

GRANT COUNTY DRAINAGE BOARD

401 South Adams Street
Marion, Indiana 46953

The Grant County Drainage Board meeting was held November 28, 2023 in the Grant County Council Chambers. Vice-Chairman Gordon Gough called the meeting to order at 11:00 am. Other members present were Richard Cox, Pat Pinkerton, Kenny Cates, and Grant County Surveyor Jim Todd and Drainage Board secretary Mary Weesner. Chairman Mark Bardsley was not present at onset of meeting but will be joining soon.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Richard Cox made a motion to approve the November 14, 2023 minutes as presented, seconded by Pat Pinkerton. Motion carried 4-0.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS:

Jim Todd read the claims as follows;

John's Repair Service \$1,578.00 Solms Ditch; \$1,480.67 in the fund
John's Repair Service \$1,768.50 Sims Franklin; \$19,862.86 in the fund

Pat Pinkerton made a motion to approve the above claims as presented; Seconded by Richard Cox. Motion carried 4-0.

*Chairman Mark Bardsley is now present.

OLD BUSINESS:

Little Crane Pond

There is nothing new to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS:

Middle Fork – Discuss public hearing per Burl Worl

Polly Walk – Discuss public hearing per Burl Worl

Waters Ditch – Discuss public hearing per Burl Worl

Jim Todd stated that we have received petitions on the above three drains for \$10.00 per acre. He added that he has talked to Angi from Madison County and he needs to call the Surveyor and see what he wants to do about the Middle Fork; see if he would want to form a joint board or waive their rights. Angi informed Jim that they have already done their own thing up to the county line and her suggestion was for us to put Grant County's Polly Walk on maintenance, collect maintenance and work on Grant County's and not to request a joint board. The Waters Ditch is all in Grant County and we can move forward and hold a hearing in time to collect Spring 2024. Mary Weesner stated that the January 9, 2023 meeting would be the latest possible date for a public hearing in order for it to collect with the Spring 2024 collection. She went on to explain to the Board that would need to vote on and set at today's meeting in order for the notices to reach landowners in order to be compliant with the Indiana Drainage Code. Jim Todd added that it has been discussed before that the Middle Fork should be its own assessment roll and that Waters and Polly Walk would pay into the Middle Fork and the Polly Walk and Waters would also have their own assessment roll as well. Gordon Gough verified that Middle Fork is the main trunk; Jim said that is correct. A color coded water shed map has been distributed to the Board for review (a copy is attached to these minutes in the Drainage Board office).

*Mark Bardsley is now present.

Burl Worl is approaching they Board. Mr. Worl stated that he is the one who collected the signatures on the petitions and he also stated that he has brought some landowners today. Gordon Gough asked Mr. Worl if the landowners are wishing to have all three as one watershed, or are they are wanting them separated. Mr. Worl responded that he mentioned it as one when he went around getting signatures on the petition; but feels it may not matter if

they are separated. Jim Todd stated that regarding the Polly Walk, if they decide to hold a hearing, just with Grant County's part. The Waters Ditch is all in Grant County. Jim added that we can go ahead and have a hearing on the Waters and the Polly Walk by January 9, 2024 and then we can get those assessed for next year. He said that the Middle Fork will just depend on if they would waive their rights. Mark Bardsley asked the landowners if anyone would like to speak regarding this. Steve Comer approached the Board stating that he would like to see this move forward and get on the tax roll. He added that if that means keeping it all together, then keep it all together. He really doesn't want to drag this out another year, he would like to start collecting on the Middle Fork. Jim Todd stated that if we would hear from Madison County, then we can hold these hearings on January 9th. Kenny Cates asked what rate they are seeking; Jim responded that they would like \$10.00 per acre and \$50.00 per homesite. He added that this would not be enough money to do everything, but it would be a start. Gordon Gough stated that he has seen Middle Fork and it would be quite the undertaking to get it done. Steve Richey is present before the Board. He said that between himself and his parents, he has close to 800 acres that drain into the Waters Ditch. Mr. Richey stated that they actually removed the brush from both sides for about a mile and a half on the Waters Ditch, adding that he keeps it brushed. He said that his is in for the dipping, but now sure about someone that hasn't cleared their brush, but he's cleared his; there are several landowners that worked together on the brushing. Jim Todd informed Mr. Richey that it is very difficult to have a variable assessment roll. Gordon Gough asked Mr. Richey if he wants to concentrate on Middle Fork or get it all done; Mr. Richey stated that he wants to get it all done. Raymond Bair stated that per the map he has made, in his opinion, the other three ditches all can pay for that front section. The dark orange section would pay for Polly Walk, the green section would pay for Waters Ditch and the light orange section would pay for the light orange section, but all three of them would pay for the striped area on the map (attached to these minutes in the Drainage Board office). He added that the striped area could pay 50¢ per acre on the main trunk for Middle Fork. Mr. Richey asked Raymond what he thought this project may cost; Raymond responded maybe \$10.00 per foot to brush. Richard Cox asked Raymond if the part down stream would have a separate rate; Raymond nodded yes. Jim Todd stated that it gets

complicated. If you assess everyone on the Middle Fork, you will have one big collection on Middle Fork. But then you have the Polly Walk and the Waters, then they are going to be taxed twice; their drain Middle Fork. Richard Cox added then Middle Fork will be taxed twice too. Kenny Cates told Steve Richey that if he got \$10.00 per acre for clearing this, for 13 miles, that would be \$650,000.00 and the \$70,000.00 they are considering annually would not even get them started and it would take up to ten years to collect the total amount needed. Burr Worl stated that they would chip away at year by year and not tackle it all at once. Kenny Cates recommended maybe \$20.00 per acre. Jim Todd stated that if the drain is not collecting enough at the rate they would like, they can always hold another hearing at another time. Mr. Worl stated that all the people that he has talked to agreed on the \$10.00 per acre. Mark Bardsley suggested that we advertise three different ditches at \$10.00 per acre, \$50.00 per homesite with a minimum of \$25.00 for a four year collection. We would put \$1.00 on the lower end where they all come together, and we move forward advertising pending the agreement with Madison County and cut it off at Howard County so that Howard County is not involved. Kenny Cates suggested \$30.00 per acre because you can always come down, but you cannot go up. Jim Todd said that he would not advertise for \$30.00, they would never go with that. He added that \$10.00 would at least get them started, Gordon Gough disagrees, adding that \$10.00 will barely get them out of the starting gate. Mr. Worl stated that when he took the petition around, he told them \$10.00 per acre and they were for that rate, he is not sure about \$30.00. Richard Cox stated that he feels that \$30.00 may be too high while Gordon Gough said that this is a large project and \$10.00 per acre will not get it done; Richard said that you have to start some place, this would be a start. Jim Todd stated that he will get ahold of Madison County regarding waiving their rights. Gordon Gough said that this is something that should have been started a long time ago and we cannot rush to do something and then not do it right. Mark Bardsley asked the Board if they want to advertise the rate and all of this is pending the waiving of Madison County and if they do not waive their rights by the time of the public hearing, then the public hearing would be null and void. Richard Cox clarified that the Waters and the Polly Walk could still proceed, just not the Middle Fork, Jim Todd agreed. Mr. Richey said to throw \$30.00 out there and see what happens.

Kenny Cates asked Mr. Worl about ditch spraying; Mr. Worl responded that they can always change the maintenance afterward to maintain the watershed and keep it sprayed.

Richard Cox made a motion to advertise for the public hearings to be held on January 9, 2024 as follows:

Waters Open Ditch would be advertised as \$10.00 per acre, \$50.00 per homesite with a minimum of \$25.00 for a four year collection. Polly Walk Ditch would be advertised as \$10.00 per acre, \$50.00 per homesite with a minimum of \$25.00 for a four year collection. Middle Fork on the upper end would be \$30.00 per acre, \$50.00 per homesite with a minimum of \$25.00 for a four year collection. Middle Fork on the lower end would be \$5.00 per acre, \$50.00 per homesite with a minimum of \$25.00 for a four year collection.

Motion was seconded by Pat Pinkerton, carrying 5-0.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Solar Ordinance

Kenny Cates informed the Board that he had just received a call from APEX, two of the men would like to attend the January 9, 2024 meeting regarding solar. Mark Bardsley asked Kenny to have them give Mark a call because we already have four public hearings on that date which makes a full agenda already.

2024 Meeting Dates – Board approval needed

Mary Weesner presented the proposed schedule of Drainage Board meeting dates for 2024. Pat Pinkerton made a motion to approve the 2024 meeting dates as presented; seconded by Gordon Gough. Motion carried 5-0.

Mark Bardsley asked Mary Weesner if any of the Board member terms were ending this year, Mary informed Mark that Kenny Cates is the only member with his term ending. Mark Bardsley will make a recommendation to the Commissioners to approve the appointment of Kenny Cate to maintain his position on the Drainage Board.

Grant Howard Drain–Request for waiver of rights to Howard County

Jim Todd informed the Board that he has received a request from the Howard County Surveyor, Greg Lake. Jim reviewed a map of the Grant Howard Drain where it enters Grant County. He stated that Howard County has 10,300 feet and we have 6,000 feet; we have 1,016 acres and they have 915 acres. A copy of the letter has been given to Board and a copy is attached to these minutes in the Drainage Board office. Greg Lake told Jim that they are wanting to have a hearing yet this year for \$11.00 per acre on Grant County's part. Kenny Cates stated that the part that is on the Grant County side is bad. Pat Pinkerton asked Jim if the landowners will be paying two assessments, Jim Todd stated that they will be paying on the tile and the open ditch, so yes, two assessments. After a brief discussion, Gordon Gough made a motion to waive our rights on Grant County's part of the Grant Howard Drain. Seconded by Kenny Cates; motion carried 5-0.

ADJOURN:

Kenny Cates made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:06 pm; seconded by Richard Cox. Motion carried, with support, 5-0.

The next scheduled Drainage Board meeting to be held will be December 12, 2023 at 11:00 am and will be held in the Grant County Council Chambers.

Minutes recorded by:
Mary R. Weesner
Drainage Board Secretary

The Grant County Drainage Board has approved the minutes for November 28, 2023 as presented:

Mark Bardsley

Gordon Gough

Richard Cox

Kenny Cates

Pat Pinkerton