

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeff Mitzner; Pat Vance; Chad Hertges; John Matwyshyn;

STAFF PRESENT: John South, Brad Adamsky

MEMBERS/STAFF ABSENT: Connie Gramarossa; Mark Scarborough

PUBLIC PRESENT: See sign-in sheet.

Jeff Mitzner called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Attendance was taken. Chad Hertges motioned to approve the minutes from the last meeting. Pat Vance seconded. Motion passed.

WHITE DITCH PROJECT/FRANK ZOLTAN COMPLAINT: Pat Vance stated that he would like to say something, if he could, about the White Ditch. Vance stated that he was out there, he missed very few days, when the contractor was doing the job and he wanted to say what an awesome job they did and how professional they were. They went above and beyond to work with those neighbors. The neighbors came out and talked to them. They were really professional and thoughtful to the people around that project. They were in the easement and they could have just gone through and bulldozed the whole thing, but they really went above and beyond to work with everybody there. Vance stated that he and John south went out to the White Ditch after receiving this complaint. They were a lot of tracks out there. This property is from the state line forward. Vance was out there the day before and watched them lift up the tailings and put them on the bank and smashed them down with the bucket. They were going to go from one end to the other and then come back and smash the tailings down for real. Vance noted that someone had driven back and forth on the tailings with something little such as a bobcat and it bothered him that somebody would be out driving through what is basically an active construction zone. Vance added that the contractor did come back and grade it and reseed it. Jeff Mitzner added that he wanted to thank Pat and John, he received a few phone calls, but he never had to go up there, so he appreciated that. Mitzner asked South if he had anything on this complaint. South responded that he received an e-mail which mentioned lawyers and consequences, so he forwarded the e-mail to Brad Adamsky. Mitzner asked what is the complaint? Adamsky answers that it's a couple of different points, one is something that is already addressed in the contract. The complainant had concerns about it being seeded and slope stabilization. Basically, repairs that are part of the contract that Allsop's going to do, so that's already being addressed. Then he makes a complaint about a couple of trees that were potentially damaged and a demand for value for those trees. If he's going to make that demand, he can do a legal demand. Adamsky adds that maybe Allsop's has some liability, but probably not because of the way our statute protects, but we don't know

the nature of the claim. We don't know if the trees are in the easement? Are they off the easement? There is other stuff that would need to be addressed in a more formal manner, but it seems the timeliness of his complaint was really about the reseeding and stabilization which is already being addressed. Mitzner asked if he has already got it reseeded. South responded that he doesn't know if it's been done. Pat Vance adds that when he was out there they were reseeding. Adamsky adds that that was in the contract that all disturbed areas shall be reseeded with a slope stabilization mix and mulched. Obviously, you can't tell right now with the snow, but we'll want to confirm with Allsop that that's done. Mitzner states we'll just table that until next meeting on January 13th. South adds that the complaint said he might be able to make it to that meeting. South said he will put him on the agenda for next month too. Adamsky states that South may want to reach out to the complainant in the meantime, he mentioned a December 15th deadline in his e-mail, at least say we discussed it and that seeding and restabilization is in the contract

BEAVER DAMS, HEDRICK DRAIN: John South reported that he got in contact with Dean Hartman, up in Berrien County, Michigan, who said that he was unable to find any beaver dams or beaver activity on the Michigan side. So that was kind of what we were waiting for to have Sam Martin do the Indiana side, so if there is nothing up in Michigan, I guess there is no reason why we couldn't go forward with Sam doing the Indiana side, but South has not heard from Sam. He was going to give us a quote, but I haven't heard anything back from him. Jeff Mitzner responds we'll just continue on with that and when Sam gets us a quote we'll go from there.

BANK SPRAYING 2026: John South started the discussion on the specifications for Bank Spraying 2026. South mentioned the mix of chemicals, suggested by Jeff Mitzner, for use by the contractors on the ditches. The mix consists of: Garlon 3E @ 2QT/100 Gallons, Tordon 22K @ 1.5 QT/ 100 Gallons, and Oil @ 1 QT/ 100 Gallons. Mitzner suggests that the contractors spray both sides when able to reach across the ditch. Mitzner also suggested that we need before and after pictures of the ditches. Mitzner also wants John South to know when they are doing the spraying and within a week of them doing it, South needs to go out and inspect the work. They need to notify South when they are going to do it and South needs to go out within a week or ten days to take pictures and make sure, we've got a good kill on the ditches. Mitzner discussed the success of the chemical mix when he sprays his own ditches. He doesn't need to spray for two years, and he doesn't have any broadleaf vegetation. Mitzner also mentioned the relative ineffectiveness of Crossbow, which has been used in the past with ineffective results and we don't want to use Roundup because we don't want to get rid of the grass. Chad Hertges added that we can put the Davey Arm of the rodman on the list for the spring, since it's been cleaned. Mitzner adds that if there are any ditches that are clean now, we need to get those on the spray list, so that we can keep them clean and not have to go back in there. The spraying is cheap compared to having an excavator come in there and have to mow. Mitzner adds that we need to talk about what we are going to spray on the O'Hara-Rice ditch. Mitzner questioned whether we need to spray the portion of the O'Hara-Rice ditch that runs from 800 S north because it's so bad already. When we are doing these ditches, we really need to look at how wide it is. If the bank is as wide as this room, there is no need to go up and spray the banks. That's a waste of our money. We really need to take a look at stuff like that where South needs to go out and look at these. South adds that he's listed potential bank spraying candidates: Davey Arm of the Rodman, Little

Kankakee River, O'Hara-Rice and Scipio Sunrise. South questioned if we wanted to go back in and spray the basins. Mitzner states that Scipio Sunrise is going to be an expensive spray, it's not going to be Crossbow and Garlon, because that is not going to kill that. It's going to have to be something aquatic to get rid of those cattails. Mitzner asks south to get the bids ready for the next meeting so that we can look at it and we want to get it done by June 15th. South had a question about the wording of spraying on both sides of the ditch, when necessary. Mitzner suggests that they need to spray both sides unless otherwise told. Each ditch is going to be a little bit different. They can't reach both sides on the Little Kankakee River, The O'Hara-Rice they can reach both sides with no problem. Each one is going to be a little bit different in the bidding. That's going to be at your discretion, or someone is going to have to go out there with you to make sure if they can reach both sides. The Davey Arm of the Rodman can have both sides sprayed. South asks if the Davey Arm, Little Kankakee, O'Hara-Rice, and Scipio Sunrise are tentative or OK to do those? Mitzner responds to go ahead and bid them. There is money there, so let's go ahead and bid them.

UPCOMING POTENTIAL PROJECTS: Mitzner states let's go into potential upcoming projects since we're talking about bank spraying. You have tree removal on the O'Hara-Rice ditch. South reported that there are some trees that have fallen out there and we probably need to get these removed as soon as possible, the trees are blocking the ditch. Mitzner asks where it is located. South responds it is on 1000 S, near the location where we had a recent violation. Mitzner asks if it's close to the road. South responds that it is right next to the road. South adds that the one to the north is maybe 300' from the road. Mitzner asks if the County Highway can reach the trees from the road? South responds yes. Mitzner asks South to get in touch with Connie Gramarossa, or Charity, to see if they can get that out of there. South introduced a photo of the tree on the South side of the road. Mitzner didn't think that one was that big of a deal. Mitzner informs South to get a hold of County Highway to see if they can get the trees removed. If not, go ahead and put it out for bid. Pat Vance asks if these are estimated funds for all these ditches and these are regulated ditches? South responds yes. Vance asks if it's been a long time since we've done work on the Moon, Bull, and Warwick? South responds that we performed bank spraying on the Bull last year. Mitzner asks if the Bull was the one he did ok on? South responds yes. Mitzner states that he doesn't believe we need to do bank spraying every year. We don't need to go every year in the same place. The only reason we are doing O'Hara-Rice is because it needs to be redone. South explained that on the list provided, he marked whose district the ditches are located in and there happens to be three in each district. South was hoping to get their input on these ditches. Pat Vance and Chad Hertges both were agreeable to walking the ditches with South. Mitzner states that after you guys go and look at these ditches, if there is any dipping or mowing of the trees, come back with a recommendation and see what we can do and try to get a bid done. Mitzner adds that he doesn't want to spend money just to be spending money, but if we have money in these accounts, let's try to use some of it to try and stay ahead of this stuff, because stuff is just going to keep getting more expensive.

DRAIN CROSSING APPLICATION, MULTIPLE DITCHES, ZAYO: John South reported that he was hoping to have the applications by today, because he contacted the guy at Zayo, who stated he was going to get the permits to South yesterday, but South has yet to receive them.

WEBSTER DITCH, GEORGE LEDONNE: John South reported that George Ledonne came in to discuss the issue on the south side of US 6, where there are numerous trees down in the ditch which is impacting his mother's property on the north side of US 6. Webster is a regulated drain but does not have an assessment. Jeff Mitzner recalled dealing with an issue in this area in the past. The ditch is assessed on the north side of US 6, but not on the south side of US 6, Mr. Ledonne would like the Board to persuade the owner on the south side to remove the trees that are down in the ditch. Mitzner Stated that he was at this property a few years ago with Christy and he thought they were going to take care of that stuff. That was the last thing they left with them. Mitzner stated that we can give them permission to go ahead and get it cleaned. South added that George Ledonne may be coming to the January meeting. Mitzner decided to table the topic until the next meeting.

DRAIN CROSSING APPLICATION, WHITE DITCH, NIPSCO: John South reported that NIPSCO is going to replace the gas main under the ditch. They are going to leave the line in place and put in a new one. They are going to go 6' below the bottom of the ditch. Pat Vance made a motion to approve the Drain Crossing Application. Chad Hertges seconded. Motion passed.

HUDSON LAKE: Georgette Joyce was unable to attend this month's meeting, so John South read the Hudson Lake report. Lake Level Information: Before the latest snow, the lake was measuring more than 6 inches below the weir. The snow probably will only raise the lake by an inch or so. The drain continues to be closed. LARE Grants: The permit for treating 2 invasive species and the overgrown phragmites has been approved for 2026. Grants for invasive weed treatment and a dredge plan were submitted. They are evaluated in January and awarded shortly thereafter. Sediment removal: Site 4 – the southern channel and spur are almost complete – latest target is completion by December 15. Securing more grants: HLCA continues to work with Amazon Web Services on more grants. Next meeting will be in January 2026. Other businesses are being identified for support.

BRAD ADAMSKY, ATTORNEY: No Report

JOHN MATWYSHYN, SURVEYOR: John Matwyshyn - Matwyshyn wished to apologize for not being at the last meeting. He got confused by the calendar on the county webpage. Apparently, it's difficult to do the updates there. He visited a site where a utility pole was being put in. He saw that they had the proper provisions to prevent any debris from going into the drain. He also met another individual that was dealing with environmental issues there, who had a big, thick binder and a checklist who was doing a far more thorough job than I had envisioned. He also attended a meeting where we met with people who were intending to change the sewer line being put across a drain in the

Saugany Lake area. He didn't think he needed to contribute anything to that. It seemed to be an amicable meeting and no changes were made there. He also added that the agenda has the wrong date at the bottom. Jeff Mitzner read an email he received stating that the 4-County Board meeting got cancelled for Thursday and that Starke County is having a meeting with their software company on December 17th for training on Ditch Assessment. Mitzner asked the surveyor if he has contacted everyone in regard to the Drain Crossing Applications and if he is on top of it to make sure no one is doing anything without us knowing about it? Matwyshyn replied that he thought it would be best, since John South has been in contact with the people, to maintain the public contact. He has been working with John on the people that have the applications in, rather than confuse them by having a new person jumping in and asking for information and stirring the pot. Jeff Mitzner stated that that should be your job, after he gets the application, brings it to us, we okay it, that's your job then. Matwyshyn added but he already had contact with the people, certainly with the new people he will get in touch with them, but with the people that already have had contact with John, rather than confuse them with who they should be contacting, continue with John. Mitzner adds that once we ok it, John's out of it, this John, [pointing to John South], is out of it, then it's you. For doing the work on the inspections. They shouldn't have to be contacting him, because he has enough work to do in his office, you can do it. Matwyshyn adds that he also has a lot of work to do. He stated he's had a staff reduction.

Mitzner asks "you've had a staff reduction"? Matwyshyn responds, he's down to a crew chief, a rod carrier, and himself. Mitzner asked what happened to the rest of your office? Matwyshyn responded that that individual departed, and the council did not permit him to replace him. Apparently, there are budget issues.

JOINT BOARDS: Already mentioned

CLAIMS: Allsop Excavating, White Ditch Project - \$50,000

Pat Vance motions to amend the claims to include the Allsop claim of \$50,000 for the White Ditch and approve it. Chad Hertges seconded the motion. Motion passed.

\$1,625 available in engineer fund

Pat Vance wanted to add that the way we did the White Ditch, we gave them plenty of notice, a year out we were talking about it. Vance thinks it was a good process. You're never going to places everybody 1005 of the time, but it was a good process. The contractor did what he was supposed to. We did what we did, we started early, we gave plenty of notice to all of the people, and we have just one person that has an issue. Mitzner thought we were going to have a lot more complaints up there. You guys did a great job handling it. Brad Adamsky stated that he's not going to spike the ball yet, because he has a Michiana Shores meeting tonight and there might be complaints that show up when he's at that meeting.

John South added that he wanted to thank Tony Hendricks for having \$1,625 available in our fund, because he waived his fee for the Saugany Lake meeting. Hendricks stated that that was a Christmas & New Year's present for us. South wanted to acknowledge that Tony Hendricks did

that for them. Mitzner added that Tony Hendricks is doing this awfully cheap for us and he wanted to thank Tony for that, because he doesn't think we're going to find anyone else to do it any cheaper for us.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ADJOURNMENT: Jeff Mitzner adjourned the meeting at 9:06 AM. The next regular meeting is Tuesday, January 13, 2026 at the LaPorte County Complex Meeting Room #3 at 8:30 AM.

John South, Secretary
Dated: December 9, 2025

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

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HcxZ2MAgVq8&list=PL8L8Y5g9S6bq8rlUrYSH2oxusFpU9Il_Z&index=2