

**MINUTES OF THE KANKAKEE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION  
HELD THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2013 AT  
9:30 AM CST  
Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission  
6100 Southport Road  
Portage, IN**

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

Secretary Jim Lambert called the roll.

*Members present*

Kevin Breitzke	Larry Fisher	Rance Glinge
Randy Glinge	Tony Hendricks	Chris Knochel
Jim Lambert	Tom Larson	John Law
Kim Peterson	Ken Purze	Gerry Scheub
Mike Schoonveld	Vince Urbano	James Walstra

*Guests Present*

Jim Carter	Gina Darnell	Julie Duttlinger
Gus Ellicott	Jim Fahey	Don Lode
Christine Keil	Dan Plath	Joe Skelton
Jim Sweeney	Joe Toth	Al Walus
Mark Wunderink	David Zack	

*Staff Present*

Jody Melton

Jody Melton reported that each of the 8 SWCD offices has been contacted about membership. Marshall County has appointed Rance Glinge, St. Joseph County is looking for an interested supervisor and Starke County has

not replied. Eric Blad sent a letter thanking the KRBC and commending the work of the Commission.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Gerry Scheub made a motion to approve the October 10, 2013 meeting minutes. Ken Purze seconded. The minutes were approved.

Chris Knochel asked for self-introductions from all guests.

### **Finance Report**

Jody Melton presented the financial report for 2013. All county funds have been contributed to the KRBC. Jim Lambert made a motion to accept the report, Kevin Breitzke seconded and the report was accepted.

### **Old Business**

Jasper County Surveyor Vince Urbano has met with regulatory agencies and put together a bid packet for work on the river levee from US 231 east. He is also working with the homeowners of houses west of US 231. His permit request has raised some concern with the environmental community as to how many trees are going to be removed. Vince assured Dan Plath and Gina Darnell that his intent is to only remove trees that have fallen or are ready to fall and to stabilize the levee bank to strengthen and to prevent erosion. He has been working with environmental inspectors from Indiana and the Corps.

Lake County Commissioner Gerry Scheub said the Range Line Bridge is still on target for next year. He explained to the Commission about the proposed Illiana Expressway and its effect on south Lake County. North-south roads will be affected, emergency services will be needed, growth will hinder quality of life, and landscape will be changed. Drainage will be to the Kankakee River through the Singleton Ditch.

Tony Hendricks, LaPorte County Surveyor, presented a plan for a wetland restoration plan with a meander restoration possibility in LaPorte County. The willing seller has about 29 acres and the project could be partnered with IDNR. The engineering expectations of this project would lead to cleaner water, wetland enhancement, and provide a demonstration for future areas. It could be a great example for other areas. Since the LaPorte 319 project

did not get funded, he is interested in planning the project and perhaps implementing it instead of the 319.

The LaPorte County Drainage Board and the Three County Drainage Board have passed resolutions in favor of this project and there are outside interest that may become involved, especially in land acquisition. There are several financial factors involved in planning this project. The KRBC funds need to be sorted and allocated to the most pressing projects and this may be doable but more study and estimates of costs are needed before a final decision is made.

Larry Fisher said that Marshall County through the 4 County Drainage Board will be performing maintenance on the Yellow River.

The Jasper-Newton County Joint Drainage Board will be beginning a project on the DeHaan Ditch in Jasper County that will continue into Newton to the outlet at the Kankakee. Chris Knochel is working with the regulatory agencies concerning the wetlands at the mouth of the DeHaan where it meets the Kankakee River. I 65 bridges over the Kankakee River are going to be replaced and the KRBC and Newton County have asked that a road be built under the bridge on the south side to allow access between I 65 and the railroad crossing to the south.

Porter County Drainage Board is awaiting permits for work near the Pleasant Township Ditch and the Heimberg Ditch.

The ethanol plant has been purchased in South Bend and is being put back on line. The water that was being pumped to control groundwater will be utilized in the ethanol process. The St. Joseph County Drainage Board and the city of South Bend are awaiting permits on cleaning the upper Dixon-Place Ditch (Kankakee River) on the south side of South Bend.

St. Joseph County Energy, a project to build a natural gas fired electric generating plant that discharges into the Niespodziany Ditch and then into the Kankakee. The Drainage Board asked but did not get a public meeting from IDEM. IDEM Office of Air Quality issued a permit for the plant in 2012 and the office of water quality has issued a draft permit as of November 2013.

Lomax Station is not for sale at the appraised price.

The new Sentry gage at US30 (Davis) has been installed by USGS.

## **New Business**

Kevin Overmyer as President of the Marshall County Board of Commissioners has requested the sum of \$87,248 to purchase a house in the city of Plymouth to expedite the maintenance work that will be done by the 4 County Yellow Drainage Board. The buildings will be removed, creating a green space with protection from the eroding Yellow River. Purchase of this property will allow the Drainage Board to save thousands of dollars in drainage work. Larry Fisher, presented drawings and aerials of the property and explained how this purchase will not only aid the drainage but will provide access to senior housing and enhance recreation in this part of Plymouth. With some discussion about mutual aid through several agencies and maximizing funds for the greater good, Ken Purze made a motion that the KRBC contribute \$87,248 toward this project for the purchase of the specified property. Kevin Breitzke seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

Jim Lambert reporting for the nomination committee said that the recommendation is that Chris Knochel, Chairman; Ken Purze, Vice Chairman; Jim Lambert, Secretary; and Kevin Breitzke, Treasurer be re elected for 2014. Gerry Scheub made a motion to elect the slate as presented, Vince Urbano seconded and the officers were re elected.

Dave Zack from the Kankakee River Conservancy district in Illinois said that the KRCD is attempting to get the District expanded to cover all of Kankakee County. The KRCD would like to work more closely with Indiana and the KRBC here.

Gina Darnell complimented the LaPorte County Drainage Board and Tony Hendricks for looking at a re meander project. That type of activity will help water storage and water quality.

Dan Plath thanked the KRBC for help during the Sandhill Crane canoe float in October. The campground in LaPorte County is working out well and is being used.

The next meeting of the KRBC will be February 13, 2013 at the Kankakee Fish and Wildlife Headquarters at North Judson.