jim Lambert	Tom Larson
John Law	Russ Pumroy	Ken Purze
Gerry Scheub	Ken Sebasty, Sr.	Vince Urbano
Jim Walstra		

Guests Present

Michael Aylesworth	Jim Carter	Kerry Daily
Julie Duttlinger	Gus Ellicott	Jim Fahey
Jerry Gumz	Marge Hefner	Christine Keil
Catherine Lax	Robert R. Lax	Juan Lopez
Harvey Nix	Michael Polan	John Sabo
Joe Skelton	Joe Toth	David Zack

Staff Present

Jody Melton

Approval of Minutes

Gerry Scheub made a motion to approve the August 11, 2011 meeting minutes. Vince Urbano seconded and the minutes were approved.

Finance Report

This is a 3 page report. The old emergency funds are the first page, the second page shows the new emergency money, and page 3 is the administrative account. Newton, LaPorte, and St. Joseph have been billed for their 2011 dues. Jim Lambert moved to accept the report, Russ Pumroy seconded and report was accepted.

Old Business

Ken Purze said that the 3 Co. Drainage Board has accepted proposals for log jam removal in the Kankakee River. The cost is approximately \$54,000; the estimated cost was \$94,000. This money was authorized previously as part of the KRBC's allocation to the 3 County Board and Tony Hendricks made a motion that the 3 Co. Board could proceed with the project, Kevin Breitzke seconded and the motion was approved.

There was discussion about release of funds from the State Budget Committee. Jody Melton will be preparing a request based upon project requests needing immediate funding.

Ken Purze also said that the 3 Co. Board has hired Christopher Burke Engineering to look at the problems of the Yellow River and prepare some pilot projects to address the sediment problems. Tony Hendricks is anxious to get a project underway.

Ken reported that the Northwest Indiana Paddlers Association will be having their annual canoe float on the Kankakee River on Sunday, October 22. The LaPorte County Commissioners and the LaPorte County Tourism Bureau provided \$500 for the event for publicity and T shirts to ensure a good adventure. There is a need for bus transportation if anyone can help.

Tony Hendricks also said that he is investigating the state of the sediment traps in the Kankakee and how well they are working. He has also begun work on the trap near Travis Ditch. His work will give the Board a better idea on how to provide long term maintenance.

Vince Urbano explained that the Jasper County Drainage Board intends to begin a process of rebuilding the levee between the Hodge Ditch and the county line where there was so much damage from the June windstorm. The work will probably begin on the west end and work its way toward the east. Jim Walstra said that the Drainage Board is seeking some state help but will proceed with KRBC funds and local landowner help.

There was discussion about the existing homes on the levee and their safety.

While Commission members were sympathetic to situation, all feel that Jasper County needs to address the levee issue as soon as possible.

Ken Purze made a motion, seconded by Jim Walstra that Jody Melton be authorized to file a request with the State Budget Committee for release of funds for the emergency accounts, the 3 county Board work, and the Jasper county work. The motion was approved.

Kevin Breitzke explained that the Porter County Board is preparing plans for levee repair along about 3 miles of river levee. There will be some sediment removal involved. The total cost will be about \$275,000 and plans are being prepared. Ken Purze made a motion, seconded by Tony Hendricks, that this amount be included in the State Budget request. Motion passed.

Mike Aylesworth talked about a culvert that parallels US 231 in Porter County and with a damaged flapgate caused flooding to land east of US 231. There is discussion between Porter County Drainage Board, State Highway, KRBC, and landowners about who is responsible for the pipe and how to get it fixed.

Russ Pumroy said that Porter County had pulled several trees out of the river downstream from US 231.

Gerry Scheub said that Lake County has completed its initial work on the Williams Levee west of US 41, the access road had been re-created and 3 low spots have been filled. There may be more work to do. Tony Hendricks said he had visited the State Line Bridge over the Kankakee and thought it was a really nice piece of architecture. Lake County will restore that bridge and remove the Kankakee Bridge over Range Line Road for the Kankakee Valley Historical Society.

Chris Knochel said that Newton County is working with Jasper County to clean the DeHaan Ditch between the two counties. Some of the work is in wetlands and the Corps is requiring over 60,000 cubic yards to be removed. It cannot be stacked on top of the levees. There is quite a bit of planning to get this project underway.

With the accelerating use of the Kankakee River as a recreational paddling stream, there has been discussion about creating a series of mile markers along the river so boaters know where they are. The creation of a numbering system using figures from the Corps of Engineers or the IN DNR would seem most likely. When the LaPorte County Drainage Board met with IDNR Director Carter, this topic was discussed and IDNR offered to help. Chairman Knochel appointed Tony Hendricks, Vince Urbano, and Kevin Breitzke to work as a committee to get a mileage marker program underway.

Ken Purze asked about the farm lease and when the best time to review the leases should be made. There is a lease committee of Jim Lambert, Russ Pumroy, and Ken Purze who have been following the leases. There is still some question about the USDA programs on the farm and when and if they can be transferred. The committee will work with Jody Melton to prepare a report on the USDA programs, the value of the leases, and a recommendation in the spring for upcoming years.

New Business

The Northwest Indiana Paddlers Association will be hosting a canoe float on October 23, 2011. The float will start at English Lake and go to Dunns Bridge. A bus will be available for shuttling and, following the float, there will be a side trip to Jasper-Pulaski to see the sand hill cranes. LaPorte County Convention and Visitors Bureau and LaPorte County Commissioners have offered financial help. Ken Purze said that the group is in need of an additional bus.

Chairman Knochel said that the statute of the KRBC says it should meet every other month but quorum issues always can be an issue. The nature of the geography of the Basin is that most people have to travel a distance to make the meetings. So the meetings need to have meaning and a quorum. Ken Purze said that the KRBC has been very active lately and he feels we should follow the law as outlined by the General Assembly. It was decided that the KRBC will meet on the third Thursday in 2012 in January, March, May, July, September, and November. Ken Purze made that a motion, Kevin Breitzke seconded and the schedule was approved.

Other Business

Chris Knochel appointed a nominating committee for a slate of officers for 2012. Tom Larson, Russ Pumroy, and Jim Lambert will serve on the committee.

Joe Skelton told the Board that the Marshall County Lakes Association will conduct a workshop on bank stabilization at the Culver library at 5 pm on October 26, 2011. Lake of the Woods Property Owners Association has filed to create a conservancy district.

The next meeting of the KRBC will be December 15, 2011 at the Kankakee River Basin Commission headquarters in Portage. Bass Pro Shop has a meeting room that might be available. Jody Melton will check to see if that room is available. The meeting was adjourned.