

DRAINAGE BOARD MINUTES

July 14, 2025

DAVID LAWSON PRESENT
NATHAN RUNNEBOHM PRESENT
JASON ABEL ABSENT
JEFF POWELL PRESENT

Please note: The meeting minutes below were drafted with the assistance of an AI tool.

Motion to approve minutes from 6/23/25 made by Nathan Runnebohm, 2nd David Lawson, approved 2/0.

Ditch Spraying: Jeff Powell, County Surveyor, reports that the ditch spraying is officially completed. He will present an official report at a future meeting and hopes to get the spraying completed earlier next year. Nathan Runnebohm would like to know which spraying was not completed. Mr. Powell states anywhere that access would have caused crop damage to access the drain, he directed them (Dalton Group) to not complete. He states that drain access is a common problem. Mr. Runnebohm also asks about the possibility of drone spraying. David Lawson explains some about drone spraying and that it is a relatively new procedure that is still in the learning phases. The possibility of using a drone in the future is discussed. Jeff Powell has a couple areas on the Hills Branch that need attention scheduled for this fall but could not be accessed at this time.

Woodruff Ditch: Jeff Powell has a request for his client, Chris Southworth, who needs to install a perimeter drain that would channel into the Woodruff Ditch. Mr. Southworth is installing a mound system and in order to get drainage his best route would be a 6" subsurface drain tile routing into the Woodruff ditch. David Lawson motions to allow Chris Southworth to outlet a 6" tile into the Woodruff drain, if necessary, 2nd Nathan Runnebohm, approved 2/0.

Meiks Tile: Jeff Powell states he has been on site to 1418 Maple Dr. where there has been standing water, which he believes to be from a sump pump near the regulated tile. The contractor who installed the Meik's Tile, James Ramsey, is present today. Mr. Powell states there is no knowledge of any drain being missed and suggests notifying the property owner and feels this could be easily resolved by installing a tile that ties into the existing structure. David Lawson suggests digging the area up to investigate: if it is something that was missed in the original construction then it should be fixed on the County's dollar, if it is anything other than that the property owner should be responsible for taking care of it. Contractor, James Ramsey, states at the time they did construction the old tile was collapsed and full of dirt so if it was there then it wasn't working at that time, he also points out the structure Jeff Powell referred to is on the neighbor's property. Jeff Powell states there are monies available in the account. David Lawson moves to approve the inspection of this issue and if it is determined to be something that was missed in the original construction the County will stand the cost to remedy it, if not, it will be solely the landowner's responsibility, 2nd Nathan Runnebohm, approved 2/0. The board also discusses water being held under a culvert on E. Maple Dr. due to the structure being too high. Mr. Powell feels there are 2 options: cut the structure down or go in and dig down a little on the side of the structure to core a hole into it and then install rip rap allowing it to surface flow over to that point, he feels coring the hole would be the easiest. Mr. Lawson feels either fix would be sufficient and advises Mr. Powell to look into the 2 options and come back to present the Drainage Board which he would like to go with to obtain a vote.

Swamp Creek/ Brandywine Lakes: Jeff Powell states he has received a couple of calls regarding concerns of a particular culvert pipe on Lake Dr.; he presents the Drainage Board with a map. He states that the culvert pipe was installed by the landowner, Cheryl Seibert. Ms. Seibert stated to Mr. Powell that she had contacted previous County Surveyor, Taylor Sumerford around 2023, and was given permission to install the pipe. She advised Mr. Powell she installed a larger pipe than she was directed to and that it was not regulated a drain. However, Mr. Powell states it is in fact a regulated drain, he shows some photos that show an obvious restriction. He states it is creating an erosion problem downstream and a blockage upstream. The Swamp Creek drain is not actively on maintenance. Mr. Lawson would like to know what prompted Ms. Seibert to install the tile, but Mr. Powell is unsure. Ms. Seibert feels the County should have to pay to upsize the pipe or correct the issue, however Mr. Powell advises that it would not be possible as there are no available funds for that drain and there are uncertainties about the discussion of the installation. One possible suggestion is to create a depression on one side to allow the surface water to come across but that would not fix all the issues. Mr. Powell believes the pipe is approximately 42"x 50' and has been covered with dirt, the back up of water is 4-5' deep. There is discussion of the process and importance of the property owners obtaining permits or permission from the Drainage Board to tie into legal county drains or working within the County's right of way. Mr. Powell will follow up on this location at a later date.

Smithland Tile: Contractor, James Ramsey, is present and will be making the necessary repairs for the obstruction in the Smithland Tile. Mr. Powell would like to see if he can get approval from the Drainage Board to be done at the same time allowing a property owner to tie in by installing a riser with some accessible Ts that would be at the landowner's expense with the work to be performed by James Ramsey. David Lawson moved to approve the landowner to install the breather pipe with T for future access to the drain, 2nd Nathan Runnebohm, approved 2/0.

Hankins Ditch: Jeff Powell reports the initial clearing on the west side of Kroger Storage building has been completed. His goal is to dispose of the brush once everything is dry, this fall.

David Lawson would like to clarify the definition of a county drain: it is not owned by the County; it is formed by the people that use and own the land around it and drain it into it. The County has set up a maintenance fund for these people which is assessed on their property taxes. Then when repairs are needed the fund is used specifically for that ditch, it is not shared between ditches. He feels every county drain should be on assessment long enough to establish some kind of balance in each so they are never without funds when a problem arises and would like to see this happen going forward. Mr. Lawson also notes that an established county drain also gives the County access to maintain a drain.

Solar Farm: Danny Norris, project manager or DESRI/ Speedway Solar, states Jeff Powell has been very helpful in identifying both non-participating and participating landowners who have had issues with drainage. Mr. Norris states he has met with the majority of the landowners and believes they have a proposed solution to be completed by their drainage contractor or a 3rd party contractor if necessary. Mr. Norris states DESRI will still own the project and Speedway Solar will still be around and they are committed to fixing any issues that come up, for example, next spring, when water is more prevalent, even for non-participating landowners. They are planning to file a variance with the BZA regarding trees being installed over drainage tiles and are in the process of getting the proper sign offs from landowners. David Lawson brings up that Mr. Norris has offered to plant any extra trees they have from the project in other areas of the county, Mr. Norris confirms this. Mr. Norris states he shared some photos of the Carmony Drain tile where they made connections and as-built drawings with the Drainage Board. He also states there were some landowners with crop damage due to drainage issues which they are making whole for 2025 and plan to fix all the drainage issues going forward for 2026. There is discussion of the plan for remedying the drainage issues and when the drainage contractor will be in the area. Mr. Powell notes a landowner, Debbie Seaton, who has had to have her septic tank pumped recently due to what he believes is a drainage issue that didn't exist before the solar farm construction. Mr. Norris states they are aware of the drainage issues with Ms. Seaton's property but do not have the solution completed for that property at this time. David Lawson expresses the urgency of getting the Seaton property's drainage remedied in as soon as possible since it is affecting the septic. Mr. Powell appreciates the fact that DESRI is acknowledging that some of the drainage concerns will not surface immediately and he would highly encourage them to continue the cooperative relationship with non-participating landowners since they do not have a written contract as the participating landowners do. Mr. Norris notes that there will always be a contact for the Speedway Solar project withing DESRI that can be reached for any issues that present themselves. Mr. Powell would like to know about the ongoing maintenance plan for the plant, Mr. Norris discusses different responsibilities that will be handled on a regular basis. Mr. Norris states for safety reasons, no one should be entering the array while energized but should drainage issues arise, the Drainage Board would have the opportunity to walk the property while being escorted by a representative of the project to identify and remedy drainage issues. Nathan Runnebohm requests Mr. Norris return to the Drainage Board meetings with updates for transparency and public information, Mr. Norris is amenable. Mike Gosnell is in the audience and expresses some concern regarding his driveways on his property. Mr. Norris is going to speak with him about his after the meeting. Mr. Norris states there is no deadline to report problems. James Ramsey requests to continue the conversation with the Drainage Board and Mr. Norris regarding the possibility of making the perimeter drains regulated. Mr. Norris notes the project is indifferent to whether or not the property owners are in favor of making the drains regulated as it would not affect the project.

Adjourn.