



Minutes

MERRILLVILLE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT BOARD

TUESDAY, JANUARY 6th, 2026, at 3:30 PM

Merrillville Stormwater Resource Center, 7404 Broadway, Merrillville, IN

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

President L.J. “Bud” Crist called the January 6th, 2026, Stormwater Management Board (SWMB) meeting to order at 3:31 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Crist led the pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Members in attendance were, President Bud Crist and Vice President Jim Kendig, two board members are present, a quorum was established. The staff member present were Executive Director Matt Lake and Secretary Adra Breclaw-Csanyi.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION OF 2026 OFFICERS (ROLL CALL VOTE)

President Crist opened the floor for Stormwater Management Board Members positions to remain as is. President Bud Crist entertained a motion for positions to remain as is, Vice President James Kendig seconded. Secretary nomination from Jim Kendig for Barbara Ghoston to remain as Secretary, President Crist seconded Ghoston. There were no other nominations for each position, they are now closed, a voice vote was taken, and a motion passed with a 2/0 vote.

COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Comments: None

MINUTES

Stormwater Management Board Minutes (SWMB) from December 2nd, 2025, approved. Vice President Kendig entered a motion to approve the minutes from the SWMB meeting on December 2nd, 2025, and motion seconded by President Crist. There were no questions. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 2/0 vote.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE REGISTERS APPROVAL

Included in the agenda packet were copies of the Accounts Payable Register from December 9th, 2025, and December 23rd, 2025. President Crist entered a motion for approval Vice President Kendig entered a motion to accept the Accounts Payable Registers from December 9th, 2025, and December 23rd, 2025, seconded by President Crist. No questions asked. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

OLD BUSINESS - (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

Bud Crist – None

Matt Lake – Executive Director Matt Lake read invoices for approval for the following projects/contracts listed below:

Status/Updates: Matt Lake

- Hendricks Drainage Analysis – Executive Director Lake said he is reviewing the draft plans and had a few markups; they will go through them and get them finalized. The next step will be to look at putting it out to bid this year in the spring.

- Stormwater Improvement Plan 69th & Connecticut St –Executive Director Lake said everything is essentially completed. They are just waiting on the as-builts. Tim Hollandsworth stated that they sent them the pdf version of the as-built and they put that into CAD and sent it back for their review since it is their contracted obligation to submit that, it is now in their hands to resubmit it and he expects that and process the final invoice hopefully before the next Board meeting and to be on the next Board meeting. Executive Director Lake said he was out on the last intense rain event where we had three inches in a few hours and went out at 69th and Connecticut, there were no backups or issues, it was a great investment for public safety. Other areas in town where we had projects were in good shape, the things that we have done have made a significant difference.
- Hickory Ridge Flood Control Project – Hickory Ridge, – Matt Lake said he did go out there as well, the inlets in the parking lots were covered with leaves and debris. There was a water project from Indiana American Water, they were doing some work out there and had some gravel covering up one of those storm drains in the west parking lot and had some issues on the east parking lot, other than that the pond itself was working great and was also monitored by Dyer Construction during the rain event. If the apartment complex could address a few things with their parking lot inlets one is the grates size, the opening in the grates which are the small slit ones which are prone to getting covered up easily if they switch that it will help and he also told them to televise and look at the old CMP in the ground and assess the condition. We will advise the owners of the complex regarding our recommendations for them to improve. In terms of what we had done even without having a pump hooked up it was performing as designed.
- 97th and Grand Boulevard Drainage Improvements (DLZ) – Frank Stewart elaborated that they are getting ready to get the coordination done for the utilities, so it is ready for the summer. Finalizing the acquisition of the property. Executive Director Lake said we will have Supplemental Agreement No 3 later as part of the agenda.
- Stormwater Master Plan – Executive Director Lake said he is working with Christopher Burke and have a lot of good projects that we are going to be identifying and moving forward with.

NEW BUSINESS - (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

Bud Crist –

Matt Lake – DLZ, Professional Services for Grand Boulevard Ditch Relocation Project Supplemental Agreement No 3, addition to current base agreement from May 12th, 2021, in the amount not to exceed \$146,086.00 (**VOICE VOTE**). The original agreement was for \$86,246.00 so this will increase it by \$59,840.00 this will include the utility coordination, all the bid documents and processes and construction observation. We are using the same contract adding supplements as the project progresses along. President Crist entertained a motion for approval, Vice President Kendig made a motion to approve, President Crist seconded it, no other questions or discussions, A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 2/0 vote.

Merrillville Stormwater Management, Stormwater Compensation for Employees adoption of Resolution 26- for Stormwater HSA contribution for 2026 year - Resolution 26- authorizing HSA contribution for employees of the utility to have paid from the proper fund of the Stormwater Management Department of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana during the year 2026. It is not ready year but Executive Director Lake wanted to mention it. We will table it and hopefully have it prepared for the next meeting.

Official approval of **TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA, ORDINANCE NO 25-40** amending the Municipal Code establishing a **PILOT FEE for the STORMWATER UTILITY**. The Town Manager recommended the payment in lieu of taxes or **PILOT** as a component of the user fees and rates of the Stormwater Utility calculated and disbursed in two installments, one remitted by July 15th, and the other to be remitted by December 31 of each year and deposited into the corporation general fund used for lawful purposes of that fund.

Executive Director Lake said that this was determined through an assessed valuation, so the amount was based on an assessment, but we have not received the back-up data from this analysis which we have requested. According to Attorney Meyer it is only the assessed value of the property as of December 31st, Karl Cender thought that Town Manager Michele Griffin sent it but would have to look. President Crist said it was approximately \$111,000. The taxes would be as if you were not tax exempt. Karl Cender said that he did send over the calculations. Executive Director Lake said we will need all the data for our records and our files. In doing so the council passed a first and second reading of this ordinance. It cannot get executed or enacted until our board passed a resolution since the Board has authority over all stormwater expenditures. From that standpoint we do have prepared a Resolution number 26-01. President Crist asked if Matt would read it.

TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA, RESOLUTION NO 26-01 establishing a **PILOT FEE for the STORMWATER UTILITY**. Official approval of Resolution 26-01 authorizing establishing **PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES (PILOT)** to the Town of Merrillville as a component of the user fees and rates of the Merrillville Department of Stormwater Management (the Stormwater Utility), **(VOICE VOTE)**. Matt Lake mentioned, when would this be executed since we didn't budget for this this year and it would have to be 2027, he asked Attorney Meyer to confirm, he responded yes and Karl Cender also responded that he believe that it's what we talked about. Karl said that we would amend our rates this year so that we would be able to pay for this PILOT amount to the town, Jim Meyer concurred. President Crist said they didn't have the year listed and discussed 2027 because our budget for 2026 was already approved. Karl Center said the calculation will always be in the year in the rear, Attorney Meyer said because the property taxes are paid a year behind, taxes for 2026 are not due until 2027 and Karls said that was the first-year Michael was requesting, Executive Director Lake said that Michael Griffin missed the deadline, but either way it would be next year, either way it will be enacted when they are due, next year and is implies, it is a safe thing to move forward on.

President Crist said we also must address interest on our utility revenue, that is not addressed, anywhere in the resolution. Matt Lake said that it is separate topic from this resolution and all parcels including the town-owned parcels have a stormwater fee that must be paid as well. We asked Karl to look into and account for the accrued interest on existing stormwater utility funds and add an additional line item to our budget for interest revenue. Karl thought that Michael said we can make an adjustment to the town fees that are being paid. Attorney Meyer said we just don't pay them, we don't have a contract with the town saying we are going to pay them. In the past you just approved payment annually. Executive Director Lake said we can officially send an invoice for the utility bills. President Crist entertained a motion for approval, Vice President Kendig made a motion to approve, President Crist seconded it, no other discussions, A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 2/0 vote.

December 2025 installment of stormwater fees received from Lake County Treasurer. Cender & Dalton directed the Town Bookkeeper to use the same property tax breakdown as done in June as follows: Stormwater Operating - 59.22% and Stormwater Construction - 40.78% of the total stormwater user distribution fee. The total amount of revenue is \$1,060,457.86.

OTHER BUSINESS

Bud Crist –

Matt Lake –

Proposed Engineering for On-Call Engineering Services with Robinson Engineering Ltd, Addendum No.1 for 2026. In addition to the current base agreement in the amount not to exceed \$10,000.00

(VOICE VOTE). President Crist entertained a motion for approval, Vice President Kendig made a motion to approve, President Crist seconded it, no other discussions, A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 2/0 vote.

2026 NISWAG Contractors & Developers Stormwater Training – all members are registered for Tuesday February 17th, 2026, from 8:00 am to 1:30 pm at the Dean and Barbara White Community Center. Admission is free. There is a possibility that they will be adding an award section for contractors that do well and recognize them.

2026 Annual MS4 Meeting Tuesday May 12, 2026, Plainfield, IN-please let Adra know if you will be attending. The entire state is represented there. Typically, the Board goes the day before then stay that night and leave after the conference.

Executive Director Lake wanted to mention that we received several calls regarding leaves over drains. Earlier this year the Street Department had shifted gears in terms of leaf collection because the weather changed so quickly in the fall, so they converted their trucks early into snow removal mode. This paused town-wide leaf pickup efforts until this spring which left a lot of leaves along the right-of-way. We have some mild windy days prior to the last significant rain event, and the leaves had blown into the street and washed over to the storm drain inlets as heavy rains persisted. Approximately 95% of the calls received were due to leaves over the drains or basement backups from sanitary infiltration and inflow, there are still I/I issues in some areas of town. Executive Director Lake said he always offers to have residents' insurance adjusters to call him, and he can explain our stormwater infrastructure versus the sanitary districts and basement backups occur so residents can file their claims appropriately.

President Crist wanted to add that we had to replace equipment that we originally bought in 2012. We ordered a new Vac truck worth over half a million and a new mower/tractor approximately \$200,000. We had to replace our plotter for around \$12,000 and our printer for approximately \$6,000. Matt said we are adding a lift for the garage to expand and maximize our vertical space in the garage and a new natural gas generator to ensure we can reliably operate during outages. We opted for natural gas since its lower maintenance and more reliable.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

Attorney Jim Meyer– None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bud Crist –

Matt Lake –

President Crist – Next SWMB meeting is set for Tuesday, **February 3rd, 2026**, at 3:30 pm at the Stormwater Resource Center. President Crist entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting Vice President Kendig made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Secretary Ghoston seconded.

ADJOURNMENT TIME –

The meeting was adjourned at 3:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Adra Breclaw-Csanyi, Staff Secretary