

**MINUTES OF THE KANKAKEE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
HELD THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2016 AT
9:30 AM CST
KANKAKEE FISH AND WILDLIFE AREA HEADQUARTERS
4320 W. TOTO ROAD
NORTH JUDSON, IN 46366**

Chairman Chris Knochel called the meeting to order and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Secretary Vince Urbano called the roll.

Members present

Bill Crase	Tony Hendricks	Mark Kingma
Chris Knochel	Tom Larson	Don Lode
John Law	Kim Peterson	Ken Porter
Russ Pumroy	Ken Purze	
Vince Urbano	James Walstra	

Guests Present

Bob Barr	Siavash Beik	Kathe Brunnick
Les Burton	Allan Cameron	Jim Carter
Gus Ellicott	Steve Engelking	John Goss
Randy Johnson	Matthew Linn	Harvey Nix
Mike Novotney	Joe Skelton	David J. Smith
Mark Wunderink	David Zack	

Staff Present

Jody Melton

Chairman Knochel asked for self-introductions from all guests.

Approval of Minutes

Ken Purze made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 1, 2016 meeting. Tom Larson seconded and the minutes were approved.

Finance Report

Jody Melton explained the various line items and what money is left for work for the counties. Ken Purze moved to accept the report, Tom Larsen seconded and the motion was approved.

The River Edge Farm Lease was put out for bid and the committee received four bids. The bid of \$240 acre was highest and will pay \$57,000 per year. It is a Wheatfield farmer, Kevin Misch, who bid for a 12 year lease and will pay the rent twice a year. K Misch Farms will also keep the house and keep renters in the house. Ken Purze made a motion to approve signing the lease, Russ Pumroy seconded and the motion was approved.

Old Business

Bill Crase said that Starke County is removing several blockages of trees in the Yellow River east of Knox and a couple of washouts to fix.

John Law said that St. Joseph County still has damage from the 11 inch rain in August. The Pokagon band of the Potawatomi will build a new casino in St. Joseph County. Most of the drainage will go to the St. Joseph River but a small amount will go into the Kankakee watershed.

Tony Hendricks said the LaPorte County Drainage Board has removed the blockages of trees in the Kankakee.

Vince Urbano is sending his surveyors out to chart the slopes of the river banks and to prepare to get a program going in Jasper County to build a stable bank in Jasper County.

Chris Knochel said that the Newton County Drainage Board is working on a pilot project on the Kankakee downstream of I 65. Wetland issues are a big concern. He is looking at designing what Vince Urbano is seeking. Hopefully it will be an example for many areas.

Jody Melton said that he and Chris Knochel had attended meetings in Crown Point and Kentland and learned that the IN Department of Transportation will provide a 12 X 12 opening under the I65 bridges over the Kankakee River on the south side. They will maintain the opening on the north side. There was discussion about the size of the opening at 12 X 12. Mark Wunderink said his equipment would fit but there was some discussion about asking INDOT to provide a 14 X 14 opening.

Jody Melton passed out copies of the request for funding for Biennium 2017-2018 from the Indiana General Assembly. He was asked to prepare a document for State Budget Agency for review. This is the copy of the request. Jody and Ken Purze will create a booklet for use in explaining the needs.

Siavash Beik said that CBBEL had brought in the national contractors who do work nationally similar to what is being designed on the Yellow River. Several people and contractors attended the meeting and then there was a tour out on the Yellow.

They continue meeting with the regulatory agencies to explain what it happening on the watershed plan as well as just the Yellow River project. They are comfortable with the feedback they are getting from the agencies.

Construction will hopefully start next fall. Construction cost estimates are not ready yet. CBBEL and Bob Barr continually meet with groups to explain what the project is and how it is going to work.

Ken Purze and Tony Hendricks asked if it would be possible to bring contractors to a meeting and explain the project, the logistics, and discuss the technical aspects for the job. This would allow local contractors to learn about the project and determine if they would be capable of performing the work. Bob Barr and Siavash Beik said absolutely.

New Business

Chris Knochel said that he was having trouble getting the regulatory agencies to recognize that the projects on the Yellow and the project on levees that he and Vince Urbano are designing are connected. He is looking for a brand, a name that connects all the different parts into a macro view of what our overall objective is. A long discussion ensued about the common

path the KRBC is laying out to provide overall maintenance of the river system. Each county has different needs and approaches to stream restoration. One brand name may not provide the solution. Consensus is that we need to think about this topic. Our pilot project is not underway. We need to evaluate what is or will work and decide a brand or slogan later.

The 2017-2018 Appropriation request to the General Assembly has been put into a book for distribution. It can also be found on the website at www.kankakeeriverbasin.org. Make sure to contact your legislator to explain why the KRBC needs these funds.

Russell Pumroy, Tom Larsen, and Kim Peterson were appointed to be a nominating committee for officers for 2017.

Ken Purze made a motion, seconded by Tom Larson to adopt Resolution 2016-3, honoring Larry Fisher of Marshall County for his many years of service to the Kankakee River Basin and its residents. Resolution 2016-3 passed unanimously.

Kim Peterson made a motion, seconded by Tom Larson to adopt Resolution 2016-4 honoring Gerry Scheub of Lake County for his many years of service to the Kankakee River Basin and its residents. Resolution 2016-4 was adopted unanimously.

Other Business

Randy Johnson from Olivet Nazarene University has organized a Kankakee River Watershed Conference to be held on February 10, 2017 at ONU in Bourbonnais. He is looking to have a conference to discuss Kankakee issues in Indiana and Illinois, provide some education on the natural resources, and then have a conversation among those attending. He will forward information to Jody Melton and it will be forwarded to the members and others interested.

Public comment

The next KRBC meeting will be held on February 16, 2017 at 9:30 am. The meeting site will be at the Kankakee Fish and Wildlife Area Headquarters.