

**MINUTES OF THE KANKAKEE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
HELD THURSDAY, JULY 14, 2016 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.

Jody Melton called the roll.

Members present

Kevin Breitzke	Bill Crase	Larry Fisher
Randy Glinge	Chris Knochel	Jim Kreiger
Tom Larson	John Law	Kim Peterson
Ken Porter	Russ Pumroy	Ken Purze
Gerry Scheub	Vince Urbano	James Walstra

Guests Present

Mike Aylesworth	Siavash Beik	
Jim Carter	Rick Niemeyer	Harvey Nix
Randy Peterson	Dan Plath	Joe Skelton
Joe Toth	Mark Wunderink	David Zack

Staff Present

Jody Melton

Chairman Chris Knochel asked for nominations for secretary for the KRBC. Russ Pumroy nominated Jim Kreiger. There was no second. Tom Larsen nominated Vince Urbano. John Law seconded. The vote was called and Vince Urbano was elected unanimously.

Chairman Knochel asked for self-introductions from all guests.

Approval of Minutes

Gerry Scheub made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 12, 2016 meeting. Ken Purze seconded and the minutes were approved.

Finance Report

The finance report was presented on two pages. Page one is an accounting of work funds dedicated to river work per county; page two is administrative expenses.

There was discussion about the lease on the Rivers Edge Farm. The Conservation Reserve Program is up after 10 years. Ken Purze made a motion to authorize Jody Melton to work with an attorney to advertise for bids for farming and managing the property. Jim Kreiger seconded and the motion was approved.

Jody Melton said that he had been seeking professional help from CBBEL for many extra tasks related to the Yellow River initiative. Much of the work is outside the original contract. Ken Purze made a motion seconded by Kevin Breitzke that CBBEL be allowed to bill the KRBC for time and material for work efforts requested and approved by the Director. The motion was approved.

Jody Melton, Chris Knochel, and Ken Purze will appear before the State Budget Committee to ask for release of \$395,000. This is the final funds left from 2013. That meeting is July 29 at IU-Kokomo.

Presentation

Carl Wodrich and Brad Baldwin from the IDNR Division of Land Acquisition made a presentation on the status of the Indiana Stream and Wetland Mitigation Program being proposed by IDNR. While the Army Corps has not signed off on the program yet and there are reviews taking place, when the program starts it will allow wetland mitigation by using banks created by the IDNR. The DNR's ILF program, when established, will provide stream and wetland mitigation credits that can be used for compensatory mitigation for unavoidable impacts to waters of the United States and isolated wetlands in the State of Indiana. Permits are required by the Corps in accordance with Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 USC 403) for work in or affecting traditionally navigable "waters of the United States" and in accordance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) for the discharge of dredged and/or fill material into "waters of

the U.S.,” and by IDEM under Section 401 Water Quality Certification of the CWA and Indiana’s Isolated Wetlands law (Indiana Code 13-18-22).

New Business

There are 120 acres next to Rivers Edge Farm that are currently for sale to the KRBC. A KRBC committee toured the site and discussed the value of purchasing the acreage to add to Rivers Edge. After listening to the in-lieu fee program discussion there might be value in seeing if that property could fit into that program as well. Certain drains that we keep open on Rivers Edge could be closed if the KRBC purchased that land and did not farm it. Ken Purze made a motion, seconded by Kevin Breitzke that Jody Melton contact an approved appraiser and order an appraisal before further discussion. The motion carried with 3 nays. Ken Purze made a motion that Porter County Surveyor’s Office be asked to furnish wetland information. John Law seconded and the motion was approved.

Jody Melton explained that the new biennium for the Indiana General Assembly will be this coming session. We must prepare a request to give to our legislators. Put numbers together for your county’s needs and get the numbers to Jody Melton

Old Business

Vince Urbano told the members that there are still sections of riverbank in Jasper County that continue to erode and he is going to be seeking money for rip rap and stabilization in certain areas.

Bill Crase, Starke County Surveyor, said he was finishing up floating the Yellow River and checking out the tree situation. He is working with CBBEL to set trees aside for the pilot project on the Yellow.

Kevin Breitzke, Porter County Surveyor, said the Heimberg project was given a permit by the Corps. The Cornell and Phillips projects are awaiting permits.

Chris Knochel said Newton County and Abonmarche Engineering are studying the embankment from I 65 to the 3 I railroad to determine how the bank can be repaired. Wetland mitigation is a major factor.

Allen Cameron Jr. expressed his frustration in not being able to access the riverbank on his property on the south side of the Kankakee. He is willing to work with Newton County and the KRBC to get that access.

Siavash Beik spoke of the progress on the Yellow River work being undertaken. They are still collecting some data and are having meetings with regulatory agencies. CBBEL is working with Indiana Farm Bureau to develop a field day to present this project to the legislators, land owners, and county officials of the Basin. That field day will be August 11 at the Nancy Dembowski Community Center in Knox and will then proceed to the Yellow River pilot project site. This field day is being sponsored and organized by Indiana Farm Bureau. KRBC members will be invited.

Bob Barr showed the pilot project area and a graph that showed how one log jammed against the bank randomly had managed to change the shape of the bottom of the channel. It occurred during a period of high water. The pilot project will mimic this natural occurring event and create the same circumstance of a deepen channel. We can learn from this lesson and try to help the river work in a natural way.

Dan Plath representing the Northwest Indiana Paddlers Association (NWIPA) announced that the US Department of the Interior had designated the Kankakee River a National Water Trail from Crumstown Highway in Indiana to the confluence with the Des Plaines in Illinois. It is one of only 20 National Water Trails in the U.S. It took a lot of effort from many groups and people to make this happen. The KRBC was a partner in this effort and Dan presented the KRBC with a plaque from the US Dept. of Interior announcing the designation. The designation does not put any restrictions on the river. It will create an opportunity to seek additional funding for safety, for signage, for cleanup, for efforts to develop tourism, and overall economic boost. Dan also presented the KRBC with an honorary paddle designating the KRBC as an outstanding partner with the NWIPA.

Kevin Breitzke announced that NIRPC just reissued the Greenways and Blueways Trail map for northwest Indiana. Jody Melton brought maps to distribute. Reissue goes perfectly with the Trail designation.

Included in the packet is the letter Jody Melton wrote on behalf of the KRBC concerning the proposed Great lakes Basin Railroad. Read the newspaper for more information.

The next KRBC meeting will be held on September 1, 2016 at 9:30 am. The meeting site will be determined. Bass Pro Shop is an option. The meeting was adjourned.