

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY
DRAINAGE BOARD MEETING
JULY 24, 2025

PRESENT

CARY GRONINGER - CHAIRMAN
JIM SCOTT
DENNIS DARR
STEVE METZGER
TODD SMITH

ALSO PRESENT

JIM MOYER – SURVEYOR
SANDY ANGEL – DRAINAGE BOARD SECRETARY
AMY HURD – GIS TECHNICIAN

CARY GRONINGER – CHAIRMAN CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER.

MAY MINUTES/CLAIMS

JIM MOYER EXPLAINED THERE WAS A LARGE CLAIM ON THE DANNER DRAIN, WHICH WAS FROM A LONG TIME PROBLEM WITH THE TILE GOING THROUGH SOME MUCK PROPERTY. NEARLY \$6,000 IN REPAIRS HAS BEEN SPENT IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS. WE WORKED OUT SOMETHING WITH THE FARMER THERE, AND WE REPLACED ABOUT A QUARTER MILE OF TILE. THE PROBLEM WAS SOLVED BY LOWERING THE TILE, AND THERE IS BETTER GRADE AND COVER. MOYER SAID HE HAD INHERITED THIS PROBLEM AND WILL HANDLE THESE TYPES OF CLAIMS DIFFERENTLY IN THE FUTURE. WHEN ISSUES LIKE THIS APPROACH WHAT COULD BE CONSIDERED A RECONSTRUCTION, HE PLANS TO PREPARE COST PROJECTIONS AND CONSULT THE BOARD PRIOR TO MOVING FORWARD. DENNIS DARR MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE CLAIMS AND MINUTES FROM JUNE AS PRESENTED SUBJECT TO ANY AND ALL AUDITS. STEVE METZGER SECONDED THE MOTION, AND ALL WERE IN FAVOR.

WORK ORDER LIST/CLAIMS

JIM MOYER SAID THERE WERE STILL A LOT OF OUTSTANDING BRUSH CONTROL WORK ORDERS. HE IS HAPPY WITH THE DRONE SPRAYING AND IS WORKING OUT DETAILS. WE ARE ABLE TO HIT AREAS WE COULDN'T GET TO BEFORE AND NOT DAMAGE AS MANY CROPS. WHEN NOTIFYING PROPERTY OWNERS, WE ARE GIVING THEM INFORMATION ON FILTER STRIPS AND TRYING TO GET A LITTLE MORE AREA TO WORK IN. MOYER FEELS WE ARE DEVELOPING A BETTER SPRAY PROGRAM.

OLD BUSINESS

BURKHOLDER UPDATE

JIM MOYER SAID AT THE REQUEST OF ELKHART COUNTY, A CAMERA INSPECTION OF THE UPPER END OF THE TILE IN ELKHART COUNTY WAS DONE. THIS CONFIRMED THE TILE IS IN TERRIBLE CONDITION. YOU COULDN'T EVEN GET THE CAMERA THROUGH IN AREAS. THERE WERE UNREPORTED HOLES, ROOT BLOCKAGE AND GRAVEL WASHED DOWN THROUGH THE TILE. MOYER DIDN'T CAMERA FUTHER DOWNSTREAM BECAUSE HE HAS GOOD INFORMATION ON THAT AREA. MOYER BELIEVES THE PROJECT SHOULD BE DIVIDED INTO THREE PARTS. THE LOWER SECTION SOUTH OF CR 1350 IS WHERE MOST OF THE FLOODING IS. EVEN IN NORMAL RAINS, WATER PONDS AND HE HAS SEEN IT AS DEEP AS FIVE FEET. MOYER WOULD LIKE TO CALL A JOINT BOARD MEETING WITH

ELKHART COUNTY. HE WILL GATHER MORE NUMBERS AND THEN CONSULT THE BOARD ON BREAKING THIS DOWN INTO THREE MANAGEABLE PHASES. PREVIOUS NUMBERS FROM MIKE KISSINGER WERE IN THE \$300,000 TO \$400,000 RANGE, AND MOYER FEELS THAT IS MORE THAN OUR LANDOWNERS CAN HANDLE. HE FEELS THE LOWER PORTION WOULD BE THE FIRST PHASE AND THEN THE UPPER END WOULD BE PHASE TWO. THE MIDDLE SECTION WOULD BE ADDRESSED LAST. CARY GRONINGER ASKED HOW FAR UP MOYER WOULD GO WITH THE FIRST PHASE. MOYER SAID HE WOULD NEED TO GET AT LEAST THREE QUARTERS OF THE WAY TO CR 1350. HE FEELS WE WILL HAVE TO REPLACE AND UPSIZE THE EXISTING TILE. HE DOESN'T FEEL AN OPEN DRAIN IS THE ANSWER. A JOINT BOARD MEETING WILL BE SCHEDULED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

LEVI EATON UPDATE

JIM MOYER SPOKE TO THE SEVERANS FAMILY, WHO HAVE THE MAJORITY OF THE TILE ON THEIR PROPERTY. THE COST OF REPLACING THE TILE IS NOT AFFORDABLE TO THE FAMILY. CURRENTLY THE TILE HAS BEEN OPENED SEVERAL PLACES AROUND THE EDGE OF THE LAGOON. ON THE NORTH END IT FLOWS OUT INTO SPONSELLERS FIELD. RON SEVERANS SUGGESTED WE IMPROVE THE OPEN DITCH AND KEEP THE WATER FROM FLOWING ON SPONSELLERS LAND. MOYER DOESN'T LIKE THE IDEA OF AN OPEN DRAIN FLOWING INTO A TILE, BUT IT IS THE BEST OPTION AT THIS POINT. IT HAS BEEN THIS WAY FOR TWENTY-FIVE TO THIRTY YEARS. SPONSELLERS ARE ACCEPTABLE TO THE IDEA. MOYER SAID THAT FROM THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE LAGOON, THE TILE IS ALL NEW AND THERE IS A MANHOLE. MOYER PLANS TO PROCEED WITH THIS PLAN.

BEYER BRADY UPDATE

JIM MOYER EXPLAINED THIS IS AT THE MARKETPLACE OF WARSAW. THERE IS AN OPEN DRAIN NEXT TO THE ROLLER-SKATING CENTER THAT FLOWS INTO A FOUR TO FIVE FOOT DIAMETER PIPE AND DUMPS OUT AT APPLEBEES. MOYER SAID HE HAS REVIEWED A THIRTY-YEAR-OLD VIDEO WHERE HE AND MIKE KISSINGER WALKED THROUGH THE PIPE. ABOUT HALF WAY THROUGH THE PIPE, THE BOTTOM OF THE TILE HAD FALLEN AND THE TOP HAD PLUNGED DOWN. THIS IS WHERE THERE IS A DIP IN THE CURRENT PARKING LOT. MOYER HAD A CAMERA INSPECTION DONE TWO WEEKS AGO AND THE CONDITION OF THE TILE HAS GOTTEN WORSE. THE METAL PIPE IS COLLAPSED AND RUSTED OUT AND DOESN'T HANDLE WATER LIKE IT SHOULD, SO FLOODING IS CAUSED BACK UPSTREAM. 950 ACRES DRAIN THROUGH THIS AREA AND ALMOST ALL OF IT IS URBAN AREA. MOYER HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH THE CITY ENGINEER AND SHARED BOTH THE OLD AND NEW VIDEOS. THE ENGINEER IS WORKING WITH THE CITY OFFICIALS TO REROUTE OR REPLACE THE PIPE. MOYER IS CONCERNED THAT IT IS GOING TO COLLAPSE, AND WE WILL BE STUCK WITH AN EMERGENCY SITUATION. MOYER AND THE ENGINEER ARE DISCUSSING INTERCEPTING THE OPEN DRAIN WHERE IT CURVES NORTHWEST AND BRINGING IT THROUGH TILE STRAIGHT NORTH 600 TO 700 FEET ACROSS FRONTAGE ROAD. WE COULD WORK WITH STATE OFFICIALS TO LET IT FLOW THROUGH THE STATE RIGHT-OF-WAY IN AN OPEN DITCH UNTIL IT REACHES CENTER STREET. THIS WILL HAVE TO BE A CITY AND COUNTY COLLABORATION. MOYER INFORMED THE BOARD THAT HOBBY LOBBY IS PLANNING TO BUILD IN THE MARKETPLACE. THE CITY IS FORCING HOBBY LOBBY TO INTERCEPT ANY WATER THEY PRODUCE. WE WILL HAVE TO ABANDON THE TILED PORTION OF THE DRAIN FROM THE OPEN DRAIN ON THE WEST TO THE CAMPBELL AND FRETTER PROPERTY. CARY GRONINGER SUGGESTED THAT THE NARROW STRIP OF PROPERTY OWNED BY ACRES MIGHT BE MORE OPEN TO ALLOWING A DRAINAGE EASEMENT. MOYER SAID HE WILL CONTINUE TO PUSH THIS PROJECT FORWARD.

G. POLK DRAIN REPAIR/ATTORNEY NOTIFIED

JIM MOYER SAID THERE IS A CABLE CONDUIT COMPANY GOING THROUGH OUR COUNTY PUTTING IN FIBER OPTIC CONDUITS. AT THE INTERSECTION OF CRYSTAL LAKE ROAD AND PARK SCHRAM ROAD, THEY USED A TRENCHING MACHINE TO GO ALONG THE COUNTRY ROAD RIGHT-A-WAY, AND THEY WENT THROUGH THE GEORGE POLK PIPE. MOYER SAID HE CONTACTED THE CONDUIT COMPANY A COUPLE TIMES, AND THEY SAID THEY WOULD REPAIR IT, AND THEY DIDN'T. MOYER CONTACTED OUR ATTORNEY, WHO HAS CONTACTED THE CONDUIT COMPANY, AND THEY SAID IT WOULD BE REPAIRED BY THE END OF THE WEEK. IT HAS NOT BEEN REPAIRED YET. MOYER WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW UP ON THIS UNTIL IT IS REPAIRED. THERE WAS DISCUSSION ABOUT MONITORING FUTURE UTILITY INSTALLATION MORE CLOSELY. MOYER SAID HE IS WORKING WITH STEVE MORIARTY REGARDING THIS TYPE OF WORK.

NEW BUSINESS

MENTONE TILE ABANDONMENT

JIM MOYER EXPLAINED THIS PROJECT STARTED IN 2009 WHEN THE TOWN OF MENTONE DID A STORM DRAIN PROJECT. AS THIS WAS PUT IN, THERE WERE TO BE PORTIONS OF THE COUNTY REGULATED DRAIN THAT WERE TO BE ABANDONED, BUT THIS HAS NEVER BEEN OFFICIALLY DONE. PORTIONS OF OUR TILE WERE CUT OFF, AND WE CANNOT AFFORD TO KEEP MAINTAINING THIS ABANDONED TILE. MOYER HAS CONTACTED THE TOWN OF MENTONE. THE STREET DEPARTMENT IS GOING TO SET UP A MEETING WITH EMANS ENGINEERING, WHO WORKED ON THE ORIGINAL STORM DRAIN PROJECT. DURING THE MEETING IT CAN BE DETERMINED WHICH TILES ARE OPERATING AND WHICH ONES THE TOWN NEEDS TO KEEP OPERATING. IT CAN ALSO BE DETERMINED WHAT THE COUNTY WILL CONTINUE TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR. THERE IS CURRENTLY SOME DUPLICATION OF SYSTEMS. MOYER WILL BRING BACK THE RESULTS OF THIS MEETING TO THE BOARD.

2026 BUDGET REVIEW

JIM MOYER STATED WE HAVE OVER FOUR MILLION DOLLARS TO MAINTAIN THE DRAINS IN THE COUNTY. THAT MONEY ISN'T FOR THE OFFICE, SALARIES, INSURANCE, ETC. HE IS MAKING SOME CHANGES IN THE OFFICE. HE WOULD LIKE TO ASSIGN MORE RESPONSIBILITY TO AMY HURD AND SANDY ANGEL TO HELP HIM DO SOME OF THE CHANGES DISCUSSED, BUT HE IS HESITANT TO DO THAT WITHOUT PROPER COMPENSATION. HE IS PLANNING TO APPROACH THE COUNTY COUNCIL TO HELP HIM APPROPRIATELY COMPENSATE THEM. HE WOULD LIKE THE DRAINAGE BOARD TO PROVIDE A LETTER OF SUPPORT, WHICH WOULD SAY THE BOARD SUPPORTS HIM IN HIS EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN HIS STAFF. MOYER SHARED THE BUDGET HE WILL BE PRESENTING TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL. THERE ARE FOUR ITEMS THAT WERE FUNDED IN 2024 THAT ARE NOT FUNDED NOW AND THE BUDGET HAS BEEN REDUCED BY \$165,000. MOYER ASKED THE BOARD TO SIGN A LETTER APPROVING THE PROPOSED 2026 BUDGET HE IS PRESENTING TO THE COUNCIL. CARY GRONINGER FELT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO PROPERLY COMPENSATE EMPLOYEES FOR THE SKILL LEVEL REQUIRED. HE SAID THE COUNTY HAS A COMAT CHART, AND WE HAVE TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT HOW EMPLOYEES ARE COMPENSATED AND HOW THEY FALL IN THAT COMAT CHART. IF WE GET TOO FAR OFF BASE FROM THAT, IT COULD BECOME A FREE FOR ALL FOR COMPENSATION REQUESTS. MOYER SAID HE HAS WORKED WITH HUMAN RESOURCES TO CHANGE JOB DESCRIPTIONS TO MEET COMAT LEVELS. CARY GRONINGER POINTED OUT THAT THE REDUCTION IN BUDGET WAS GOOD, BUT SOMETIMES IT IS HARD TO GET BACK MONIES THAT HAVE BEEN TAKEN AWAY. GRONINGER CLARIFIED THAT MOYER WANTS TO GO FROM A BUDGET OF \$240,000 TO \$297,000. MOYER ASKED FOR A

MOTION FROM THE BOARD SUPPORTING HIS REQUEST. CARY GRONINGER ASKED ABOUT THE ASSISTANT SURVEYOR POSITION. MOYER SAID THAT POSITION IS STILL OPEN. GRONINGER ASKED FOR CLARIFICATION ON THE PART-TIME HELP POSITION. MOYER SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO HIRE PART-TIME HELP TO LEARN THE OFFICE PROCEDURES TO TAKE OVER POSITIONS WHEN NEEDED. HE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO BEGIN SOME PROJECTS THAT WOULD REQUIRE ADDITIONAL OFFICE SUPPORT. GRONINGER ASKED WHERE FEES FOR A LICENSED SURVEYOR WERE COMING FROM. MOYER SAID THOSE COME FROM THE SECTION CORNER PERPETUATION FUND, AND SO FAR, THIS YEAR \$5,000 HAS BEEN SPENT HIRING LICENSED SURVEYORS FOR NEEDED WORK. IF SURVEYING WORK IS DONE ON A SPECIFIC DRAIN, THE COST IS EXPENSED TO THAT DRAIN. TODD SMITH ASKED FOR FUTHER CLARIFICATION ON THE ASSISTANT SURVEYOR POSITION. MOYER EXPLAINED THAT THERE CURRENTLY IS NO ASSISTANT SURVEYOR. HE WOULD LIKE TO MAKE AMY HURD HIS ASSISTANT. HE WILL BE CHANGING THE ASSISTANT SURVEYOR TO A DIFFERENT CLASSIFICATION, BUT FOR NOW IT NEEDS TO REMAIN AS IS. AFTER FURTHER DISCUSSION, JIM SCOTT MADE A MOTION THAT DRAINAGE BOARD SHOW SUPPORT FOR THE SURVEYOR’S PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2026. STEVE METZGER SECONDED THE MOTION, AND ALL WERE IN FAVOR.

UNSICKER DRAIN/JOINT BOARD WAIVER OF RIGHTS

JIM MOYER SAID THAT THE GALL UNSICKER DRAIN IS IN THE NORTHWEST PORTION OF OUR COUNTY. IT FLOWS OUT OF OUR COUNTY AND INTO MARSHALL COUNTY. MARSHALL COUNTY HAS 89 PERCENT OF THE DRAIN IN THEIR COUNTY AND KOSCIUSKO COUNTY HAS 11 PERCENT. MARSHALL COUNTY IS GOING TO HAVE AN ASSESSMENT HEARING AND THEY ARE REQUESTING OUR COUNTY WAIVE OUR RIGHTS TO BE REPRESENTED AT THE HEARING. JIM SCOTT MOVED TO WAIVE OUR RIGHTS TO BE REPRESENTED AT THIS HEARING. STEVE METZGER SECONDED THE MOTION, AND ALL WERE IN FAVOR.

EICHER PROPERTY/ATWOOD

ATWOOD PROPERTY OWNERS, TAYLOR AND KRISTIAN EICHER, HAVE BROUGHT FLOODING CONCERNS ON THEIR PROPERTY AT THE INTERSECTION OF PRAIRIE STREET AND OLD 30 TO JIM MOYER’S ATTENTION. MOYER SAID IT DOESN’T AFFECT A REGULATED DRAIN. HE HAS SPOKEN WITH THE EICHERS REGARDING THIS SEVERAL TIMES AND TO THE COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT. MOYER SAID THERE IS NOT A LOT THAT HE CAN DO ABOUT IT. CARY GRONINGER ASKED MOYER WHAT HIS SUGGESTION IS. MOYER FELT THAT THE EXISTING CATCH BASIN AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THAT INTERSECTION NEEDS TO BE UPGRADED. THIS BASIN DRAINS INTO A TILE THAT RUNS PARALLEL TO THE ROAD, WHICH THEN FLOWS DOWNSTREAM TO A COUNTY TILE. THE TILE ALONG THE ROAD IS NOT PART OF THE COUNTY REGULATED DRAINS. CARY GRONINGER SAID HE WOULD BE WILLING TO MEET WITH STEVE MORIARTY AND JIM MOYER TO DISCUSS A PLAN TO ADDRESS THIS ISSUE.

ADJOURN

BEING OF NO FURTHER BUSINESS DENNIS DARR MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN. STEVE METZGER SECONDED THE MOTION AND ALL WERE IN FAVOR.

CLAIMS

7/1/25

BEYER BRADY	NATIVE ROOTS	\$450.00	2700
DEEDS CREEK	TIMBER VALLEY	\$13,408.19	2700
HALL LEMON	TIMBER VALLEY	\$1,380.00	2700
POLE RUN	TIMBER VALLEY	\$1,300.00	1158

SHOEMAKER ISAAC	TIMBER VALLEY	\$1,730.00	1158
SOLOMON SECHRIST	WARSAW WHOLESale	\$354.00	2700
SWICK MEREDITH	TIMBER VALLEY	\$2,450.00	2700
SWICK MEREDITH	TIMBER VALLEY	\$2,060.00	2700

MAINTENANCE: \$ 20,102.19

GENERAL DRAIN: \$ 3,030.00

7/15/25

ACHOR	GARY DANT	\$570.00	2700
BURKHOLDER	R&R VISUAL	\$1,200.00	2700
BURKHOLDER	TIMBER VALLEY	\$1,788.39	2700
		\$ 611.61	1158
CONRAD WILLIAM	TIMBER VALLEY	\$480.00	2700
DANNER	FARMER'S DRAINAGE	\$21,728.34	2700
ELDER	GARY DANT	\$420.00	2700
ELDER	KLINE TRUCKING	\$4,715.00	2700
GAY EASTERDAY	STEVE BARTELS	\$240.00	2700
KEEFER EVANS	STEVE BARTELS	\$60.00	2700
MCCLEARY GOCHENOUR	STEVE BARTELS	\$60.00	2700
MCCONNELL NEVIN	STEVE BARTELS	\$390.00	2700
PETERSON MARTIN	TIMBER VALLEY	\$480.00	1158
PHILLIPS WALTER	TIMBER VALLEY	\$960.00	2700
PYLE JOHN	GARY DANT	\$510.00	2700
ROBINSON GA	GARY DANT	\$360.00	2700
WALNUT CREEK	STEVE BARTELS	\$60.00	2700
WALNUT CREEK	KLINE TRUCKING	\$1,283.07	2700
WALNUT CREEK	TIMBER VALLEY	\$960.00	2700

MAINTENANCE: \$ 35,784.80

GENERAL DRAIN: \$ 1,091.61

7/29/25

BIERCE	BLUESKY APPLICATORS	\$1,098.25	1158
BURKHOLDER	WARSAW WHOLESale	\$258.70	1158
DEEDS CREEK	BLUESKY APPLICATORS	\$923.75	2700
GAY EASTERDAY	FARMER'S DRAINAGE	\$14,249.62	2700
PYLE JOHN	TIMBER VALLEY	\$3,650.00	2700
KEEFER EVANS	BLUESKY APPLICATORS	\$4,505.28	2700
KOONTZ MARY	TIMBER VALLEY	\$1,460.00	2700
SHOEMAKER ISAAC	WARSAW WHOLESale	\$67.60	1158
WALNUT CREEK	KLINE TRUCKING	\$6,203.75	2700
WALNUT CREEK	KLINE TRUCKING	\$485.00	2700
WYLAND	LUMBERJACK JIM	\$3,750.00	2700
WYLAND	TIMBER VALLEY	\$1,600.00	2700
WYLAND	TIMBER VALLEY	\$480.00	2700

MAINTENANCE: \$ 37,307.40

GENERAL DRAIN: \$ 1,424.55

JUNE TOTALS
MAINTENANCE: \$ 93,194.39
GENERAL DRAIN: \$ 5,546.16

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY DRAINAGE BOARD


Cary Groninger – Chairman


Dennis Darr


Todd Smith


Jim Scott – Vice Chairman


Steve Metzger