

CEDAR CREEK DRAINAGE BOARD MEETING

February 13, 2025

Drainage Commissioners Present:

James Deetz, Vice-Chair
Bruce Laub, Member
Denny Taylor, Chair

Others Present:

Tyler Lanning, Lead Survey Tech
Shannon Kruse, Attorney
Katie Rutan, Office Clerk
Rebecca Wright, Drainage Board Secretary

Guests:

None

Absent:

Glenn Crawford, County Surveyor
Troy Bungard, Survey Tech

Chairman Denny Taylor called the February 13, 2025, regular meeting of the Cedar Creek Drainage Board to order at 9:00 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

He introduced the first business item, the approval of minutes from November 7, 2024. Bruce Laub moved to approve the minutes as presented, and Mr. Jim Deetz seconded the motion. Since there was no discussion, Mr. Taylor called for a vote, and the motion carried. Mr. Taylor turned the meeting over to Attorney Shannon Kruse to conduct the nominations and elections vote for the 2025 Cedar Creek Board.

2025 BOARD ORGANIZATION AND APPOINTMENTS

BOARD CHAIRMAN: Ms. Kruse asked for nominations for the 2025 Cedar Creek Drainage Board Chairman. Mr. Bruce Laub nominated the same people for the same positions of chairman and vice-chairman, with Mr. Jim Deetz seconding the nominations. Shannon Kruse stated that Mr. Denny Taylor would fill the role of Chairman, and Mr. Jim Deetz would fill the role of Vice-Chair. Ms. Kruse asked if there was any discussion or other nominations. Since there were no other nominees, Ms. Kruse called for a vote, with all members voting affirmatively.

BOARD SECRETARY & ATTORNEY: Ms. Kruse then asked for nominations for secretary and attorney. Mr. Bruce Laub nominated Becky Wright as secretary of the drainage board and Shannon Kruse as attorney. Jim Deetz seconded the motion. Mr. Taylor asked if there was discussion or other nominations, but since there were none, he called for a vote, and the motion carried. He thanked members of the Surveyor's Office for their work before meetings so the Board could be informed. Ms. Kruse handed the meeting over to Chairman Denny Taylor.

ATTORNEY'S CONTRACT

Mr. Denny Taylor then moved the meeting to approve the attorney contract for Ms. Shannon Kruse. Ms. Kruse noted that the attorney contract was the same as in years past with the same services and same fees. Mr. Taylor asked for a motion to approve the 2025 attorney contract and payment for February. Jim Deetz moved to approve the 2025 attorney contract and fees as presented, and Bruce Laub seconded the motion. Mr. Taylor called for a vote and the motion carried.

CEDAR CREEK WATERSHED

Then Denny Taylor introduced the major discussion of the morning regarding the Cedar Creek Watershed. Mr. Tyler Lanning reported that the Surveyor's Office requested the annual assessment increase from \$6.24 to \$11.24, an adjustment of \$5.00 a year per parcel. He read a statement from Surveyor Glenn Crawford relaying the history of assessments for the Cedar Creek Watershed and

how the increased maintenance fund would be used to improve the condition of the drain. The statement noted that a hearing needed to be scheduled, and notice of the hearing would be sent to landowners with the spring tax statements.

Mr. Taylor asked when the hearing would be. Mr. Lanning answered that it would be May 15 at 10 AM if the board approved. Ms. Kruse added that the Surveyor's Office had researched a cost-efficient way to notify the landowners in the Cedar Creek Watershed, saving the Office \$8,000-\$10,000 by including the notification with the Treasurer's Spring Tax Statements. She continued that the Drainage Code dictated that a hearing must be held to increase an assessment by more than 25%.

The Board discussed at length the necessity of the increase. It concluded that a \$5.00 increase was minimal compared to the need to maintain the drain. Mr. Taylor asked what happened with funds remaining in the drain fund at the end of the year, and Mr. Lanning answered that it would accumulate. Mr. Taylor asked if the money would ever be transferred to a different drain fund. Mr. Lanning said, "We can't." Ms. Kruse stated that maintenance money could be used in a reconstruction project for the drain but could not be transferred to a different drain account.

Mr. Taylor said, "I'd entertain a motion to have this rate increase and to have the hearing on May 15." Mr. Bruce Laub made the motion, and Mr. Jim Deetz seconded. The motion carried, and Mr. Taylor added that a \$5.00 increase was "very wise."

Mr. Taylor asked if there was any other discussion. Since there was none, he called for the surveyor's report.

SURVEYOR'S REPORT

Mr. Lanning reported that increased maintenance money would allow the Office to do more than clear log jams. Contractors could work on issues that landowners had reported that the Office had not had the funding to address in the past. Addressing these issues would not only make landowners happy but would also decrease some of the issues the Office had surrounding Cedar Creek.

Mr. Taylor reported experiences with several Allen County boards having a vested interest in Cedar Creek. He described studies conducted by special interest groups concerning agricultural and environmental changes over time and how those outside of DeKalb County impact how the Surveyor's Office maintains Cedar Creek. He concluded his remarks, though he did not always agree with people in surrounding communities, staying informed and communicating with them was good practice. He felt that increasing the Cedar Creek Assessment rate would benefit all parties.

He asked if there was more discussion, but since there was none, Mr. Taylor adjourned the meeting at 9:34 am.

Denny Taylor, Chairman

Rebecca Wright, Secretary

CEDAR CREEK DRAINAGE BOARD

NO.	NAME	PHONE (HOME)	PHONE (CELL)	EMAIL ADDRESS	MAILING ADDRESS	PETITION OF INTEREST
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DATE
2/013/2025