

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
LAPORTE COUNTY DRAINAGE BOARD
SEPTEMBER 9, 2025
LAPORTE COUNTY COMPLEX MEETING ROOM 3
LAPORTE, INDIANA
8:30 AM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeff Mitzner; Pat Vance; Connie Gramarossa; Chad Hertges; Mark Scarborough; John Matwyshyn

STAFF PRESENT: John South, Brad Adamsky

MEMBERS/STAFF ABSENT: None

PUBLIC PRESENT: See sign-in sheet.

Mark Scarborough called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Attendance was taken. Connie Gramarossa motioned to approve minutes from last meeting. Pat Vance seconded. Motion passed. Mark Scarborough handed the meeting over to Jeff Mitzner.

SCIPPIO SUNRISE: John South reported that there were a couple of things he wanted to bring up. There was a question about contacting the HOA. Send them a letter, let them know what the status was, why we left the project. There's some question whether they actually have an HOA. I talked to Gene Schwartz, He's one of the residents, and he said there isn't an HOA in place, so I sent an email to Nancy Frigo, she's been to a couple of our meetings, but she hasn't gotten back to me. I just want to verify whether there is actually an HOA there. If there's not an HOA in place, do you want me to send a letter to all the homeowners about what's going on or just wait until I actually hear from somebody? Brad Adamsky reported that we did send a cease and desist letter to the property owner, it just went out last week. I don't know that we got the green card back yet. We should have received the green card by now, but we just haven't received the certified mailing back yet, so maybe a week after that's back, I can follow up with John and if the Board wants either further communication with the property owner or to the HOA, or other residents out there, maybe go from there. Jeff Mitzner asks have you been back out there? South replies no. Mitzner asks if we sent this letter out to him, do we need to do anything else right now until someone else comes before us? Adamsky responds no, you've pulled from the project already, right? He's not been out there. Mitzner adds at the board's request, I think, John, you need to go out there and just see if that water is running or what's going on out there. If they fix that, we know that it got broke. So, run out there and check that and get back to us.

DAVEY ARM OF THE RODMAN DITCH, MAINTENANCE, DALE WILLIAMS: Connie Gramarossa stated that Dale Williams called this morning and stated that he wouldn't be able to make it today. Jeff Mitzner stated that they will table this topic.

DRAIN CROSSING APPLICATION, KIEFFER DITCH, PERIMETER DRAIN: Tony Hendricks approached the Board and stated that this is just a perimeter drain access to Keiffer ditch from a potential new septic system. Its perimeter drain water only. That's the only thing that will be in your easement. Pat Vance motions to approve. Mark Scarborough seconded. Motion passed.

BEAVER DAMS, HEDRICK DRAIN: John South reported that he has gotten in touch with Sam Martin, the trapper, and asked him to give a quote on what it would cost to remove the beaver dam on the Indiana side. He hasn't gotten back with him yet. Jeff Mitzner asked did you follow up with anybody in Michigan? John Matwyshyn responded yes, I did, and I passed the information to John South. They don't trap them. They kill the beavers on the Michigan side because they are considered a nuisance animal. I don't know if it's been done yet. South responds I haven't contacted them yet. Mitzner states we'll put that on the agenda for the next meeting.

HUDSON ARM OF THE TAYLOR DITCH: John South provided a quick update. I sent out the bid packets. John Law sent an email yesterday. They got two bids for it. Allsop was \$9,750 and Davey Group was \$12,000. He didn't say whether they accepted the bids.

O'HARA-RICE DITCH, DUMPING VIOLATION, 4942 W 1000 S: John South reported that the guy called to say that he had taken care of it. He did ok. He got rid of most of the stuff that was near the culvert. South passed out a picture showing the work on the two culverts. South stated that he thinks it's ok to close the violation. Jeff Mitzner stated that it looks like they did a decent job.

BANK SPRAYING 2025, HERITAGE DRONE SERVICE: Jeff Mitzner reported that Jake contacted him last week. He wanted to go look at some stuff, but Mitzner was pretty busy last week. Mitzner said that he needs to contact him. He wants to go out and try to fix some of the spots that we have an issue with. Mitzner asks Chad Hertges, there is a ditch up by you that he did, right? Hertges nods yes. Mitzner states that we don't want him to run through the crops now, it's a little too late for that. So, what I'm thinking is wherever he has access, let's try to see if he can get in there and see what he can do. Mitzner adds I don't know what we can do about the bill, but he wants to make it right. I kind of told him not til next year, so what do you guys want to do on that? I know with the ditch I looked at, he could probably spray a mile and a half that he has access to, but he's not going to be able to get access to the whole thing, unless he sprays it with the drone, but I think it's a little late to spray with the drone, because those bigger trees are going to start hardening off now. I did spray some a week and a half ago and they're turning brown, so I mean it still is working, I guess it's whatever the board wants to do on that. Mark Scarborough states that I think you're good for a couple of weeks. It's plenty warm out so I think it should still work. Mitzner adds wherever he can access that and then we are going to have to adjust the bill to what he does. Pay him on a percentage or something, whatever he gets done now and just go from there. I'll talk to him. What other ditch did he go down, that one down by me and then one

up by you. Where was the other one? South responds that it was the Rodman and the Little Kankakee. Mitzner asks one was fine, right? South responds the Bull. Mitzner asks who's near the District of the Little Kankakee? Hertges responds that he is. Connie Gramarossa asks if that's your motion to go ahead and have it taken care of? Mark Scarborough responds I'd say take care of whatever he can take care of without destroying anybody's crop at this point in time. Connie Gramarossa seconded. Motion passed.

ECKERT DITCH STRUCTURE: Jeff Mitzner reported that the structure has not been completely fixed yet. He's waiting on some things to try to fix it. The ditch has been dug from the structure to 850 and 1700, where the T-bridge is at. We dug a little bit past that. To go any further, we're going to destroy somebody's crops and I know that it's on an easement, but I think we need to just kind of wait and see what happens here, because I think that part of the stuff that happened might not have been from the structure. It might have been from the structure, but we got the main part dug out, Werner's leveled off, so I have not heard anything else on that.

HUDSON LAKE: Georgette Joyce approached the Board and reported that the lake is really low; it is over 2" below the weir. That's a good 20" below where it should be. We did have incidents on the lake where boats were getting stuck in the muck. Owners are not able to navigate to their own piers. And now, due to the lake bed being exposed, though native to the lake, phragmites are now growing rampant. We've identified two area that need to be treated and between the Amazon grants and some homeowner donations to the Hudson Lake Conservation Association, we're going to treat those this week, but the cost is between \$5,000-\$6,000, so this low level is really hurting us financially as well as the usability of the lake. The drain continues to stay closed. Hopefully the Taylor ditch will get bid selected and we'll be able to move on from that. The drain agreement is in place and people know to call us now. The incidents reported were either reported via our website or via our phone call, so that is working. If you guys get any complaints, please direct them to those two sources. The LARE grants, we did the vegetation plans and surveys. We did one treatment for the Eurasian water milfoil and two for the starry stonewort. We're doing a third one at the end of September, but again that is falling totally on the backs of the HLCA, because there's a cap at \$5,000, so there's another \$4,000. Thank goodness Amazon has come and given us \$20,000 in grants to help offset all of this, because our dues, regular dues, can't afford to pay for these things. Sediment removal for site one, which is a public ramp, is done. It's all open, it's been advertised and so forth with updates. Site 4, which is the southern channel, is being taken care of. They are about halfway through that, but it's a slow process. We'll be doing grant applications again in 2026. Again, I can't be thankful enough for Amazon for their \$20,000. We partnered with the Township to get another \$10,000 beyond that, so now we have \$30,000. That \$10,000 is going to energize the local park that's near Hudson Lake on the eastside, so that's exciting. They'll have lighting. We welcome a new Board member, Austin Kosinski, who also happens to be our trustee of the township, so we have a nice strong partnership with that. We're grateful that he has joined us. Sewers, I attended the meeting via zoom, and phase 2, which would have included Hudson Lake, has been put on the shelf because they lack funding to make it affordable, so we have no idea when that's going to go through. Pat Vance asked aren't they doing Saugany Lake now? Joyce responded, that's Phase one. The

residents are upset because the cost is over \$100 a month. They felt they were misled that there were issues with the lake being contaminated, but that's not the case.

BRAD ADAMSKY, ATTORNEY: No Report

JOHN MATWYSHYN, SURVEYOR: John Matwyshyn reports that the president and I were at the Technical Advisory Committee meeting. went over a lot of information for the first time for me, I don't know if it was the first time for the president. It strikes me that very little technology is being introduced here. We have consultants, we have hired people that come in, who may use technology, that I think, maybe, this committee should consider using to keep track of what's going on with the ditches, because there are a lot of detail and detail, you know, gets forgotten and people change. Pat Vance asks the surveyor if he was able to get a hold of anybody on the Michigan side of the White Ditch? Matwyshyn responds to consider for which? I talked to a whole bunch of people. I talked to the County. I talked to the Township. I talked to two towns along the ditch. None of them really had a way to engage because it's considered a creek, north of the border. It's not considered a ditch. So, it kind of went back and forth. They're aware of it. Vance responds you don't clean a creek, right? They're aware of it and they're not concerned, because the water flows without affecting anything economically. So, it goes through and they're not troubled by an additional flow from south of the border. Brad Adamsky adds that he will be meeting the Michiana Shores Town Council this evening. So, I'll represent that to them. They may have contacts up there too, but that can now go back to them, if they want to reach out. Matwyshyn adds the group that I mentioned last week, includes them also. We're looking at the whole watershed in southwest Michigan and northern Indiana. Jeff Mitzner states so, since I was going to ask about that. Have you been up that way/ Is stuff getting moved off of the White Ditch? Have we looked? John South responds that he hasn't been up there in a while. Do you want me to go up there too and take a look? Mitzner responds well, all of these people probably went back up to Chicago, so, we probably need to go take a look, see what kind of mess we got up there before it goes too far. South adds that as far as he knows from Al, he was talking November to start. Mitzner states so, go up and check and report back to us next month.

JOINT BOARDS: Jeff Mitzner reported like John said, we attended the Technical Advisory Committee meeting. So, they got a lot of things going on there. The Kankakee River Basin has a meeting on the 21st of September, I believe, and I'm thinking it was at the library. There's a new river gauge that just got installed by the Kankakee River Basin. They monitor it at Crumstown. Mark Scarborough asked what was the technology? Was it just river gauges? John Matwyshyn responds oh, no. The corps of engineers has a lot of software that keeps track of river flows, sediment buildup, and sediment erosion from the banks that seems to be what we're addressing most often is taking silt out of the ditches and making sure, in the case of the Kankakee River Valley, make sure that the banks don't get eroded. The consultants may be using the software, but the Technical Advisory Committee was not. But it may make sense for us to take a little more engagement and see what technology has available, so we get a better handle of what's going on, so we don't have hundreds of truckloads of sediment that needs to be taken out of a ditch. We can control that by controlling the water flow to make sure that the flow takes the silt out of the ditch on a continuing basis rather than being surprised at the end of ten years, hey,

we've got a hundred truckloads to deal with. Mitzner responds I think they're using some of that stuff already. Matwyshyn responds I assume they are, but I haven't seen it so far. The advisors that come in, they bring in consultants to provide a report, but I attended three meetings so far and no one has mentioned anything about using that kind of software. They bring in consultants to do, I think, that kind of work.

CLAIMS: No claims

\$1,625 available in engineer fund

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

Connie Gramarossa asks real quick, can we discuss November? So, in November, we meet usually, the second Tuesday of the month. That's the 11th of November, the County is closed for Veteran's Day. So, I called up and we definitely have November 4th or November 18th available at 8:30, so we could either move it one week earlier or one week behind. But, instead of waiting until the October meeting, and deciding that, figured we could put out notice. Brad Adamsky adds that's only three weeks after the October meeting, but at the same time, I think you want to be cautious about timing it around the White Ditch project that's starting that month too. Gramarossa adds that would give us an opportunity, hopefully, to meet before we started the work, in case we get any questions, if we did it on the 4th. Mitzner asks if everyone is good on the 4th? We'll make that for November 4th and then the October meeting is on the regular date of October 14th at 8:30 in this room. Pat Vance motions to adjourn. Mark Scarborough seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned.

Jeff Mitzner asked for a motion to adjourn. Pat Vance motioned to adjourn, Mark Scarborough seconded. Motion passed. Jeff Mitzner adjourned the meeting. The next regular meeting is Tuesday, October 14, 2025 at the LaPorte County Complex Meeting Room #3 at 8:30 AM.

John South, Secretary

Dated: September 9, 2025

Video replay of this meeting can be found at this location:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOkS2S2Xzvk&list=PL8L8Y5g9S6bq8rlUrYSH2oxusFpU9I1_Z&index=1