

DEKALB COUNTY DRAINAGE BOARD MEETING

August 24, 2023

Drainage Commissioners Present:

Bruce Bell, II, Chair
Sandra M. Harrison, Vice-Chair
William L. Hartman, Member
Michael V. Watson, Member

Others Present:

Tyler Lanning, Lead Survey Tech
Michelle Lassiter, Secr. /Drainage Board Adm.
Shannon Kruse, Attorney

Guests:

Greg Eriean

Absent:

Glenn Crawford, County Surveyor
James A. Miller, Member

Chair Bruce Bell, II, called the August 24, 2023, regular meeting of the DeKalb County Drainage Board to order at 8:30 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mike Watson to accept the Minutes of August 10, 2023, with the correction on page 148 in the fourth paragraph from the bottom from “could not” to “could only” as presented as the standard minutes of the DeKalb County Drainage Board. The motion was seconded by Bill Hartman, and the motion carried.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Mr. Bell asked for a motion for Ms. Kruse’s September stipend of \$1,295.00. Mike Watson moved to approve Ms. Kruse’s September stipend of \$1,295.00, Sandy Harrison seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

UTILITY PERMITS**SURF INTERNET – TOWN OF WATERLOO BUILD OUT**

Mr. Lanning explained that Surf Internet would be installing fiber throughout the Town of Waterloo within the Town’s road rights-of-way, crossing the *J. Harris Reed Tile Drain No. 263-20.0*, the *J. Harris Reed Lateral 1 Tile Drain No. 263-01-0*, and the *J. Harris Reed Lateral 1 Spur 1 Tile Drain No. 263-01-1*. Mr. Lanning read Mr. Crawford’s report which stated “In regards to the utility permit application I approve under the following condition, the utility installer to hydrovac the count tile at the utility crossing to ensure no damage occurs to the county tile and that the county surveyor’s office is contacted before work begins, so a field inspection can be completed for the crossing of the tile, and that at least an 18-inch vertical separation be maintained between the fiber and the county-regulated tiles.”

A brief discussion then ensued in which Mr. Watson stated that Surf Internet would be working quite a bit in the DeKalb County. Mr. Watson stated there were ongoing issues with utility companies communicating with the county departments after receiving utility permits. Mr. Watson wondered if requiring a bond for every project might be the encouragement needed to get the utility companies to communicate with the county.

Ms. Kruse asked if Surf would be managing the fiber after the installation. Mr. Watson stated Surf would not be. Originally Surf was only going to provide service to the schools, but the Town of Waterloo contracted with Surf to install fiber to the Town, with the Town being the managing entity. Ms. Kruse stated that a bond could be required for one to two years for the construction of the fiber run. She reminded the Board they had required one utility company to provide a bond earlier in the year. Ms. Kruse stated the Board could set a policy to cover when a bond would be required. It

would need to be an objective criterion. It could not single out one utility provider. Ms. Kruse asked if it would be beneficial to include the county highway department in the bond coverage. Mr. Watson stated the county highway department had their own set of concerns and should not be included.

Mr. Watson had Mr. Lanning re-read Mr. Crawford's recommendation. It was then decided to table the permit request until a Surf Internet representative could attend a meeting to discuss further the concerns of the Surveyor and Drainage Board and the conditions that were being considered.

RECONSTRUCTION CERTIFICATIONS

Mr. Lanning then presented the reconstruction certification of assessment for the Fred Groscup Jr. Tile Regulated Tile Drain No. 335-00-0. The final cost of the reconstruction was \$121,870.01 which fell within the engineer's estimate plus 10% amount from the public hearing of \$129,630.74. The engineer's estimate being \$117,846.13.

Mike Watson made a motion to accept and approve the reconstruction certification of assessments as presented. Sandy Harrison seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

GUEST COMMUNICATIONS

Greg Eriau, 2653 County Road 68, presented to ask for a status update on the reconstruction of the *James Ferguson Warner Lateral Tile Regulated Drain No. 86-53-0*. The tile is completely in the ground. However, his driveway had not been repaired there was grading and seeding that needed to be done. There was also a whole where a utility line had been cut that was still not resolved. Mr. Eriau wanted to know when those items would be done. Mr. Eriau stated that at a minimum he would like his driveway repaired sooner rather than later.

Mr. Lanning stated that Mr. Eriau's inquiry was reasonable and Mr. Lanning would speak with the contractor, Knott's Excavating, to ask that they get those punch items completed.

Mr. Hartman stated there was settling of the soils that needed to happen before some of the items could be completed.

SURVEYOR'S REPORT

Mr. Bell asked for the Surveyor's Report and the surveyor's staff provided the following information:

Mr. Lanning stated there wasn't much to report this week. Drain maintenance projects were moving along well. The *Fred Groscup South Tile Regulated Drain No. 352-80-0* landowner notices had been mailed. There was a lot of comments on social media regarding the notices as there was a lot of misunderstanding regarding the notice. Mr. Lanning stated that he would be bringing several requests for the Board to hold rate hearings for several of the drains. There was a list of drains that the rates were very low that needed to be increase to cover current maintenance rates. Mr. Lanning asked Ms. Kruse if there was any way around having to mail the landowner notices due to the cost of mailing to large numbers of landowners in the large watersheds. Ms. Kruse stated there was not, as it was set forth by the State Code.

There was a brief discussion as to how the postage might be paid out of the General Drain Fund vs. the General Fund as the Surveyor's Postage account was empty and the Surveyor's postage on the County Postage Meter was approximately \$100.00. Mrs. Lassiter explained that the Auditor's Office was emphatic that there wasn't anyway to put money on the postage meter from each drain's maintenance fund or reconstruction fund as the exact amount would need to be known first. Mr. Lanning stated he was going to ask the County Council for additional funds for postage to finish the year. Ms. Kruse stated that the plea to the Council could be justified through explaining the Board is

still catching up on reconstructions from the COVID years and the large increases in the cost of postage during that same time frame.

Ms. Kruse cautioned the staff regarding increasing drain maintenance rates, stating that once the hump of catching up on maintenance is past there may not be a need for rate increases due to more diligent monitoring of the drains and earlier repairs before problems become major issues.

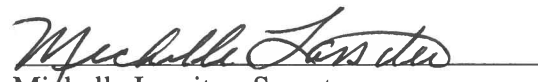
Mr. Lanning stated he hoped to be able to bring the reconstruction plans and documents for the *John Ketcham Tile Regulated Drain No. 334-00-0* at the next meeting for consideration of a public hearing.

Mrs. Lassiter reminded the Board that the August 31, 2023 meeting would begin at 9:30 a.m. instead of 8:30 a.m. due to the Joint DeKalb/Noble Drainage Board meeting to open the bids for phase two of the reconstruction of the *William Bickel Tile Regulated Drain No. 133-00-0* being set for 9:00 a.m. on August 31, 2023.

DISCUSSION

There being no further business or discussion, Mr. Bell thanked everyone for attending the meeting and declared the meeting adjourned at 8:59 a.m.


Bruce Bell, II, Chairman


Michelle Lassiter, Secretary