

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT BOARD

April 11, 2023

The meeting of the Storm Water Management Board was called to order and the Pledge of Allegiance was said. Present were Commissioners Laura Blaney, Barb Regnitz and Jim Biggs. Also present were, Kevin Breitzke, Scott McClure, and Chelsey Gordon.

Consent Agenda – Drainage Board

Cases (Drainage Board Approval)

#SM-23-0016 Eric Herrera – To widen and perform maintenance on an existing access drive over Swanson-Lamporte Ditch, Arm 2 to provide access to a new home site. Case heard at the April 10, 2023 SWAB meeting. **SWAB Recommendation** - approve with conditions, per staff report.

#SM-23-0017 NIPSCO – To excavate at the existing gas transmission pipeline within the easement of Crooked Creek to remove the existing coating and recoat the existing gas transmission pipeline. Case heard at the April 10, 2023 SWAB meeting. **SWAB Recommendation** - approve with conditions, per staff report.

#SM-23-0018 Indiana Dunes Tourism – To construct a boardwalk system over Munson Ditch and within the regulated drainage easement associated with Munson Ditch to accommodate the Indiana Dunes Indigenous Cultural Trail. Case heard at the April 10, 2023 SWAB meeting. **SWAB Recommendation** - approve with conditions, per staff report.

#SM-23-0019 TJZ Properties – Discuss storm water management plan for the proposed 11-lot Skyway Industrial Park subdivision and responsibility for maintenance of storm water infrastructure to be located therein. Case heard at the April 10, 2023 SWAB meeting. **SWAB Recommendation** - approve with conditions, per staff report.

MOTION: Laura Blaney moved to approve the Consent Agenda – Drainage Board as presented. Barb Regnitz seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the motion passed with a 3-0 vote.

Consent Agenda – Storm Water Management Board

Claims – Storm Water Fund (Storm Water Management Board Approval)

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|--------------------------|-----------|
| ▪ Eagle View Subdivision | \$ 515.00 |
| ▪ Greiger Ditch | \$ 300.00 |

MOTION: Kevin Breitzke moved to approve the Consent Agenda – Storm Water Management Board as presented. Laura Blaney seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the motion passed with a 4-0 vote.

Storm Water Management Board

Projects & Programs Update

- Storm Water Program Manager Report – They have received 83 drainage reports since the first of the year. The majority of residents have been contacted.

Mike Novotney – The public storm water infrastructure has responded as expected. There were not significant overbank issues. As of the end of last week the County was at 250% of average rainfall.

- MS4 Annual Report Summary (Reporting Years 2021-2022) This report was submitted on April 1, 2023. This is the last report that will be a two-year period. From now on it will be an annual report.

Mike Novotney - This report goes to the Department of Environmental Management. It is to comply with the municipal storm sewer permit that is issued by IDEM.

Chelsen Gordon – In 2021 they received 193 drainage complaints. In 2022 they received 190 complaints. This year they are already close to half of what they had in 2021 and 2022. The largest concern was ponding and standing water. Flooding was also a concern. Most were not related to the County's public storm water infrastructure. When meeting with residents that provide guidance and technical assistance.

Mike Novotney – The reporting and response program is way beyond what is required. They take any complaints. It might not necessarily be something that the County can or should do anything about. But they do offer education and connection to the right agencies.

Barb Regnitz – Do we have a Commonly Asked Questions section on the Web Page

Mike Novotney – Yes. Amanda is working on updating it. He feels the one on one meeting with residents is important as well.

Chelsey Gordon – One of the requirements is education and public outreach. They partner with Recycling Department for the Earth Day event. The Department sponsors some rain barrels. Students paint the barrels and they are raffled off.

Mike Novotney - They work to get as much education and information to the public as possible.

Chelsey Gordon – Another requirement is Outfall inventory and outfall testing. They have updated the outfall map. There are 162 outfalls. The testing was done during a dry weather period. One challenge is the size of the MS4 area. They have an entire County with a lot of residential areas and a lot of storm water systems. Despite this challenge they are still scheduled to meet the requirements. Another component is reporting on active construction sites. Erosion and sediment control is a concern. The number of construction sites reported in 2021 was 277 and in 2022 it was 272. Many of the sites needed corrective action. This was done in a timely manner by most. Contractors are required to do their own self inspection also.

▪ East Branch Little Calumet River – Water Trail Extension Project

Mike Novotney – This project has been worked on for a number of years. They have been working with the National Park Service, Northwest Paddlers Association, Shirley Heinze Land Trust, Save the Dunes, and individual property owners. The concept is to create a water trail from Lake Michigan to the National Park's rookery property which is at County Road 1300 North and 600 East. This will be 12 miles of water trail. Log jams have been an issue. The current trail is isolated between Brummett and Howe Road. Currently log jams in that area have been maintained by hand. The two areas that need attention have too much wood there to deal with by hand. The National Lake Shore will take care of the portion that is their property. The Paddlers Association will continue to take care of Area B. The County will take care of Area C. Permits are required to do this work. IDNR and Army Corp and IDEM need to see documentation of existing conditions. In the County's portion there are 88 log jams. There is stream bank erosion. There are 30 leaning trees ready to fall in. This is a substantial maintenance burden. When this was constructed in 1915 there were no funds for maintenance. A lot of what is there now has just built up over time.

They plan to use amphibious excavator to clean up the log jams. They will pull the logs out and put them along the banks. The pontoon excavator does not put pressure on the ground. It is minimal disturbance. They are putting together the permits now. IDNR will let them work in June and July and then again November to March.

Barb Regnitz – Will that help with storm water and drainage in that area?

Mike Novotney – Absolutely. It will address flooding and erosion. This is about a 4–6-week project. The length of their area is about 4 miles. In total the trail will be about 12 miles.

Kevin Breitzke – Another issue will be the bat roosting season. This all makes it so there are only certain times when they can work on this.

Laura Blaney – Is there public access for kayaking?

Mike Novotney – Yes. Shirley Heinze Land Trust has three. They are talking about adding more.

Public Comment

William Malikowski - 499 E 1200 N. A neighbor has put concrete in a drain tile and now his pond is overflowing on his property, driveway and the road. He has put in a drain tile.

Mike Novotney -The Department is familiar with this issue. It has been existence about 20 years. The County did a comprehensive drainage study in 2010. Whatever the cause is, it is not something recent. They discussed this with the landowners at a 2022 storm water advisory meeting. The Department has pursued ARPA money to address the issue. That funding is in place now. They have to get environmental permits from the Army Corp. This area has not been maintained and is in a state of failure. There was never any easement to be able to go in and work.

William Malikowski - 499 E 1200 N. This is ruining his vegetation and the end of his driveway. He is paying a storm fee to keep water instead of getting rid of it.

Barb Regnitz – Please notify property owners when work starts and follow up to make sure the problem is fixed.

Ronald Turnowski – He is the main property owner of the pond. Last year he though something was going to be done. Since then, nothing has been done. A neighboring farmer has pretty heavy farm equipment. He hopes a new one will hold up to that weight. He has lot 10' of his property from flooding.

Barb Regnitz – Do we have any recourse on the drain tile filled with concrete.

Mike Novotney – The project will be designed to accommodate the heavy farm equipment. The pond and drain tile allegedly filled with concrete was a private tile. The County had no ability to address that issue.

Ronald Turnowski – Pulling out the log jams and putting the trees along the bank will not work. It will rain and they will go back into the water.

Mike Novotney – They will be very strategic where they put the logs.

Next Meeting: May 9, 2023, 9:00 am

There being no further business, the meeting recessed at 9:45 am.

Jim Biggs, President

Chelsey Gordon, Storm Water Program Manager