

**MINUTES OF THE
MERRILLVILLE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 7, 2018**

President L.J. “Bud” Crist called the August 7, 2018, Merrillville Stormwater Management Board (SWMB) meeting to order at 4:32 p.m. The pledge of allegiance was said. The other members in attendance were Barbara Ghoston and Ralph Simek. A roll call was taken, and a quorum was established. Staff members present were Executive Director Matt Lake, Attorney James Meyer and secretary Liz Bushemi. Also present were Merrillville Town Councilperson Chrissy Barron, Town Manager Bruce Spires, Ron Wiedeman from Robinson Engineering and Darren Olson from Christopher Burke Engineering. Bon Aire Lake residents who signed in were Dan Besedick, Joanne Besedick, Maurice Washington, Lawrence & Pamela Sinclair, Bob Cotton, Linda Neidlinger, Karen Billick and Tony Nadolski.

MINUTES

Included in the agenda packet was a copy of the minutes from the July 3, 2018 SWMB meeting. Ralph Simek made a motion to approve the minutes from the SWMB meeting held July 3, 2018, and it was seconded by Barbara Ghoston. There were no questions. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE REGISTERS APPROVAL

Also included in the agenda packet were copies of the accounts payable registers from July 10, 2018 and July 24, 2018. Barbara Ghoston made a motion to accept the accounts payable registers from July 10, 2018 and July 24, 2018, and it was seconded by Ralph Simek. There were no questions. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Bud Crist said the Stormwater Clean and Clear oil painting that was done by Mitch Markovitz has been framed and hangs in the Stormwater Resource Center reception area.

OLD BUSINESS

Matt Lake said they met on site at the Independence Street project, and the engineers are working on their final punch list for the project. He said some seeding needs to be done. Robinson Engineering will be working on Dyer Construction’s final pay request for the next meeting. Matt said this project is a great improvement to the neighborhood since it had been labeled “Independence Bowl”. Town Manager Bruce Spires said if paving this road does not take place this year, it will be done next year. Councilwoman Chrissy Barron thanked Stormwater for doing this project. Matt said Robinson Engineering did a good job engineering this stormwater project instead of having to have a lift station at that area.

Regarding the Sunset Road project, Matt said he did a walk-through of the project with Robinson Engineering and the contractor, Delta III, Inc. Robinson will be making a recommendation for a final pay request, which is being prepared by their engineer, Steve King.

Matt said Stormwater filed an application with the Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission (LCRBDC) for engineering for the Meadowdale project, and it was approved last week. The LCRBDC will pay the entire cost of engineering. Matt publicly thanked the LCRBDC Board for approving the application and Darren Olson from Christopher Burke Engineering (CBBEL) for all his work on the project and back and forth for meetings with the LCRBDC. Matt said the Meadowdale area was designed without flood storage detention back in the 50’s and 60’s. Included in the members’ packets was a copy of the Christopher Burke Engineering amended contract and Exhibit A-5 for \$169,000.00 for engineering this project.

The LCRBDC will reimburse Stormwater for the \$169,000.00 engineering costs. Ralph Simek make a motion to accept the Contract with Christopher Burke Engineering with attached exhibits for engineering costs in this project, and it was seconded by Barbara Ghoston, who asked how this will be paid; Matt said we will submit the CBBEL bills for reimbursement. There was no other discussion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

NEW BUSINESS

Included in the members' packets were copies of the budgets for 2019 for Funds 626, 627 and 628. Barbara Ghoston made a motion to approve the Fund 626 operations and maintenance budget in the amount of \$1,156,722.00, and it was seconded by Ralph Simek. There were no questions. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote. Ralph Simek made a motion to approve the Fund 627 construction budget for the Meadowdale project and nine watersheds in the amount of \$890,000.00, and it was seconded by Barbara Ghoston. There were no questions. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote. Ralph Simek made a motion to approve the Fund 628 Grants Fund budget in the amount of \$70,000.00, and it was seconded by Barbara Ghoston. There were no questions. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

Matt said there was another sinkhole at 61st and Harrison Street last week, and because it was an emergency, Delta III, Inc. was hired to repair it, and it should be completed later in the week. Matt showed two pictures. He said the pipes at that area are being replaced as they fail because they are failing systematically. Matt talked to Attorney Jim Meyer and Robinson Engineering about having a contract for emergency contractors in order to know the range of costs, or for natural disasters like the Iddings Court culvert replacement after the heavy rain in February. Ralph Simek asked if this is the third sinkhole on Harrison Street, and Matt said yes; Mr. Simek asked why the entire project is not being done at this time, and Matt said it is too cost prohibitive, and it is being done in phases. Matt said they are replacing existing 72" CMP pipes in the polymer coated 72" CMP pipes.

OTHER BUSINESS

Added on to the agenda was Pay Request #1 in the amount of \$11,725.00 from Delta III, Inc. for the 56th & Grant Street slope armoring project. Matt said the concrete was removed, and there is rip rap over the entire area, which was the only feasible option without putting a box culvert at that location. A picture was passed out. Last month, the SWMB approved Delta's quote in the full amount of \$13,125.00. Barbara Ghoston made a motion to approve Delta III, Inc.'s Pay Request #1 in the amount of \$11,725.00, and it was seconded by Ralph Simek. There were no questions. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Crist recognized that several residents from the Bon Aire Lake subdivision were present and asked Matt Lake to give an update prior to any public comment. Matt said he has talked to residents David Walton and Bob Cotton about a possible alternative treatment since there is residents consensus in getting another contractor and/or use possible other chemicals to treat the lake. Matt said he met with Ed from Lake & Pond Biologists, and Ed will be preparing a proposal. He said he is interested in nature and the wildlife, and perhaps there is a different way to treat the lake; perhaps some of the algae can be mechanically removed. They are meeting Thursday to discuss Bon Aire Lake further.

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Resident Bob Cotton said there is a large amount of algae in the lake, and Anthony Nadolski, who lives across the street, suggests putting the fountains back in the lake for oxygen. Matt said there were lengthy discussions about the fountains, and they were scrapped after 20 years (an unidentified resident said they were in the lake for 17 years). Another unidentified resident said when the fountains were installed, they ran all day, 12 months out of the year and with lights. Matt said the NIPSCO bill for electricity for the fountains were about \$1,000.00 per month, and the fountains were on 12 hours and off 12 hours.

Resident Karen Billick said all the neighbors are concerned; she said she went to Chesterton Feed and Grain Store and was looking at new chemicals for the lake. She asked to receive public credit for giving Matt a brochure and referring the Lake & Pond Biologists company. Matt said he already met with the owner of Lake & Pond Biologists and discussed treatment options. He said it is a natural body of water, just like Cedar Lake and Hobart's Lake George. He said Stormwater is looking at the current chemical treatment of the lake and assessing treatment alternatives like non-toxic dyes that will slow algae growth and reduce negative impacts to wildlife.

Dan Besedick, who said he's been a resident since 1978, asked if elevation of the lake would eliminate the need for chemical treatment and asked if anyone has thought of solar powered pumps for aeration. Matt said it's not the town's responsibility to aerate the lake but we can monitor the dissolved oxygen levels. Matt said when the culvert is lowered, it will provide more stormwater storage. Mr. Besedick said there was a sanitary lift station at Bon Aire Lake years ago.

Town Manager Bruce Spires said he was working for the town when the culvert was raised, and they were told the lake level had to be raised for the fountains to be functional. He said originally, there was an old culvert with a lift station owned by Bon Aire Utilities and Washburn Realtors, where waste would be pumped out into a ditch; a plate was installed to keep the waste from backing into the lake.

An unidentified resident said after the culvert was raised many years ago, ground water starting coming through the basement walls of his house when it rains, and mold is growing; he asked what he is to do if his house collapses.

Mr. Besedick also said there is a beaver dam; Matt if there is confirmation of a beaver dam, he will contact the Lake County Surveyor since it is Lateral 7, a regulated drain, and they will have their contractor trap the beaver and their drainage crew will remove the dam.

Matt said one of our main priorities is flood control. Environmental permits are being applied for through BF&S to lower the culvert, which will restore the normal water level of the lake and is our best chance to remove properties from the high-risk flood zone. A woman who did not identify herself said she paid \$23,000 to have drain tiles surrounding her house replaced. Matt said lowering the lake level will provide more protection from flooding. He said the engineering for the project is about 85% complete, and the environmental permitting process must be done properly through state and federal regulatory agencies. Once permitting is complete, we can solicit bids for the project.

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Barbara Ghoston asked Matt if he has a resident contact person at Bon Aire Lake, and Matt said he generally corresponds with Bob Cotton. Matt said Merrillville residents with high-risk flood insurance policies receive a 15% discount on flood insurance through the FEMA Community Rating System program.

Resident Bob Cotton said that he heard that FEMA is raising flood insurance rates and bringing more people into the flood zone Matt said the federal government/FEMA is over 25 billion dollars in debt due to nationwide natural disasters over the last several years.

Resident Karen Billick said the weeds by the culvert are very high and asked who cuts the weeds by the culvert; Bruce Spires said the Public Works Department does, and he will get them out there as soon as possible. She also asked about the algae, and Matt said the Lake & Pond Biologists company is putting a proposal together. Meanwhile, Aquatic Weed Control is scheduled to treat the lake.

There being no further business, Ralph Simek made a motion to adjourn, and it was seconded by Barbara Ghoston; the meeting was adjourned at 5:16 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Bushemi
Staff Secretary