

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
LAPORTE COUNTY DRAINAGE BOARD
OCTOBER 14, 2025
LAPORTE COUNTY COMPLEX MEETING ROOM 3
LAPORTE, INDIANA
8:30 AM**

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

STAFF PRESENT: John South, Brad Adamsky

MEMBERS/STAFF ABSENT: Pat Vance

PUBLIC PRESENT: See sign-in sheet.

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

SCIPPIO SUNRISE: John South reported that he went to Scipio Sunrise twice since the last meeting to check on the status of the well. The well has not been turned back on. Jeff Mitzner asked Brad Adamsky if they received the letter. Adamsky responded that there has been no response, but the cease and desist letter did go out. So, apparently, they're not running the well. Mitzner tells South that if you're in the area, just check on it.

DAVEY ARM OF THE RODMAN DITCH PROJECT: John South reported that he went out there on Friday and saw where the highway Department had cleaned up the Williams property. South also reported that Elmer Varro has gone and seeded the project area as per the contract.

WHITE DITCH PROJECT: John South reported that he went up there twice since the last meeting to check on what structures have been removed or are still there. South stated that some of the trees have been removed, Frank Zoltan, whose property is up near the state line, was in the process of removing some of the trees. The property with a landscaped area with small pine trees, they were removing the trees and putting them into pots. South continued reporting that neither of the sheds has been removed and the fence is still there. Jeff Mitzner asked South when he is going to start. South replied that after talking to Al he stated late October, early November, but he will be finished by the end of November. He also said he wants the leaves to be off before he starts. Mitzner asks so, we got two sheds and a fence that he's going to have to remove? South responds in the affirmative. South adds that the fence and shed are on Daina Dumbrys property and the other shed is just down the road from Daina. Mark Scarborough asks can he work around them? South responds I don't think so, the only one that could be close is the shed on Daina's property, but he's going to bring in the big excavator, so... Mitzner asks Daina Dumbrys if she's going to get her stuff removed. Dumbrys approached the Board and stated that they are working

on it. Dumbrys stated that she has been talking with someone who works with trees in their community and she has tried to contact Al Allsop, because he wanted to arrange with him on what he could do with the trees, however, she has not been able to get an answer from Allsop. Dumbrys asked the Board if they could ask Allsop to return her call or to the gentleman who will be working on the trees. Dumbrys stated the fence will come out.

BEAVER DAMS, HEDRICK DRAIN: John South reported that he received a response from the Berrien County trapper, Dean Hartman, who stated that he has a trapper lined up and they were going to do it two weeks ago, he's going to do the trapping, but he's not sure if he's going to have to remove the dam or if he has to get someone else to get the dam removed. So, they're working on it, but I haven't heard from them whether that's been done yet. South said he contacted Sam to go out and take a look and see what he thought. Sam Martin approached the Board and gave a report on what he observed at the site. He said he doesn't have an estimate at the moment, because of the current conditions out there. Martin offered to email something within the next week or so, if the Board approves the project. Jeff Mitzner asks we have a beaver dam in Michigan and we have a beaver dam in Michigan, correct? South answers yes. Mitzner asks Martin if he feels the beavers are in Michigan or are they in Indiana. Martin answers that the beavers are in Indiana. Mark Scarborough asks, does the water flow towards Michigan? South answers yes. Mitzner asks South who requested this? South replied with a brief history of how this issue came about. South also mentions that the Hedrick is one of the drains we don't have an assessment on, so we would have to borrow from the GDIF to pay for it. Scarborough asks if we pull the one in Indiana, but not the one in Michigan, is it really going to matter? South replies nope. South adds that he will contact Dean Hartman in Michigan to see if they've got the dam out. Connie Gramarossa asks if we have been dealing with this for a while? South replies since June. Mitzner asks Brad Adamsky, if we don't have any money in there, how do we do this? Adamsky replies you can still request the quote, but that doesn't mean you're going forward with it unless you fund it. The options to fund it are, borrow from the general fund or the homeowners up there pay for it themselves. Mitzner asks Sam Martin to go ahead and get the Board a quote and they will share that with the property owners and see what they want to do.

HUDSON ARM OF THE TAYLOR DITCH, TREE REMOVAL PROJECT: John South reported that he thought Al did a great job on that. He got all the trees out that we requested. He chipped some of them and some he used to reinforce the bank.

DRAIN CROSSING APPLICATION, HUDSON ARM, SAUGANY LAKE: John South reported that he received an email from the contractor on this project, the sewer drain on Saugany Lake. He stated that they also copied John Matwyshyn. South reported that we approved this application back in December of last year, but they want to change the elevation of the pipe. South thinks that we need to have Tony take a look at this. The contractor has requested a meeting on site with us, but I think we should get Tony out there with us as well. Jeff Mitzner asks for a motion to have Tony go to the meeting with us. Mark Scarborough makes the motion. Connie Gramarossa seconded. Motion passed.

BANK SPRAYING 2025, HERITAGE DRONE SERVICE, COMPENSATION: A discussion of the work done at the rodman was started by John South. Chad Hertges provided his opinion on the work completed. Hertges also stated that going forward on the bank spraying, we need to set some kind of expected parameters as to what's going on. Hertges explained that he thought he had satisfactorily done what he intended to do, so Hertges thinks he is entitled to his compensation. Hertges also stated he thought the Little Kankakee looked good as well. Jeff Mitzner asks Hertges if he thinks those ditches need to be paid? Hertges replies that he thinks he should be paid for what he did. Hertges asked South if he agreed. South replied yes. Hertges reiterated that we need to come up with something for future expectations, so we all know what going into what the bank spraying is going to entail. South adds that he and Jeff had talked about this too. In one of these meetings before the next time we put out the bank spraying bids, we need to talk about specifics of exactly what we want, what chemicals, which side, both sides. South stated that Mitzner showed him the areas he sprayed, and South said it's what he envisioned it would look like. Mitzner added that he looked at the O'Hara ditch. Mitzner asked South we spray that ditch every year? South replied 4 out the last 5. Mitzner continued by saying it doesn't look like it's been touched. Mitzner mentions that we need before and after pictures and we need to get a little bit more in-depth on what we want people to do. Mark Scarborough asks if we can pay on a percent kill? Mitzner replies we could. Scarborough adds you kill 80%, you only get paid 80%. Mitzner adds if they use the concoction I say we need to use, it'll be dead. Scarborough adds as long as you get coverage. Mitzner questions why are one spraying the first mile and a half of the O'Hara, because the banks are already 20'-30' on both sides. Mitzner says in places where the ditch is 30' wide on both sides, we don't need to be paying to spray those. South adds that maybe that is another thing we can do once we identify which ditches we are going to do next year, we need to walk the entire ditch and identify which sections are ok, which need to be sprayed. Brad Adamsky adds to be more specific. Hertges mentioned that the Davey Arm of the Rodman Ditch, that was just cleaned by Elmer, needs to be on the bank spraying list for next year. Mitzner states that we will table some of this stuff to another meeting, before we send the packets out. Mitzner stated that he is not happy with the kill on the O'Hara Ditch at all. Mitzner added that we owe him something. Mitzner asked South what was owed on the three ditches. South responded O'Hara - \$5,000, Little Kankakee was \$3,058, and Rodman was \$5,125. Chad Hertges motioned that he should be paid for the Rodman. Mark Scarborough seconded. Motion passed. Chad Hertges motioned for him to be paid on the Little Kankakee. Mark Scarborough seconded. Motion passed. Chad Hertges motioned to pay half, (\$2,500), on the O'Hara Ditch. Mark Scarborough seconded. Motion passed.

DRAIN CROSSING APPLICATION, TRAVIS DITCH, SURF INTERNET: Jeff Mitzner added to the agenda a Drain Crossing Application from Surf Internet for Travis Ditch. John South reported that he doesn't think we need Tony to review this one, because Surf is planning to go a minimum of 48" below the Ditch, unless you guys think they should go deeper. Mitzner states that it needs to go minimum 48" below the original bottom of the Ditch. Mark Scarborough makes a motion that they are a minimum of 48" below the original bottom of the Ditch. Chad Hertges seconded the motion. Motion passed.

DRAIN CROSSING APPLICATION, MULTIPLE DITCHES, ZAYO: Jeff Mitzner asked John South if anyone had gotten a hold of him about the Eckert ditch? South replied no. Mitzner replies that he thinks we need to pursue that. There're too many places where they have crossed the Eckert Ditch and we have no idea what they did, where they did it. If we go to dig that ditch, whose fault is it if we hit that? Mitzner asked what the name of the company was. South replied he didn't recall, but that he has been in touch with them a couple of times and told them what they needed to do. I followed up and reiterated that these are important. I'll send something else to them again. Connie Gramarossa asked who is giving the permits? Mitzner responded that no one gave them permits, they didn't come to us or anything, you wouldn't even know that was done if I wasn't on the Board and said something. Gramarossa adds so, should they be going to the building commission? Brad Adamsky adds obviously they're crossing your easement, but what other easements are they using to install the lines? Are they using a utility easement? South adds a lot of these are right next to the road. Gramarossa adds that these should be going to the building Commission, then if it crosses a ditch. We're going to have to talk to Mike Polan and make sure he knows that if it's going to cross a ditch, he contacts the Drainage Board. Mitzner adds that the bad part about it is that when they cross the ditch in our easement, they have all the boxes in our easement. Gramarossa states that we need to have an agreement with the building commission and make sure they understand that if it's going to be close to our drainage that we're notified. Mitzner tells South that you need to notify them, if they don't get back to you within a week, Brad, you need to send them a letter. Adamsky adds if John can follow up with Mike, I will talk with Doug, he's my partner and attorney for the planning Commission, building commission, and make sure it's on their radar as well.

HUDSON LAKE: Georgette Joyce approached the Board and reported that the lake level is really low, it is over 6" below the weir. That's two feet below the ideal. So, now the uninhabited island is starting to grow, and all that lake bed is coming up and is exposed, so that is really going to hit us with the invasive species. We're also trying to dredge along there. We're at the very last portion of the south channel dredge and it's supposed to swoop around and go up to the island. And in future ones we'll make the island that is now a peninsula, back into an island. We're treating the phragmites, that's a natural species in the area, but they're going crazy as far as growth, so we treated two areas. They tried to do it with an airboat, but because it was so tall it was wrapping around the propellers and they had to use a drone for the one section by the island. They got the treatment done and they will do another one in the spring. Thanks to some homeowner donations and Amazon grants they were able to do that. The drain is closed. They did the tree removal on the Taylor Ditch. I looked at it and it looked decent, John looked at it and it was good, so that is all covered by St. Joe's with the money. We did another treatment on the Starry Stonewort in late September, so we've done all the treatments we are going to do for the year and once again help from Amazon for covering that. We did measurements on the dredging that has been done. The hope was that when we looked along the south channel that we would be at 4' - 5', they went six feet, which is wonderful because when the water comes it will be a good eight feet. Amazon is sponsoring a community event at the armory in South Bend. I'm sending the invite to John, He can share it with you and you're welcome to come. It's on October 28th from 11:30 to 1:30.

BRAD ADAMSKY, ATTORNEY: No Report

JOHN MATWYSHYN, SURVEYOR: John Matwysyn: Just wanted to mention that we met. Two members of the Board and I met last week and we're probably going to need further discussion. The path forward is not clear at this time. Just wanted to mention that so it's in the record.

JOINT BOARDS: No Report

CLAIMS: No claims

\$1,625 available in engineer fund

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ADJOURNMENT: Jeff Mitzner adjourned the meeting. The next regular meeting is Tuesday, November 4, 2025 at the LaPorte County Complex Meeting Room #3 at 8:30 AM.

John South, Secretary

Dated: October 14, 2025

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

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SSFIINWiHXo&list=PL8L8Y5g9S6bq8rUrYSH2oxusFpU9II_Z&index=2