Minutes

MERRILLVILLE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT BOARD
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3rd, 2026, at 3:30 PM
Merrillville Stormwater Resource Center, 7404 Broadway, Merrillville, IN

CALL MEETING TO ORDER
President L.J. "Bud" Crist called the February 3rd, 2026, Stormwater Management Board (SWMB) meeting to order at 3:32 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, and Secretary Barbara Ghoston, three board members are present, a quorum was established. The staff member present were Executive Director Matt Lake and Secretary Adra Breclaw-Csanyi.

COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT
Comments: None

MINUTES
Stormwater Management Board Minutes (SWMB) from January 6th, 2025, approved. President Crist entered a motion to approve the minutes from the SWMB meeting on January 6th, 2025, and motion seconded by Vice President Kendig. There were no questions. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE REGISTERS APPROVAL
Included in the agenda packet were copies of the Accounts Payable Register from January 13th, 2026, and January 27th, 2026. President Crist entered a motion for approval Secretary Ghoston entered a motion to accept the Accounts Payable Registers from January 13th, 2026, and January 27th, 2026, seconded by Vice President Kendig. 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:

VS Engineering, Hendricks Street Drainage Analysis Professional Services billing ending period October 31st, 2025, in the amount due this request for $7,055.23 **(VOICE VOTE) –** *was ARP Appropriation*. President Crist entertained a motion for approval, Secretary Ghoston motioned, and it was seconded by Vice President Kendig. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

Robinson Engineering, Professional Service for Southmoor Subdivision Drainage Improvements Phase 2 Design & CE thru November 28th, 2025, in the amount due this invoice for $15,643.75 **(VOICE VOTE).** President Crist entertained a motion for approval, Secretary Ghoston motioned, and it was seconded by Vice President Kendig. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

Christopher B. Burke Engineering, LLC Hickory Ridge Flood Control Improvement Phase 3. Professional services from October 26th, 2025, to November 29th, 2025, in the amount due this invoice for $3,120.00 **(VOICE VOTE) –** *Notation, prior ARP Appropriation*). President Crist entertained a motion for approval, Vice President Kendig motioned and it was seconded by Secretary Ghoston. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

Dyer Construction Pay Request No. 7 from Dyer Construction Company, as reviewed by Christopher B. Burke Engineering LLC in the combined amount of $68,200.12 for Hickory Ridge Flood Control Improvements thru December 11, 2025 **(VOICE VOTE).** *Prior ARP Appropriation*. President Crist entertained a motion for approval, Vice President Kendig motioned and it was seconded by Secretary Ghoston. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

President Crist asked if the generator was coming, Executive Director Lake said no and that he will report on it and that it will be fired up soon. He has a report from TJ from Christopher Burke explaining where we are at. It will be fired up either later this week or possibly early next week, everything is set to go. There is one gas line NIPSCO is going to have to move but Matt believes we may be able to work around it and end the outlet earlier, there is a sketch of where the outlet is for the pond, and a structure will be installed there for overflow. Executive Director Lake said that he can share those drawings as well. There is enough money in the budget because they saved here and there on the project. Matt believes we are in good shape. They want to do a test run on the new pump station, they have a jet truck that they can feed water into it, the outlet is not hooked up yet and it can be tested out.

Grimmer Construction, Inc, Pay Application No. 6 Final, including retention as reviewed by VS Engineering, LLC. Requested in the amount due this (final payment) invoice in the amount of $76,991.47 for Storm Sewer Network Improvement Plan **(VOICE VOTE) –** *wa***s** *ARP now Stormwater Appropriation.* President Crist entertained a motion for approval, Secretary Ghoston motioned, and it was seconded by Vice President Kendig. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

STATUS /Updates: Matt Lake

- Hendricks Drainage Analysis – Executive Director Lake received a final set of plans from Jeff Haw P.E. from VS Engineering; he reviewed and is in agreeance with the current revisions. We should be ready to move forward with drafting bid documents and for a 2026 construction project. Matt will coordinate with VS and attorney Meyers on bid documents so that we can move forward.
- Stormwater Improvement Plan 69th & Connecticut St –Completed/Final. All drainage aspects have proven to alleviate the pre-existing issues and now we have a reliable gravity system for this area. Residents are very satisfied with the results and improvements. This was critical for public safety and for the residents and their homes as well as the nearby school property.
- Hickory Ridge Flood Control Project – Hickory Ridge, – Executive Director Matt Lake said we are going to have the subcontractors test out the new pump and generator, it is our only stormwater system that relies on a lift station. We acquired this setup from Hickory Ridge Property Association; they did not have enough funds or capabilities to maintain/manage this critical part of the infrastructure. We will have had one remaining change order which will be a minor design change for the pond outlet because there is a gas line at the edge of the pond and instead of waiting for NIPSCO to move it we will feather out the edges riprap down and tie into a new structure. This will give us an opportunity to then have an emergency

overflow on top of the new structure, so if an outlet gets plugged up from the pond it will spill over, and we will know right away if it is plugged. It gives you an extra chance to keep things in check to get out there if something does get obstructed. Matt has been coordinating with the Hickory Ridge owners and keeping them updated on the status of the final punch list items.

- 97th and Grand Boulevard Drainage Improvements (DLZ) – We are dealing with utilities right now, the plans and permitting are done and we are ready to go out for bid when the utility aspects are finalized. Frank Stewart from DLZ elaborated that notices have been going out to the utilities, AT&T has no utilities, NIPSCO gas, we have one possible that has shown up since we added and extension across the road at the request of a property owner. NIPSCO has not assigned and engineer, it is a big one as there are poles that need to be moved out of the way, there has been no response from Frontier or Merrillville Public Utilities. Matt said once this is all cleared up, we will get this project out to bid as well. We have been assured by DLZ that the new ROW & easements are all recorded properly. This is also a roadway safety project given the severity of slope in proximity to the ditch embankment along Grand Blvd. Fifty percent of the construction cost is reimbursable through Little Cal, since we prepared and submitted a successful application that was approved by their board. President Crist said, “so we’re doing roadwork for the Town”, Matt responded we would have hoped to partner with Streets, but I don’t think this project should wait that long. The project is a two-stage ditch, and the positioning will allow for significant public safety improvement in that immediate area.
- Stormwater Master Plan – Executive Director Lake said we have fifty percent cost share on this project as well. President Crist asked when the Master Plan will be done, Matt responded in approximately another month or so. Executive Director, Lake said that he met with Darren Olsen and Dave Buckley from CBBEL, they are working on a couple of final details. Again, this will be half reimbursed by Little Cal and some good projects are identified and others involving railroads which is challenge. This document will identify the larger projects for the next 5 to 10 years.

NEW BUSINESS - (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)
Bud Crist –

Matt Lake – Proposed Stormwater Site Inspection Task Order Services with Butler, Fairman & Seufert, Inc. (BF&S Civil Engineers) Exhibit 1-A, proposed to reflect similar efforts completed in calendar year 2025 in the amount not to exceed $15,000.00 **(VOICE VOTE)**. Executive Director, Lake said that it’s essential and required by IDEM that we conduct site inspections for SWP3 compliance and demonstrates that we are fulfilling one of the town’s MS4 obligations for Rule 13 IDEM permitting. At this time, it is the most cost-effective way to complete them until we hire someone to take tasks previously done by Joe Fish. President Crist entertained a motion for approval, Vice President Kendig motioned and it was seconded by Secretary Ghoston. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

Merrillville Stormwater Management, Stormwater Compensation for Employees adoption of Resolution 26-02 for Stormwater HSA contribution for 2026 year - Resolution 26-02 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 **(VOICE VOTE)**. Through Attorney Jim Meyer and Financial Advisor Karl Cender, they drafted up this resolution as a way of providing a benefit to the employees that relates back to health insurance. President Crist entertained a motion for approval, Vice President Kendig motioned and it was seconded by Secretary

Ghoston. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA, PILOT FEE for establishing PAYMENT IN LIEW 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) memorandum that properties in 2025 were $11,493.60 and as a courtesy to the

Town of Merrillville, separate invoices were not sent to the Town in 2025 but are hereby deemed to be paid by the Town to the Department as a Payment in Lieu of Taxes to the Town instead of exchanging checks. The memo memorializes that $11,493.60 of stormwater fees to the Town are hereby deemed to be paid as a Payment in Liew of Taxes to the Town. **(VOICE VOTE)**. Attorney Meyer said it is a document that was previously approved, payment of a pilot and there are administrative steps that could have been taken to straighten this all out, easier. This is easier and all that it is saying is that the payment you made to yourself so to speak for the stormwater fees which we have been paying the fees to the Town of Merrillville (Town owned parcels) for some time, this is just saying that instead of call it payment of fee your calling it a PILOT. In theory the PILOT goes to the Town then the Town repays, instead of its entries in the books as opposed to papers being exchanged. President Crist entertained a motion for approval, Secretary Ghoston motioned and it was seconded by Vice President Kendig. Executive Director Lake asked if we must do this every year Attorney Meyer answered no, one time because when it was paid you didn't have the Resolution, Matt just wanted to make sure. There were no further questions or discussion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote. Attorney Meyer commented that the idea now is that you will be making the PILOT payment and the Town is still responsible itself for the fees and theoretically they can take it out of the PILOT payment.

President Crist asked if we could address the issue of accounting for interest on un-spent stormwater utility funds. Lake Executive Director said he did bring it up to Karl, we are awaiting an answer and Karl Cender will report back on our behalf at our next SWMB meeting. Attorney Meyer said he can personally vouch for the fact that we brought up a couple of times with Michael Griffin, and he said he agreed which is obvious, Attorney Meyer said you have a right to interest bearing and it is Stormwater Utility's funds and for whatever reason they are having difficulty. The Clerk-Treasurers' Office should not have any difficulty tracking and accounting for interest earned currently and the past several years. Secretary Ghoston asked if there was a timeframe of when they might be able to have it handled. Attorney Meyer said he hasn't gotten anything. Matt said that we should have definitive answers when Karl reports back.

OTHER BUSINESS
Bud Crist –

Matt Lake –

Approval of the 2026 proposed service agreement to provide financial professional consulting service to the Merrillville Stormwater Management Department to engage Cender & Company, LLC d/b/a Cender|Dalton Municipal Advisors as the financial consultant for 2026 **(VOICE VOTE)**. This is to retain Cender|Dalton for their services or this year. President Crist entertained a motion for approval, Secretary Ghoston motioned to approve, and it was seconded by Vice President Kendig. There were no further questions or discussion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote.

Official approval of Lake & Pond Biologists and Aquatic Weed Control 2026 contract for pond/lake maintenance services not to exceed $12,820.34 **(VOICE VOTE)**. This is primarily for Bon Aire Lake non-toxic dye and Tilapia. Executive Director Lake noted over the years it has been extremely successful, we have not received any concerns regarding algae growth, it has been highly effective. President Crist entertained a motion for approval, Secretary Ghoston motioned to approve the pond/lake maintenance services in a not to exceed $12,820.34 amount, and it was seconded by Vice President Kendig. There were no further questions or discussion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion unanimously passed with a 3/0 vote. President Crist asked when the Tilapia will be put in, Matt responded probably April, but it depends on the temperature, you don't want to put it in too early. Part of this is also availability and scheduling.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

Attorney Jim Meyer– None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bud Crist –

Matt Lake –

President Crist – Next SWMB meeting is set for Tuesday, **March 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 3:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Adra Breclaw-Csanyi, Staff Secretary