

**MINUTES OF THE KANKAKEE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
HELD WEDNESDAY, JULY 11, 2018 AT
10:00 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 Vince Urbano called the roll.

Members present

Kevin Breitzke	Bill Crase	Craig Cultice
Mike Delp	Tim Drenth	Bill Emerson
Brad Hunter	Anthony Hendricks	Mark Kingma
Chris Knochel	John Law	Kim Peterson
Ken Porter	Ken Purze	Gene Schmidt
Jerry Tippy	Vince Urbano	James Walstra

Guests Present

Bob Barr	Dave Bausman	William Beaver
Siavash Beik	Tom Bennett	Bryan Boggs
George Bowman	Matt Buffington	Allan Cameron, Jr.
Allan Cameron IV	Jim Carter	Eric Courtright
Angie Crawford	Aaron Domrill	Gus Ellicott
Scott Girardi	Dan Gossman	Douglas L. Gutwein
Ryan Hoff	Christine Keil	Aaron Knezevic
Jim Kreiger	Tom Larson	Christopher Lee
Brian Matthews	Marty Maupin	Abrams Maxwell
Travis Mead	Julie Morris	Erin Moorhous
Ryan Mueller	Tim Nugent	Jared O'Brien
Courtney Papa	Grant Poule	Jim Pressel
Jason Randolph	Brian Rockensuess	Chris Salatas
Justin Schneider	John Shure	Robert Themer
Mona Ulfers	Lauren Varga	Thom Webster
Andrew Wheeler	Brian Wolff	

Staff Present
Jody Melton

Jody introduced Porter County SWCD Supervisor Brad Hunter who will now serve on the Commission

Chairman Knochel asked for introduction of guests.

Approval of Minutes

Ken Purze made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2018 meeting. Kevin Breitzke seconded and the minutes were approved.

Finance Report

Balances are available for the administrative account. A separate page shows the expenditures to date of the work money and levee repair. Ken Purze moved to accept the report, Vince Urbano seconded and the motion was accepted.

Flood repair follow up

Bill Crase said Starke County has \$67,000 available and it is going to be used for levee repair and tree removal from this spring's flood.

Jasper County needs a longterm project to begin to correct riverbank problems. The emergency repairs have been made but much more work is needed. Work near the Hodge Ditch is going to have to take place to provide protection.

Marshall County will be removing fallen trees and surveying existing sediment traps.

Porter County has an area where a river bank is being repaired.

The counties have filed for reimbursement from FEMA for the spring floods. They are awaiting decisions on those funds.

Report of the Surveyors

Bill Crase said the Yellow River pilot project fared well during the flood.

The small area of damage was repaired and the vegetation is taking hold.

Bill Crase said he thinks the pilot project is successful, the channel is holding, erosion has lessened and the next phase should be continued

hopefully at a lower construction price. Bill Crase suggested that the next KRBC meeting be held in Knox and a field trip to the site can follow. Bill said that the lower end of the Yellow in Starke will probably need to be dredged in areas. LaPorte and Starke estimate \$20 million to repair the Kankakee River in their areas, and another \$10 million for the Yellow in Starke.

Bill Emerson said that Lake County is affected by the upper watershed but influenced by the Illinois portion. He has been surveying portions of the river and meeting with Illinois officials and Newton County officials on mutual work. Vertical sand banks are causing a problem and have to be addressed. He has not come to a cost estimate yet.

Vince Urbano said Jasper County is similar to Lake County. Vertical banks are a problem but there is a meandering channel in the middle of the river. The techniques that Christopher Burke used in the Yellow River needs to be adapted to the Kankakee River in all eight counties as a joint effort. He feels a company like Burke can develop that work plan. He is not willing to give an estimate on cost yet. He would like Burke to develop a work plan and give him their estimate. He has 19 miles of river bank.

St. Joseph County has about 9 miles of Kankakee River. The biggest issue is the area from SR 104 to Pine Creek. Pine Creek backs up in highwater time and drops sand. The sand load in the river is the biggest problem. He thinks he probably will spend \$100,000 to fix that problem.

Newton County has 10 miles of river and work estimates is about \$5 million for repair and stabilization. There is a pilot project near I 65 being designed that will be using \$150,000 of local monies to construct.

Porter County has similar problems to Jasper and Lake and has about 17 miles of river. Kevin Breitzke said that he is mindful of the effect downstream of work he will do. He estimates he needs at least \$15 million.

Jerry Tippy of Lake County explained that as he talked to Surveyor Emerson of Lake County about river work and in conversations with Newton County officials, he realized that the Kankakee River in Illinois becomes a major factor in the health of the Lake County portion. Through other meetings he met and discussed the river's health with Andrew Wheeler, Kankakee County Commissioner, and they decided to bring a group together to talk about mutual efforts in Indiana and Illinois, particularly sediment control. Andrew Wheeler said that the river solutions need to be developed with both sides of the state line in mind and Kankakee County is interested in working with the KRBC to develop a plan for the river. Kankakee County also has a problem with the Iroquois River which flows into the Kankakee River at

Aroma Park. The Iroquois River carries silt and more severely, causes terrible flooding in the City of Watseka. John Shurr, Commissioner of Iroquois County, has indicated that Iroquois County is also interested in participating in a bistate effort. State Representative Tom Bennett of Illinois explained that the flooding problems were worsening and that it is an opportune time to work together for a bi state solution. He has been in conversations with officials in Springfield to build interest in such a plan. Funding for any project, Indiana or Illinois, is problematic, but Indiana counties are considering a drainage assessment for river work. Vince Urbano of Jasper County said that it is in all of our interests to develop a work plan for the Iroquois and Kankakee in both counties and he is in favor of a single consultant to draw all the plans together and present a work program.

Jerry Tippy said that he had received a proposal from Christopher B. Burke Engineering that outlines a plan to develop an assessment of the Kankakee and Iroquois Rivers and the Singleton Ditch to create a work plan and provide a cost estimate for such work from the upper Kankakee Watershed to Aroma Park in Illinois. The cost of the assessment and work plan will be \$225,000 for Indiana counties and \$50,000 from Illinois counties.

That proposal has been shared with members of the KRBC and with Andrew Wheeler and John Shurr from Kankakee and Iroquois Counties, IL. Mr. Tippy made a motion that the KRBC accept the proposal from CBBEL, Ltd. Kevin Breitzke seconded. Ken Purze acknowledged the presence of a number of people from Illinois both from state government and from the City of Watseka. He asked Paul Osman from the Illinois DNR if Illinois had previous experience with Christopher Burke Engineering. Mr. Osman replied that Burke was very respected in Illinois water projects. Chairman Knochel noted that working with Burke under this proposed assessment will be Robert Barr from IUPUI, a hydrogeologist with a wealth of information not just in water but in the Kankakee and Yellow River systems. The KRBC used CBBEL and Bob Barr for the pilot project in the Yellow River which is successful. The KRBC should build on that success and take it to the Kankakee River.

Tony Hendricks, LaPorte County Surveyor, suggested that the KRBC spend another 30 days and seek more proposals from other knowledgeable firms. In a time when the surveyors are building cross sections and determining further work, it is time for a master plan to be developed to consider the river as a whole. A master plan would give the legislature an idea of what the Kankakee needs for future work. Vince Urbano said that another 30 days will set the cost estimate behind schedule, CBBEL and Burke are

familiar with the problems and the possible solutions. They can start the assessment now. Our legislators have asked for an estimated cost from the assessment to be prepared by January 1, 2019.

After further discussion, the KRBC voted to approve the contract with CBBEL, Ltd. for \$225,000 for the Indiana portion with approval of \$50,000 from Kankakee and Iroquois Counties pending. The motion was approved 17 yes and Tony Hendricks voting no.

There was much discussion about how the river is going to look after the work plan assessment is completed and work is underway. How then is flood water addressed. The satellite pictures of the March 2018 flood is quite intimidating. Tony Hendricks then presented the RFQ that the long range planning committee constructed looking for a consultant firm to prepare a long range master plan. Ken Purze made a motion to put out the RFQ developed by the long range committee, Bill Crase seconded. Chris Knochel will appoint a scoring committee to evaluate the qualifications of the consultants who submit information. Motion was approved unanimously.

Tim Nugent asked if the Army Corps of Engineers has been involved in pilot project work. The Corps was consulted in the Yellow River pilot project and is involved in proposals of the counties now. The Basin is divided into Detroit, Chicago, and Rock Island Districts. Flood plain regulations in Indiana and Illinois are very similar, if not identical.

The availability of federal funds was questioned. Representative Gutwein said that when the Burke Assessment Plan is completed, then we could approach the feds with an actual plan.

Other Business

Ken Purze reminded the KRBC members that the upcoming legislative session starts in January 2019. He nominated Jerry Tippy to be the spokesperson for the members in Indianapolis during the session. Jerry Tippy was named legislative liaison by acclamation. Ken also told the members that it is not too early to start assembling the funding needs each county will have for the next session. He reminded the members that each year they assemble their requests, gather some pictures, and Jody Melton puts together a booklet that is distributed to legislators showing the needs of the Kankakee. Ken Purze said the requests should be ready immediately

following the November elections. Chris Knochel asked if each county should begin the conversation on establishing an assessment on the Kankakee watershed. Representative Gutwein said he would consult with the members of House Ways and Means to see if there was any advice they could offer. It is his intent that all assessments in all counties be equal.

The Commission has established two programs today. Christopher Burke will create a Flood and Sediment Management Work Plan that will include all 8 Indiana counties and Kankakee and Iroquois counties in Illinois. Their work will also include the Iroquois River and Singleton Ditch. This is an effort to recover from the recent flooding and address ongoing issues particularly sedimentation.

The Commission will distribute a Request for Qualifications to engineering firms for the creation of a long range master plan for maintaining the river and the basin after the Burke work is implemented. This will be a plan for the future.

The next meeting of the KRBC will be held in Knox at the Community Center so that a field trip can visit the yellow River project site. The date will depend on availability of the building but it will be scheduled for September.