

**MINUTES OF THE KANKAKEE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
HELD THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 2013 AT
9:30 AM CST
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

Dennis Estok	Larry Fisher	Tony Hendricks
Chris Knochel	Jim Lambert	Tom Larson
John Law	Don Lode	Kim Peterson
Russ Pumroy	Ken Purze	Gerry Scheub
Bruce Shepherd	Vince Urbano	James Walstra

Guests Present

John Coulter	Kerry Daily	Gus Ellicott
Julie Duttlinger	Jim Fahey	Marge Hefner
Christine Keil	Harvey Nix	John R. Sabo
Joe Skelton	Joe Toth	
Mark Wunderink	David Zack	

Staff Present

Jody Melton

Approval of Minutes

Russ Pumroy made a motion to approve the January 24, 2013 meeting minutes with the clarification that it was 2013 not 2012. Ken Purze seconded and the minutes were approved.

Chris Knochel asked for self-introductions from all guests.

Finance Report

Jody Melton presented the financial report for 2013 and explained its new format. Ken Purze made a motion to accept the report, Russ Pumroy seconded and the report was accepted.

Old Business

The Three County Drainage Board is operating out of LaPorte County now. Christopher Burke Engineering submitted a report showing a meander belt of the Yellow River in Starke County. It provides planning data for future development near the Yellow River corridor.

Jody Melton told the Board that he and Dennis Estok were completing paperwork for purchasing the home in Starke County being affected by erosion with State Homeland Security Hazard Mitigation funds. It is a work in progress. This site is a major contributor of sand in the Yellow and trying to fix the erosion with the house in place will cost over 1 million dollars. Outright purchase, slope grading, and riprap will be much cheaper.

Jim Walstra said that the Jasper County Drainage Board could not purchase the right of way to work on the levee with houses near 1500 N but there is an alternative and Vince Urbano is ready to proceed when funds become available. Vince also discussed trespassing problems on the river levee where Jasper County had just repaired. 4 wheelers are all over. Vince has obtained some poles to put up barricades. After some discussion Ken Purze made a motion seconded by Gerry Scheub that Jasper County is given enough KRBC funds to purchase gates to block off entrances to the levees. Motion was approved. There was a discussion about liability issues and who is responsible. The board determined that the KRBC should secure access as best as possible and liability falls on the trespasser. Landowners and the

Drainage Boards will work together and the DNR Conservation officers should be kept in the loop.

Jim Lambert said that the Porter County Drainage Board has been working on several levee spots along the Kankakee. A major project was completed near Baum's Bridge. Jim Lambert expressed his concern about obtaining permits to work on the levees. Permitting takes a lot of time. There was general discussion about the frustration of lengthy reviews by the Corps in particular. Legislators should be contacted and told that the Drainage Boards are responsible for levees and they need the ability to keep them in good repair.

Gerry Scheub said that the Lake County Highway's project placing a culver at Shady Shores in Shelby should be ready to begin very soon. The materials are being delivered. The bridges project at Range Line Road and State Line Road has not progressed.

Newton County Drainage Board has rescinded the right of way of private ditches along the DeHaan Ditch/Kankakee River corridor. To adjust the DeHaan for future flow, the ditch must be cleaned and the surrounding wetlands and ditches adjusted. This will require cooperation with adjacent landowners.

Newton County is also considering a basin wide assessment to maintain the drains flowing into the Kankakee.

New Business

Senate Bill 547 was introduced with language to create a new state water authority. It did not receive a hearing.

The budget bill is in the hands of the Senate. Current language contains \$1 million for the KRBC.

A discussion of the Mission/Vision statement for the KRBC was tabled on a motion by Ken Purze, second by Jim Lambert.

Ken Purze said that a LaPorte County committee is meeting to submit a 319 grant request to IDEM for the Mill Creek watershed in LaPorte County. Ken would like the KRBC members to understand what watershed planning is and suggested further discussion. Vince Urbano and Bruce shepherd

talked about the Iroquois River upper watershed 319 watershed project. Jody Melton offered to get someone from IDEM to come to the next KRBC meeting to discuss watershed planning.

Ken Purze also displayed a sign from the Northwest Indiana Paddlers Association that reflects some of the signage they are posting along the Kankakee for paddlers. This is another partnership the KRBC has formed with other groups. The NWIPA is going to begin work on the campsite in LaPorte County east of US 421.

The Lomax Station area is still being studied and there is a meeting later this day to meet with the property owner.

The next meeting of the KRBC will be June 20, 2013 at the Kankakee Fish and Wildlife Headquarters at 9:30 am CST unless there is a better time to get someone from IDEM for the watershed planning discussion. The meeting was adjourned.