

**MINUTES OF THE
MERRILLVILLE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 2014**

President Leonard White called the June 3, 2014 Merrillville Stormwater Management Board (SWMB) meeting to order at 4:37 p.m. The other members in attendance were Barbara Ghoston and new member, Ralph Simek. The pledge of allegiance was said. Staff present was Executive Director Matt Lake, Compliance Officer Joe Fish, Attorney James Meyer and Secretary Liz Bushemi. Others present were Councilman Tom Goralczyk, Town Manager Bruce Spires, Ron Wiedeman from Robinson Engineering and resident Anne Collins.

COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Mr. White welcomed Ralph Simek. There was no May meeting because of a lack of a quorum, and he said the board is back to work. He asked Compliance Inspector Joe Fish, Barbara Ghoston and Attorney Jim Meyer if any of them had a report, and all said no.

ROLL CALL

A roll call was taken. All three members were present.

MINUTES

Included in the agenda packet was a copy of the minutes from the April 1, 2014 SWMB meeting. Ralph Simek made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 1, 2014 meeting, and it was seconded by Leonard White. All three members voted to approve the motion to approve the minutes from the April 1, 2014 meeting, and the motion unanimously passed.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE REGISTERS APPROVAL

Also included in the agenda packet were copies of the accounts payable registers from April 8, April 22, May 13 and May 27, 2014. Leonard White made a motion to approve the accounts payable registers from April 8, April 22, May 13 and May 27, 2014, and it was seconded by Barbara Ghoston. A voice vote was taken, all three members voted yes; the motion to approve the accounts payable registers from April 8, April 22, May 13 and May 27, 2014 was unanimously passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Matt Lake said the Indiana MS4 annual meeting was held in May in Indianapolis, and there were 389 attendees. He and Darren Olson from Christopher Burke Engineering made a presentation on Utility Development and Master Plans. He said Merrillville was again recognized with a certificate for implementation of the MS4 Stormwater Quality Management Plan Associated with Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination.

Matt said Stormwater will be audited by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) again this year and said Merrillville will probably be one of the first again to be audited.

Matt said the rain barrel program was successful thanks to Liz's efforts, and 43 rain barrels were sold through UpCycle Products, and it was all handled through Upcycle. One couple bought 21 rain barrels. He said rain barrels are a good way to collect rain water and save money on watering in the summer. The barrels have a screen installed so mosquitoes don't breed. Matt passed around some pictures.

He said that the two recycled benches were installed at the 54th Avenue Rain Garden on May 24th, with a brief ceremony with Councilman Richard Hardaway and some of the Girl Scouts who helped collect caps. He said thanks to Lake County Solid Waste for providing the benches and to Stacy Gaza in Bruce's office for running the Caps program for the town. He said the benches were made well, and they were securely installed at the rain garden following the brief ceremony. A few pictures were passed around. He said the next Caps program will begin in September.

Matt said the Southmoor Park Drainage Improvement Project has been cancelled. There was a public meeting held on April 30; Councilwoman Carol Miano asked the residents at the meeting to complete a questionnaire about the project. He said the residents did not understand that the project was designed to return the subdivision to open drainage swales, like it had been before. Town Manager Bruce Spires said the results of the questionnaire were: Five people were for it, three were not sure; and 29 were against it. Mr. Spires said that Merrillville Road TIF money would have paid for the project, but the residents did not want it. Mr. Spires said the Redevelopment Commission has decided to postpone the project for the time being, but it may be done in the future. Barbara Ghoston asked why residents didn't want it, and Bruce said the subdivision was developed with swales, unlike what residents see at the subdivision to the north, Madison Meadows, with catch basins, storm drains and curbs.

Matt said he has been working with Christina Groves from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Community Rating System (CRS). He said that as early as October 1, Merrillville residents requiring flood insurance will receive a 15% decrease in their premium. Merrillville is one of 19 communities in Indiana to receive the reduction, and Merrillville has received a "7" ranking; the only other community to receive that high ranking is Hamilton County. He said Merrillville received the best of the best ranking. He said the application process must be done every year. As other communities learn of the CRS, more people will be applying for it. He expects to get official notice soon.

NEW BUSINESS

Matt said the Stormwater crews have been replacing old infrastructure at 58th and Chase and near 54th and Broadway, in conjunction with public works drainage crew replacing culverts at these locations. Sections of town with old infrastructure need to be replaced. Crews have also been doing routine maintenance within the town, and have also been clearing and snagging in Chapel Manor to keep water draining at Highland Drive. He said there is a lot of debris blocking the culverts.

Ralph Simek said there is yard rubbish near the edge at Madison Ditch and asked about property lines. Barbara suggested posting signs, and discussion was held about private property. Matt said it's possible to put up the "Keep it Clean" signs. Councilman Goralczyk said on 75th Place at the no-named ditch, people put bags of grass clippings by the ditch. Matt said if there is no evidence as to who is putting the rubbish, etc. there, we cannot prosecute. Matt said it may be possible to have the Lake County Work Release program workers help keeping the ditches clean. Bruce said residents need to be reminded that there is a dumpster at Public Works for old tires.

Matt said he met with Lake County Surveyor Bill Emerson and other officials to discuss applying for Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission money to help pay for projects in the Meadowdale watershed. He said a joint application with the county surveyor would help implement the plan; it is expected to be submitted in July.

He said on June 11, a demonstration will take place with Source I Environmental regarding a pipe patch program they have; Merrillville Conservancy District (MCD) currently is using their product and has saved a lot of money with sewer repair costs. The demonstration will be to repair a sink hole at Jennings Place. Councilman Goralczyk said the Independence Hill Conservancy District (IHCD) is also using the product. Jim Meyer said many communities are now using the epoxy methodology. Source I is from Michigan, and they will train staff to do the pipe patching themselves. Some information about the Pipe Patch program was passed around.

OTHER BUSINESS

Leonard asked Councilman Goralczyk if he had any report, and he said no.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident Anne Collins reiterated what Councilman Goralczyk said about IHCD using the pipe patch product. She said she's lived in Merrillville for 34 years, and IHCD has not had to come to her area for work for a long time. Councilman Goralczyk said there are 44 open taps in a seven to eight block area.

Matt also said he met with Dan Vicari from Gary Sanitary District (GSD) last week about GSD issues; floor drains flooding was also discussed, which is sanitary sewers. People need to be reminded to keep storm sewers and sanitary sewers separate.

Barbara asked about the resident, John Hasprunar, who appeared at the April meeting; Ron Wiedeman from Robinson Engineering said the prior engineering plans were validated, all town policies have been met and approved, and data was sent to the resident.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. White said the next monthly meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 1, 2014, at 4:30 p.m. at the Stormwater Resource Center.

Ralph Simek made a motion to adjourn, and it was seconded by Barbara Ghoston. All three members voted yes, the motion to adjourn was passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Bushemi
Staff Secretary