

**MINUTES OF THE  
MERRILLVILLE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY, APRIL 6, 2021**

President L.J. “Bud” Crist called the April 6, 2021, Merrillville Stormwater Management Board (SWMB) meeting to order at 3:32 p.m. The pledge of allegiance was said. The other members in attendance were Ralph Simek and Barbara Ghoston. A roll call was taken, and a quorum was established. Staff members present were Executive Director Matt Lake, Attorney James Meyer, Financial Advisor Karl Cender and secretary Liz Bushemi. The other person present was Dolly Flaska.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Mr. Crist said he hopes everyone stays well and is getting their Covid vaccinations.

**MINUTES**

Included in the agenda packet was a copy of the minutes from the March 2, 2021, SWMB meeting. Barbara Ghoston made a motion to approve the minutes from the SWMB meeting held March 2, 2021, 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.

**ACCOUNTS PAYABLE REGISTERS APPROVAL**

Also included in the agenda packet were copies of the accounts payable registers from March 9 and March 23, 2021. Barbara Ghoston made a motion to accept the accounts payable registers from March 9 and March 23, 2021, 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.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Included in the members’ packets was a copy of a letter from Sean Mikos from Butler, Fairman & Seufert recommending that Dyer Construction Company be awarded the Taft Place/Bon Aire Lake culvert project. Matt said a contract has been prepared for Dyer Construction for this project. He said a public meeting was held at the Dean & Barbara White Community Center last week, and five or six people attended; 44 residents received notices. A PowerPoint presentation was delivered explaining the project for flood control, and it was well received; there were a few concerns about the depth of the lake. They also discussed the tilapia, dye and other algae treatment measures that were used in 2020. After the project is completed, Matt intends to have a consulting firm study the area to determine if residential structures adjacent to the lake can be re-classified as low-risk on the FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). This would be done through a letter of map amendment (LOMA) process to remove the Zone A and AE classification from homes/insurable structures from the high-risk flood zone, which would significantly reduce flood insurance premiums and increase property values. Mr. Simek asked how many homes surrounding and near the lake would be affected, Matt projects as least 15 adjacent to the south end of the lake.

Matt said he will be coordinating with the town’s engineering administrator, Steve King, regarding paving to be done this year on 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue near the Meadowdale Regional Detention Basin project. He does not want paving to be done prior to the Stormwater project being completed to avoid unnecessary damage to the roadway. Matt will send Steve the project schedule and haul routes from Dyer Construction.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Included in the members’ packets was a copy of the South County Landscaping contract for 2021 lawn mowing services at the Stormwater Resource Center in the amount of \$2,700.00. Matt said Stormwater has used South County Landscaping in the past and has not had any issues. Ralph Simek made a motion to approve the contract with South County Landscaping in the

amount of \$2,700.00, 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.

Included in the members' packets was a copy of a proposal by Butler, Fairman & Seufert (BF&S) for a Plan Review Flow Chart. Matt said Stormwater would contract with BF&S in an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00 to create a professional permit compliance brochure through their graphics team regarding permitting processes, scheduling, ordinance references and a flow chart for prospective investors/developers and their engineers that are developing in Merrillville. Ralph Simek made a motion to approve the contract with BF&S in an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00, 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.

Also included in the members' packets were copies of three (3) quotes for a concrete pad in the back of the Stormwater building where the new storage yard is located; the drainage trailer, electric vehicles and other drainage supplies would be in that fenced-in area, and items that need to stay in the garage would remain in the garage. The quotes were from: Delta III, Inc. in the amount of \$11,500.00; Big Concrete & Excavating in the amount of \$12,700.00; and Ryan Construction in the amount of \$19,800.00. Ralph Simek made a motion to approve the proposal from Delta III, Inc. for the total price of \$11,500.00, and it was seconded by Barbara Ghoston. Mr. Simek also asked if the barb wire was eliminated, and Matt said yes, and he intends to ask the new owner of the property north of the Stormwater Resource Center if they would consider changing their fence slat color to brown like Stormwater's so it is consistent. There were no other comments. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

Included in the members' packets were copies of three (3) quotes or requests for quotes for a small culvert installation project at 7924 Independence Street. Matt said this project would help with drainage in that area, especially the right-of-way and commercial plaza on the east side. The quotes were from: Delta III, Inc. in the amount of \$2,850.00; Ziese & Sons Excavating in the amount of \$2,990.00; and Austgen Equipment was solicited for a quote but did not provide one. Barbara Ghoston made a motion to approve the proposal from Delta III, Inc. for installation of the culvert at 7924 Independence Street for the total price of \$2,850.00, and it was seconded by Ralph Simek. Mrs. Ghoston asked about utilities, and Matt said locates were already done for design and the contactor will also call for locates before every job. There were no other questions. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

Also included in the members' packets were copies of three (3) quotes for a pipe replacement project at 7775 and 7776 Delaware Street. Matt said this is in Chapel Manor, where the catch basin at the southeast corner of Delaware Court and Delaware Place 160' outlet pipe that discharges into the ditch is collapsing. The quotes were from: Ziese & Sons Excavating in the amount of \$24,440.00; Austgen Equipment in the amount of \$27,060.00; and Delta III, Inc. in the amount of \$43,950.00. Ralph Simek made a motion to approve the proposal by Ziese & Sons in the amount of \$24,440.00, 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.

Members were provided a copy of a proposal by National Power Rodding to perform chemical grouting of storm sewers at 54<sup>th</sup> and Maryland Street in an amount not to exceed \$6,500.00. Matt said there are sink holes on the east side along Maryland Street where the pipes are in good condition but the seams are failing, which was confirmed after we televised the pipe with our camera truck; National Power Rodding does repair work for Independence Hill Conservancy

District, and rather than replace infrastructure, it can be “repaired in place” for \$6,500.00 which will be much less expensive than replacement. He said there are no other vendors that perform this type of work. Ralph Simek made a motion to accept the proposal from National Power Rodding in an amount not to exceed \$6,500.00, 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 the Stormwater Rule 13 permit was filed and accepted by IDEM; his report reflected that due to Covid, some activities were restricted.

He said he still is involved in the Senate Bill 389 wetlands proposal pending before the Indiana legislature and has been working with the Hoosier Environmental Council. The matter is still pending, and he said hopefully they will reach a reasonable compromise on the bill. Mrs. Ghoston asked if other municipalities are involved, and Matt said the Northwestern Indiana Stormwater Advisory Group (NISWAG) communities are involved, and he has also written some legislators about the bill.

Matt said he has also been doing a lot of plan reviews with respects to proposed new development in the town, as well as working on engineering for various drainage projects.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Simek asked about the costs of expenses and the tilapia at Bon Aire Lake, and Matt said the natural low impact treatment cost is virtually the same as chemical treatment, as well as more effective. He said resident Bob Cotton continues to monitor the dissolved oxygen levels within the lake and assess the quality/status of wildlife. He said the new batch of tilapia will be released in the lake after the culvert project is completed. Mr. Simek asked how long the Bon Aire Lake culvert project would take, and Matt expects a couple of weeks. Matt said he would then send BF&S out to do an “as built” check before we approve any payments to Dyer Construction.

Matt said the Meadowdale Regional Stormwater Detention project will begin this spring and continue until late summer. A construction schedule was created and shared by Dyer Construction.

Mrs. Ghoston asked if Matt could contribute to the spring newsletter, and Matt said this spring newsletter’s article is about “The 100-Year Storm”. Liz said Matt writes an article for every newsletter that the town sends out.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Crist said the next SWMB meeting is set for Tuesday, May 4, 2021, at 3:30 pm at the Stormwater Resource Center.

Ralph Simek made a motion to adjourn, and it was seconded by Barbara Ghoston. The meeting was adjourned at 4:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Liz Bushemi  
Staff Secretary