

**MINUTES OF THE KANKAKEE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
HELD THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 2017 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 Vince Urbano called the roll.

Members present

Kevin Breitzke	Craig Cultice	Mark Kingma
Chris Knochel	Jim Kreiger	John Law
Mike Novotney	Kim Peterson	
Ken Porter	Ken Purze	
Jerry Tippy	Vince Urbano	James Walstra

Guests Present

State Representative Mike Aylesworth		
State Senator Mike Bohacek		Chris Brown
Bob Barr	Siavash Beik	Bryan Boggs
Steve Heim	State Senator Rick Niemeyer	
State Representative Jim Pressel		Joe Skelton

Staff Present

Jody Melton

Chairman Knochel asked for self-introductions from all guests.

Approval of Minutes

Ken Purze made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 16, 2017 meeting with corrections showing Kevin Breitzke attended the meeting and also that a motion in new business authorized \$83,179.09 be available to Porter County. Kevin Breitzke seconded and the amended minutes were approved.

Finance Report

There have been a number of expenditures since the last meeting and the riverwork funds are being spent. There is only one item in the 2009 allocation, 4 in the 2013 allocation and the 2015 allocation is being used for gages, for the Yellow River design, and log jam removal. There have been several unexpected log jams that have been removed using money from the 2015 allocation. That money has not been released by the State Budget Committee but will be on the next agenda of the Budget Committee this summer. 4 counties have paid their 2017 dues. There is a balance in general receipts of approximately \$170,000 unallocated and the cash position also contains the funds from the wetland restoration program at Rivers Edge which is used for back up expenses. After discussion it was concluded that the \$170,000 unallocated could be used for the 25% match to obtain the 2018-19 biennium funds allocated by the General Assembly.

Ken Purze made a motion to accept the finance report, Kevin Breitzke seconded and the motion was approved.

Old Business

Chris Knochel reported on the project in Newton County downstream of I 65. The bank is getting narrower and Abonmarche has created a plan to rebuild the banks by moving them back and sloping them to create a vegetated shelf. There have been several meetings with regulatory agencies and there is concern that the banks moved back will encroach on existing wetlands. There is also no easy access to this section of the riverbank. Abonmarche continues to meet with Corps of Engineers and US Fish and Wildlife to determine how the bank can be stabilized and restructured to prevent more erosion.

Bob Barr and Siavash Beik provided more updates on the Yellow River project. Most of the permits are acquired, the trees have been removed from

the area and stored and the project should begin this fall. The funds to begin this project will be provided from the 2018 appropriation but the project needs to begin this fall to provide a successful project within 18 months. The KRBC has existing funds that can be used for the project until the \$600,000 is released from the State. After discussion Ken Purze made a motion that the KRBC supports the Starke County Drainage Board letting contracts for this Yellow River project. Jerry Tippy seconded. The KRBC unanimously adopted the motion.

New Business

The General Assembly allocated \$600,000 to the KRBC for Biennium 18-19. The caveat is that the KRBC must match that \$600,000 with a 25% local share being \$150,000. In conversations with various legislators, the KRBC was told it was time for the local counties to put some 'skin in the game'. While the state should pay some portion of KRBC efforts on the Kankakee and Yellow River problems, local counties need to take some responsibility too. As discussed earlier in the finance report the KRBC can fund the Yellow River project and get the required \$150,000 from local monies already established. The major issue is that going forward the KRBC will be required to seek local monies from the 8 counties beyond just membership dues. A long discussion ensued including the attending state legislators on just how that could proceed. 25% could be a shifting number depending on what the General Assembly might allocate for a biennium. The membership of each county should have a discussion within the county of how that 25% could be raised and those discussions should continue among the KRBC members at regular meetings. The legislators in attendance were agreeable to work with the membership and the counties on possibilities for raising further local funds, but they need a consensus on how to proceed. It is not unthinkable that the counties should be contributing "skin in the game". The how is to be determined. Conversations will continue.

The next KRBC meeting will be held on August 10 at 9:30 am. The meeting site will be at the Kankakee Fish and Wildlife Area Headquarters.