

Drainage Board Meeting - Newton Co. Courthouse – March 5, 2012

The Newton County Drainage Board met on March 5, 2012 with the following persons present: Board Members – Russell Collins, Jim Pistello and Tim Drenth, County Engineer Larry Holderly, Drainage Board Attorney Dan Blaney, Surveyor Chris Knochel, Secretary Debra Chapman Risley and LeAnn Sale.

Minutes – Tim made a motion to approve the minutes for the January 17, 2012 & February 6, 2012 meetings with a second from Jim. **Motion carried and minutes were signed.**

Chemical Maintenance Bids – Three bids were received for 2012 Ditch Chemical Maintenance and they were as follows; Dalton's of Warsaw IN \$26,209.61; Anderson Tree, West Lafayette \$24,961.00; Shidler's, Eaton IN \$25,320.00. Chris confirmed that there is money in the ditch funds in order to pay for the chemical maintenance. **Jim made a motion to accept the bid from Anderson Tree in the amount of \$24,961.00 as long as it meets Chris' specifications. Tim seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

DeHaan – Chris stated he had contacted the landowners along the DeHaan in Newton County stating that we need to move private, parallel ditches away from the regulated ditch. Some of the landowners present at the meeting were Ron Sipkema and Alan Cameron. Much conversation continued regarding the DeHaan, spoils, and Army Corp of Engineers. Chris stated that since the private ditches are actually in the regulated easement we do have control over them. However we must have permission from the Army Corp before we can fill in the private ditches or do any work. There was also a discussion concerning the Kankakee River bank and it was stated that issues concerning the Kankakee should be addressed with Jody Melton of KRBC. **Jim made a motion for Chris to address the DeHaan with the Army Corp of Engineers asking to fill in the private ditches in order to make room to work on the regulated DeHaan. Tim seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

Strole Ditch – Larry Strole and Mike Osowski were present to discuss the placement of a culvert on the Strole ditch to allow access to a piece of property they wish to farm but that is currently landlocked. The original structure of dilapidated steel framed, wooden- deck bridge is still there and would be removed by landowner. Some of the material could be used for fill. The new culvert would measure 142" x 91" x 44' with a cost estimate of \$25,917.00 including culvert, installation, fill, etc. Deb gave the Strole Ditch financial report stating that there was a fund balance of \$8,134.88 and that \$3,305.94 would be collected in 2012 on assessments. Larry Strole agreed to pay \$5,000.00 or 1/5 of current estimate since he is the sole landowner affected. Jim made a motion to install the culvert at a cost of \$26,000 with landowner, **Larry Strole paying \$5,000 toward the project. Tim seconded the motion. Motion carried. It was also asked that a surveyors report and scope of work be done so that a hearing can be scheduled to increase the assessment.**

McCray-Ade – Cliff Roberts was present to discuss the replacement of a culvert on the McCray Ade. Cliff reported that until the ditch was dipped two years ago there had not been a problem. However since the dipping the bottom of the ditch went out and the culvert dropped making it impossible to move equipment over the culvert and causing a land lock. When asked if the landowner (Genevieve Bower) would contribute toward the project since she was the only landowner affected, Cliff responded that he doubted it since it was through no error on her part that caused the problem. Deb gave the

McCray-Ade financial report stating that the ditch currently owes the General Drain Improvement Fund a total of \$5,611.38. It will only bring in a total of \$1,128.87 for 2012 assessments. **Jim made a motion to install the culvert at a cost of \$13,035.00 with a second from Tim. Motion carried.** Chris asked it to be stated in the minutes that if the county pays for the whole project then the county would own the old culvert which could be used on a future project. Cliff also stated that as a landowner/farmer he didn't feel that the county was charging enough for ditch assessments. **The board decided that a hearing should be scheduled to increase the assessment rate.**

Assessment Program Conversion Report – Chris reported on the transition from the old assessment programs to the new and touched on the issues that were encountered by the GIS & Surveyors department. The state statute of assessing the state, county, railroads and townships was also discussed. **It was decided that Chris is to report back to the board prior to assessment time next year on the amount of land and assessments that would be due for each of those discussed and that they not be assessed for 2012.**

Reports – Priority Order – Unassessed Drains – In reviewing the “unassessed drains” report, Jim asked if the **Knight-Moffit** had ever been assessed to which Chris responded that we can't get there whether it is the railroad or something else stopping us. Jim explained that we need to get assessments started on these ditches even if it is only \$1.00/acre for the work already done and then in a few years when we actually begin work hold another hearing to raise the assessment rate at that time. The **Knight-Moffit-Stover** owes the GDIF over \$72,000 and we should be assessing that watershed now stated Jim. Chris responded that Dan had given the railroad an ultimatum concerning the **Knight-Moffit** and we had not yet heard from them. We can do a projection and state that based upon what we know at this time this is what the assessment should be. Chris explained to the board that the K-M-S watershed is constantly changing. Chris wants to make sure that when he does his report the watershed is correct on that given day. The Newton County stretch of the **K-M-S** has never been assessed in Newton County. Jim stated that if the watershed boundaries are defined on the ditches that owe GDIF then we need to go ahead and hold assessment hearing. Chris stated that Beaver Lake Ditch is on the long range plan and that the watershed map will be part of the surveyors report. Tim asked if we need to have a hearing on the **Barton Ditch** since it is currently #1 on the Priority Order, we need to do work on it and it already owes the GDIF. **Tim made a motion to have a hearing to raise the assessment rate on the Barton Ditch with a second from Jim. Motion carried.**

Knight-Moffit-Stover – Tim made a motion to assess the **Knight-Moffit-Stover** watershed and to convene the Bi-County Board for an assessment hearing with a second from Jim. **Motion carried.**

Battleday Lateral II Surface Repair - Two bids were received for this project: JD Excavating \$13,500; King Bulldozing & Excavating \$5,999.00. Chris' estimate was \$9,686.24. **Jim made a motion to accept the King bid as long as it meets Chris' specifications. Tim seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

Frank Johnson Tile – Chris told the board that he needs a decision from the board on the length of the Frank Johnson Open. There is no documentation in the minutes that states the exact length of that railroad ditch from where it begins to where it outlets in the Shue Ditch. Without that information we have a gap and that is what we are trying to avoid. Chris needs to get that information back before the board for them to decide if they are going to make that a regulated ditch for the entire length of the railroad ditch. Right

now we only show the length of the drain at about 1200' which is the portion that they dug. Chris thinks the total length is close to a mile. He did talk to Craig King and Craig does realize that he still needs to level the spoils from that excavation. Chris needs the actual length of the regulated drain so that it is recorded.

Jim made a motion to adjourn with a second from Tim. Motion carried.