



Minutes

MERRILLVILLE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT BOARD

Tuesday, March 1, 2022 at 3:30 PM

Merrillville Stormwater Resource Center, 7404 Broadway, Merrillville, IN

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

President L.J. "Bud" Crist called the March 1st, 2022 Stormwater Management Board (SWMB) meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Crist led the pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Members in attendance were, President, Bud Crist, Vice President, Vice President Ralph Simek, and Secretary, Barbara Ghoston. A quorum was established. Staff members present were Executive Director Matt Lake Attorney James Meyer, Financial Advisor Karl Cender and secretary Adra Breclaw-Csanyi.

COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT:

None - Wanted to recognize the people of Ukraine

MINUTES

Stormwater Management Board Minutes (SWMB) from February 1st, 2022, approved. Bud Crist made a motion to approve the minutes from the SWMB meeting held February 1st, 2022, motion seconded by Secretary Barbara Ghoston. There were no questions. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passes with a 2/0 vote.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE REGISTERS APPROVAL

Included in the agenda packet were copies of the Accounts Payable Registers from February 8th, 2022 and February 22nd, 2022. Barbara Ghoston made a motion to accept the Accounts Payable Registers from February 8th and February 22nd, 2022, and it was seconded by Bud Crist. There were no questions. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

Accounts Payable Register for ARP, there are no Stormwater appropriations.

OLD BUSINESS

Bud Crist - None

Matt Lake - None

NEW BUSINESS

Bud Crist – None

Matt Lake -

VS Engineering contract for 2022 On-Call Engineering services in an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00 is included in the packet. Here today to represent VS Engineering is Randy Strasser. Randy said that he has worked with Matt on a lift station replacement project and Bon Aire Lake, Matt said that it is the letter map amendment to determine if properties can be removed from the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) after the project. Matt Lake said the other project that Randy mentioned was in the vicinity of 69th and Connecticut Street, which entails complete redesign to eliminate a small lift station to drain the intersection. We are trying to get that redesigned to for gravity flow and eliminate the mechanical lift station. Randy Strasser said we have been busy with those projects and appreciate working with the Stormwater Utility and look forward to any future projects. Barbara Ghoston made a motion to approve the on-call contract with VS

Engineering for On-Call Engineering Services in the amount not to exceed \$10,000, Bud Crist seconded. No additional questions, all in favor said aye, motion was carried.

Matt Lake said that he had a pre-quote meeting regarding Meadowdale Phase 1 Risk Tree Removal Project and met with tree removal contractors, who had various questions. Matt stated that today is the last day to submit quotes, 4:00 pm is the deadline and have received four quotes. There are various ranges of amounts. Once all are in, we will look at the lowest quote and make sure they are a responsible bidder and that they fully understand the scope of the project as well as our expectations. Next, we will have Jim Meyer prepare a contract. This project will be supported by ARP funds and they will need to sign a contract so that they understand the scope of the work, E-verify, and follow all other standard items, and be a licensed contract in the Town before they start. Once quotes are in, a review will be completed, then Jim will look and ensure it's in compliance with federal requirements. Matt stated that we are tracking and managing all ARP transactions/purchase orders in a separate database system which will allow us to query anything at any time. Bud Crist asked if the contractors bidding is mostly local, Matt said mostly local companies and that we sent out requests to many tree removal/tree care companies to give us the best price that we can. Again, this is Meadowdale Phase 1 and there will be a Phase II. We sending this out strategically in phases to make it more competitive. Phase II will be the same scenario within a different area in the same subdivision. There will be also be two phases for Meadowland, and then Turkey Creek. As long as prices remain reasonable, we will do as much as we can within the budget.

Ralph Simek had a question, "first why are we taking all these trees out?" Matt responded that these are dead, dying or those with other severe defects and negative impacts on infrastructure. We call it risk tree assessment. Ralph asked if we would be replacing them with the same kind of trees. Matt responded, will not plant prohibited species such as silver maples in parkways, some areas don't have enough physical space for a tree in the parkway. If we get the US Forest Service grant for tree planting, we would be replacing with proper species in select areas where appropriate to ensure they are sustainable. Some examples are Ginkgo, Hackberries, Bald Cypress and it makes a big difference when you plant the right tree in the right place. Silver Maples, grow fast, provide quick shade then they fall apart easily in storms, heave sidewalks because they are shallow rooted, there are things you don't do in parkways so we are trying to remedy that. Barbra Ghoston had a question, "the root system to some of those trees, the tree is dead and the root systems are dead because I see green, is that correct?" Matt responded at times the tree appears dead on top but the root system is still viable, there is a lot of starch in the root system and the trees have dormant buds which will grow as a survival strategy for stressed trees. This happens a lot when people top a tree which is a terrible pruning practice. The tree responds through the growth of dormant buds which grow fast and are weakly attached while the main stem begins to decay. You can have a tree that looks totally cut of, no green, and it will start to sprout out because it has a viable root system. Barbra Ghoston clarified when these are removed will there be some type of stump? Matt Lake responded that each stump will be ground out six inches below the surface. A tree will not be planted in the exact spot because there is a dead root system there. Ralph Simek questioned that the new trees will have a root system near the surface or will it be deeper? Matt responded that you want deeper rooted trees in parkways, if you have compacted soil in urban areas then the root system starts to surface and then it gets into sidewalks and curbing, it also depends how you plant a tree.

Matt attended the Little Cal Board meeting, we had two applications on the agenda, one for Kaiser Ditch/Taney Ditch lateral, we had all the engineering completed, they paid for half of it and our application submitted to them was to pay for half of the construction this year. Then, we had another application for Hickory Ridge Apartments Flood Control project and we asked for engineering, permitting, and design. The Board gave a thumbs up to both of them. We are getting \$345,000.00

toward Taney/Kaiser Ditch Project, that will be all the crossings from US 30 down to 73rd Avenue replaced. Then, \$81,000 toward engineering for Hickory Ridge Lake Apartments Flood Control Project. This covers half of the construction costs on the one project for Taney Ditch and half for the design engineering and permitting for Hickory Ridge Apartment Flood Control Project. The remainder will be covered by ARP which is part of the ARP list of projects.

Christopher Burke sent a proposal as part of the packet for the Hickory Ridge project, this was received today. It is up to the Board if you would like to take action today and it is not to exceed \$161,000.00. Half will be paid by Little Cal and half by ARP, Matt wanted to run everything through the Board as Jim Meyer's always recommends and this allow for a record to be kept. Attorney Meyer reiterated that if anything is going to be paid with ARP monies than you have to have all the documentation of proceedings. When the invoices come in, we will send them in the new system going right to ARP, again this is up for your consideration, you can take action now or at the next meeting. Bud Crist entered a motion to approve \$161,000 to Christopher Burke Engineering, Ralph Simek seconded. Barbara Ghoston confirmed that each will be invoiced to us, Matt Lake responded that the invoices will be sent here, then processed, it will not come out of our budget but ARP. Matt had a question if we cover the first half of the projects using ARP and then the second half out of stormwater fund 627? Would we then request reimbursement from Little Cal to reimburse Fund 627? Karl Cender said we want to pay for it out of our construction money then it comes back to us if you have the funds to do it. Matt and Jim said yes.

Barbara Ghoston asked how do we go about submitting a purchase order for ARP, Matt responded that the Town has a protocol, a designated ARP purchase order form is printed on pink paper, and it is signed by me and then goes to the Clerks Office for a second signature by the ARP Committee Chairman. Karl Cender said there is treasury guidelines, the Treasury just issued final guidelines for the ARP money. Karl said that it is money that they give upfront to municipalities, then you spend it according to an approved plan. There is a certain amount set aside for stormwater, which allows the department to implement more projects using designated ARP funds. Ralph asked if Little Cal pays upfront or after the project is done? Matt stated that it is a reimbursement, we need to provide paid invoices and substantial competition, then we submit our documentation to the Little Cal Board for approval before receive any reimbursement. Bud Crist asked if all in favor, signified by saying aye, motion passed 3-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

The State of Merrillville Chamber of Commerce event was hosted at the Community Center, where Matt Lake put together a presentation which was delivered by Councilman Shawn Pettit. The presentation consisted of 155 slides presenting the entire Town/Departments, and will be added to the Town Website. This highlights and emphasizes the positive happenings go on around Town. Matt said that Councilman Pettit did an excellent job as a presenter.

The NISWAG meeting was hosted today at the Stormwater Resources Center. Several speakers with people attending form Lake County, Porter County, LaPorte County and also people remotely on zoom. There were good presentations on the costal program and the formerly known as Southshore Clean Cities which is now called Drive Clean Indiana, that's for all the electric vehicles and emission items along with the Lake Michigan Costal Program.

Today there was a conference call with several people across the entire state about our kick off meeting for our Climate Action Plan. We are one of the few communities doing one across the state. We are also doing this regionally with NIRPC, the Climate Action Plan, we did a greenhouse inventory and this will be the plan associated with the regional overall plan.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Crist said the next SWMB meeting is set for Tuesday, April 5, 2022, at 3:30 pm at the Stormwater Resource Center.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Adra Breclaw-Csanyi, Staff Secretary