

**MINUTES OF THE
MERRILLVILLE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 3, 2021**

President L.J. “Bud” Crist called the August 3, 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 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, Financial Advisor Karl Cender and secretary Liz Bushemi. Others present were Dolly Flaska and Adra Breclaw-Csanyi.

COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Bud said that thanks to Matt’s efforts, Stormwater has received \$776,183.36 in grants and \$822,202.92 in cost-shares, for a total of over \$1.5 million received. Matt was applauded.

MINUTES

Included in the agenda packet was a copy of the minutes from the July 6, 2021, SWMB meeting. Barbara Ghoston made a motion to approve the minutes from the SWMB meeting held July 6, 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 July 13 and July 27, 2021. Barbara Ghoston made a motion to accept the accounts payable registers from July 13 and July 27, 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

Matt said included in the members’ packets was a copy of a letter from Matt Rosa from Christopher Burke Engineering recommending that Pay Request #4 from Dyer Construction Company, Inc. in the amount of \$369,255.97 be paid. He said that he and Bud have visited the project site several times; he said the landscaping contractor is experiencing a supply issue so Stormwater may receive a credit for a portion of the landscaping. He said resurfacing 57th Avenue was delayed due to the project, and Milestone can now pave 57th Avenue since all of the mass excavation work has been completed, as well as all of the seed /blanket. Matt said the larger pond is L-shaped and located behind the Pruzin Center; both ponds will retain approximately 45-acre feet or 14.7 million gallons of stormwater storage. Matt said there should be one more pay request for work still pending. This will be added to our inventory of town-owned ponds that will be maintained using the Marshmaster to control the vegetative growth. Ralph Simek made a motion to approve payment to Dyer Construction Company, Inc. for pay request #4 in the amount of \$369,255.97, 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 Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission (LCRBDC) sent the \$426,625.00 cost share on the Meadowdale project and the \$74,572.00 cost share on Bon Aire Lake project. These funds totaling \$501,197.00 will be put into Stormwater Fund 627 for other capital projects. Bud Crist said at everyone’s place was a copy of the board’s Resolution 21-3 approving an amendment to Stormwater Utility’s 2021 budget to increase Fund 627 for other capital projects. Financial advisor Karl Cender said this is a formality for an additional appropriation to Stormwater’s Fund 627, and Attorney Jim Meyer confirmed this. Ralph Simek made a motion to approve Stormwater Utility Resolution 21-3, and it was seconded by Barbara Ghoston. There was no further discussion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

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Matt said he applied for five (5) federal grants through the SWIF (Stormwater Infrastructure Fund) grants program, which pay 50% for projects. He intends to also apply with the LCRBDC for matching money for any SWIF grants that are approved. He said he met with Commonwealth Engineering today, and they said the Indiana Finance Authority (IFA) is extending their review of the applications until the end of the month, but they should be decided upon by October. All of the Stormwater projects that he submitted are “shovel ready”, and SWIF will have two (2) rounds of \$50 million each. Attorney Meyer said the State Board of Accounts would require approval by the SWMB for grant application requests. Matt said he has applied for the following:

- (1) Kaiser Ditch East Tributary - \$360,000.00 (times 2)
- (2) Independence Hill South Sewer Improvement Project - \$174,005.00
- (3) Connecticut Street & 69th Avenue Stormwater Project - \$210,000.00
- (4) Independence Hill South Sewer Improvements 3rd Addition Project - \$1,062,500.00
- (5) Hickory Ridge Lake Apts. Dry Detention Project - \$1,113,356.07

No further discussion was held. Ralph Simek made a motion to approve Matt Lake submitting the above grant applications, and it was seconded by Barbara Ghoston. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote. Mrs. Ghoston asked about the projects being shovel ready, and Matt said the Little Cal money would be local dollars to match the SWIF state dollars. He anticipates that our project submittals will rank high. Matt also said the state coordinator for the SWIF project has contacted him already about them.

NEW BUSINESS

Included in the members' packets was an invoice in the amount of \$9,500.00 and the proposal from Delta III, Inc., along with three (3) other quotes for re-establishing a ditch behind the back yard behind 5999 Waite Street. Barbara Ghoston made a motion to approve payment of the invoice for this project to Delta III in the amount of \$9,500.00, 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.

Another invoice included in the members' packets was from Ziese & Sons Excavating, Inc. for a Stormwater project done at 7775-7776 Delaware Parkway in the amount of \$26,950.00, along with their proposal and two (2) other quotes. Ralph Simek made a motion to approve payment to Ziese & Sons Excavating, Inc. in the amount of \$26,950.00, 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 Delta III replaced a culvert and catch basin at 21 Meadow Lane; included in the members' packets was an invoice from Delta III in the amount of \$14,450.00, along with their proposal and two (2) other quotes. Barbara Ghoston made a motion to approve payment to Delta III in the amount of \$14,450.00, and it was seconded by Ralph Simek. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

Matt said Merrillville will host the Northwestern Indiana Stormwater Advisory Group (NISWAG) at the Dean & Barbara White Community Center on August 19th at 10:00 am. He said they will discuss the new wetlands law, Senate Enrolled Act (SEA) 389, and other state regulations. There will be 26 northwest Indiana communities represented at the meeting. He said Town Council President Rick Bella supported having NISWAG utilize the room at the community center at no charge, and Matt said possibly the next Lake County Contractors' Meeting could be held there in the future.

Matt reminded members that the Indiana MS4 Annual Meeting is set for Tuesday, October 26th, in Indianapolis. If members are interested in attending, he asked that they notify Liz to get them registered.

Regarding the second event for the town's 50th birthday, Matt said we have updated brochures being printed to hand out at the event, and Stormwater operator Mike Mahy is making a game using Stormwater pipes for attendees to play. We will also have Stormwater promotional items and some of our equipment displayed at Town Hall during the event. Matt supports participating in the event and will be there to answer any questions that residents may have regarding stormwater management or information about the stormwater utility.

He said the Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management Clean Community Pilot Program is going well, and he's been assisting the group with protocols for the state. They are also finalizing the Greenhouse Gas inventory; a new intern has replaced the prior intern, and will then use that data to draft a Climate Action Plan. He also said Liz prepared the annual Arbor Day Proclamation, and it will be on the Town Council agenda for August 24th; he said Arbor Day can be held at any time of the year.

Mrs. Ghoston asked about the 54th Court rain garden. Matt said he is seeking quotes from Forever Green, Hubinger's and South County Landscape. The contractor that provides the lowest quote will be selected to do basic maintenance. Next year some of the plants may be replaced as needed.

Mr. Crist asked about the leftover trees from the Meadowdale project, and Matt said Dyer Construction could not get the sizes we requested, and Dyer said probably only 160 of the 300 trees in the bid proposal would be planted at the Meadowdale project. Matt said if smaller or less trees are planted at the Meadowdale project, Stormwater will receive a credit on Dyer's contract.

Liz Bushemi asked everyone to be conscious in their talking fast and use of acronyms at SWMB meetings for Adra Breclaw-Csanyi, who was present for the meeting, since she will be replacing Liz as the Stormwater office manager who will take minutes at the SWMB meetings.

Mr. Crist said this is Liz Bushemi's last Stormwater meeting and said cake will be served following adjournment of the meeting. Liz thanked Bud for hiring her in 2011 and the confidence that he had in her. She said she has learned so much about Stormwater since 2011 and continues to learn, and that it was a pleasure to work with everyone.

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Bud Crist welcomed Adra to Stormwater and said it will be nice to work with her. Matt said Adra comes from the Planning & Building Dept. and has experience being a current town employee and having previously worked at Robinson Engineering. He said Stormwater will fit the need with Adra and welcomed her as part of the team.

Matt said the Stormwater Utility staff is a team that works well together to enhance the Town of Merrillville. Mrs. Ghoston said she brought up the 54th Court rain garden because everything matters when you're working for the town. Matt said the town is looking at many things, beautifying the town, economic development like Amazon coming to Merrillville, and hosting the job fair that attracted a lot of companies and people. Matt said Bud Crist and Barbara Ghoston have been part of the Stormwater team ever since its inception, and Bud has been a business owner in town for 58 years.

Mr. Simek asked where the dirt is going from the Meadowdale retention ponds, and Matt said any material excavated is the responsibility of Dyer Construction and most was hauled to a project in Hobart, and some black dirt is going to a property at 54th & Taft Street. He said up to 300 truckloads per day were removed to create the detention ponds.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Crist said the next SWMB meeting is set for Tuesday, September 7, 2021, at 3:30 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Bushemi, Staff Secretary