

**MINUTES OF THE  
MERRILLVILLE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 2013**

Vice President Leonard White called the June 4, 2013 Merrillville Stormwater Management Board (SWMB) meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. Board President Barbara Ghoston was unable to be present due to a family emergency. The other member in attendance was Dorinda Gregor, and a quorum was established. Staff present was Executive Director Matt Lake, Attorney James Meyer, Damon Tsouklis for financial advisor Karl Cender from Cender & Company and Secretary Liz Bushemi. Councilman Tom Goralczyk, the Town Council liaison to Stormwater Utility, was also in attendance. Councilwoman Chrissy Barron, Merrillville Resident Ruby Walla, Chas Reilly from *The Times*, Karen Caffarini from the *Post-Tribune*, Town Manager/Public Works Director Bruce Spires, Ron Wiedeman and Robert Csanyi from Robinson Engineering and Beth Gregor were also present.

Included in the agenda packet was a copy of the minutes from the May 7, 2013 monthly SWMB meeting. Dorinda Gregor made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 7, 2013 meeting, and it was seconded by Leonard White; there were no questions or corrections, and the motion was approved and unanimously carried.

Also included in the agenda packet were the accounts payable registers from May 14, 2013 and May 28, 2013 and appropriation reports for funds 626 and 627. Leonard White made a motion to approve the accounts payable registers from May 14, 2013 and May 28, 2013, and it was seconded by Dorinda Gregor. There were no questions, and the motion was approved and unanimously carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Matt Lake said the MS4 Annual Meeting was held in Indianapolis on Thursday, May 30, and the Town of Merrillville received two (2) recognitions from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). It was recognized for going beyond the MS4 Stormwater Quality Management Plan for implementing our permit, public education, urban forestry activities such as celebrating Arbor Day annually and being a Tree City USA, and involvement with the Northwest Indiana Stormwater Advisory Group (NISWAG). It was also recognized for implementation of the MS4 plan for illicit discharge detection and elimination; he said that Merrillville was the first community audited last year, and because of high marks received, Merrillville set the stage.

Regarding the 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Meadowdale project, Matt said a pre-construction meeting was held on May 15<sup>th</sup>, where representatives of all utilities were present to discuss the project. Trees have been removed and utilities have been relocated, and the project began on Monday. However, due to motorists not slowing down and obeying flagmen, it was decided that the road be closed where the work is being done. Except for buses, mail delivery and local residents, the construction area will be closed to traffic. He said safety is the number one priority for the workers and residents.

He said Dyer Construction stabilized the culvert on Taft Street, and they are proceeding with the Taft Street project. He is preparing a response to the Calumet Park Cemetery board regarding their requests regarding the easement for their property.

Matt met with approximately 40 Bon Aire Lake residents on May 8 at St. Stephen's church hall to discuss the lake, which is owned by the town. Their biggest concern is the culvert installed about six (6) years ago, which raised the water level considerably. The purpose of the meeting was to gather information and discuss a lake management plan; he also informed them about Stormwater's contract with Aquatic Weed Control to control algae in the lake and said the third fountain was repaired and installed. Board members received a copy of the safety signage installed recently at the east end of the lake.

He said Skillman Corporation has prepared a new program schedule for the new building, and the first advertisement for bidders will be June 20. The area to the west of the building was excavated and the pond installed. He asked Town Manager Bruce Spires if the fence had been moved and extended, and Mr. Spires said not yet.

Matt said that Bob Newport from the Region 5 Land Use and Development Practices Division of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was also at the MS4 Annual Meeting, who discussed construction runoff notices. He reminded members about the EPA notice that he distributed last month regarding the rule change, and communities need to be aware of EPA's enforcement of the rule change, which will expand watershed boundaries and restrict volume which will require low-impact development.

Leonard White congratulated Matt for receiving statewide recognition at the annual meeting and complimented him and the staff for doing a good job.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Matt said he is waiting on quotes for planting of the 54<sup>th</sup> Court rain garden, which was re-designed by the Arch Group. He showed everyone some proposed signage for the rain garden, which will identify the plants in the garden, as well as advise residents how they can help with rain gardens. He will advise everyone when it will be planted. Dorinda asked if it would be planted now or in the fall, and Matt said it will be planted soon. He said it will be the largest rain garden in Lake County and possibly the State of Indiana.

Matt spoke with Christina Groves from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) today regarding the Community Rating System (CRS) for flood zones. She intends to meet us, as well as the Town of Dyer and Lake County this July, and he's hopeful to progress together for flood management.

Members received a copy of a letter from Lake County Surveyor George VanTil regarding new technology at the surveyor's office and requesting local communities' financial commitment to assist in paying for the equipment. Matt said the county made this agreement without telling communities about it and is now soliciting funding from towns and cities. Leonard White asked Matt's recommendation, and Matt said Lake County did not approach Merrillville prior to receiving this letter and suggested that the matter be tabled until more information is received.

Matt met with Fire Chief Ed Yerga today regarding a green roof for the main fire station on 73<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. Chief Yerga indicated his board is looking into a green roof for the possibility of planting vegetables for the firemen to eat. He will be in touch with Matt. Dorinda Gregor said the town ordinance requires the roof to be structurally sound.

Matt said the summer crew hired by Public Works for Stormwater has finished snagging the conveyance next to Taney Place. He was approached by Ron Widing to provide boots and gloves for the summer help; Matt will inventory what is needed. Councilman Goralczyk said chain saws may need to be purchased, and Matt said he will price them.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Councilman Goralczyk said there is a road project at Salk School on 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and they will seek Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for the road portion and said \$50,000 is needed for drainage. Matt told the board that \$50,000 in Stormwater line item 395 for quantity control can be moved to line item 394 for contractual services in order to pay for this project. Leonard White made a motion to approve the transfer of \$50,000 from line item 395 to line item 394, and it was seconded by Dorinda Gregor. There were no questions, and the motion was approved and unanimously carried.

Matt will be speaking at the Indiana Association of Floodplain and Stormwater Management (INAFSM) Conference this fall. He will be attending an inspector's workshop in Michigan City this Friday.

Matt said Dan Gardner said the Lake County Surveyor's office approached him about contracting with Merrillville Stormwater Utility for use of the camera truck; Matt asked him to have their attorney prepare a contract. Stormwater staff will operate the equipment, and the county would be billed at an hourly rate for use of the equipment. Mr. Goralczyk questioned liability, and Attorney Meyer said liability issues should be addressed in the contract indicating Lake County would be responsible for any damage. Leonard asked about other communities using our equipment, and Matt said there has been discussion with the NISWAG group about equipment sharing. Dorinda asked where the money would go, and Matt said in a Stormwater revenue account.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Devonshire Woods resident Ruby Walla addressed the board and said she has talked with Matt previously. She asked who is responsible for debris in Turkey Creek, and Matt said it is a regulated drain and the Lake County Drainage Board is responsible; however, Matt said Merrillville helps to maintain and clean it. Mrs. Walla said she has been reminding her neighbors to keep debris and grass off the roads so it does not go into the stormwater drains. She asked about Turkey Creek, and Matt said since it is a county regulated drain, included in the 600 miles of regulated drains in the county, maintenance is done by the county. Matt said Merrillville partners with Lake County on projects whenever possible. He said the new rules being imposed by EPA will force communities to share since they are all in the same watershed.

The next monthly meeting is set for Tuesday, July 2, 2013, at 4:30 pm.

Dorinda Gregor made a motion to adjourn, and it was seconded by Leonard White. The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Bushemi  
Secretary