

March 16, 2026

The Wabash County Drainage Board convened at 10:00 a.m. for a regularly scheduled meeting. Board Chairman Jeff Dawes; Board Members Tyler Niccum and Cheryl Ross were in attendance and a quorum was present for the meeting. Others in attendance included: Surveyor, Cheri Slee; Assistant Surveyor, Braden See; Highway Superintendent Ryan Smith and Deputy Surveyor Tonya Blair.

Drainage Board Minutes

Chairman Jeff Dawes initiated the review of the minutes from the March 2, 2026 Drainage Board meeting. Mr. Niccum moved to approve the minutes as written, and Mrs. Ross seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with a 3-0 Board vote.

Homer Miller Drain – Informal Meeting

It was stated by the Surveyor that Tony Krom had brought several tile issues along the Homer Miller County Regulated Drain to our attention. Although it's a county regulated drain, there is no maintenance collected on it so therefore, there has not been any repairs or upkeep with the drain through the office. It was determined that this informational meeting would be essential to determine if the drain needed maintenance or reconstruction and to hear landowner's concerns. Maps and records of the existing tile system were presented for landowners and Drainage Board Members to review. Prior records show that in 1963 landowners installed a 24" concrete auxiliary tile parallel to the existing 18" (?) main through the NRCS. Max Meyer noted that the NRCS private line installed across his property, begins as a 24" at the outlet, but downsizes as it goes east to the Y. It is concrete and has been trouble free. Mr. Krom described the drain across his property as in need of repair. It was discussed starting at the Y and going east replacing the existing 12" with 18" for approximately 1200 feet on the Krom property. There was discussion on various tile sizes, noting the discrepancies between the recorded size and actual tiles sizes.

Tony Krom stated that Max Meyer and his dad several years ago installed an 8" tile to help solve their water problems. Mr. Meyer questioned if he could be removed from the watershed or compensated in some way since the private tile takes care of his drainage. It was stated that they installed an 8" single wall tile parallel to and approximately 40' to 60' away from and on the south side of the NRCS tile. The 8" runs from CR 500 N to its outlet into the Ezra Hauptert Open Drain. Mr. Meyer noted that he had installed on his property a private 6" tile on the north side and parallel to the 18" Miller Main, and they tried to keep the depth for both private drains just above the existing mains.

Hunter Krom stated that the tile on the lower end on his property is working properly. Landowners expressed that they were not aware this was a county regulated drain until recently. Mr. Niccum suggested replacing the existing Y with a manhole better access to the tile. Tony Krom stated that there wasn't a lot of input from other landowners regarding the tile issues. The landowners present today were not in favor of vacating the drain.

Max Meyer expressed concerns about how much in taxes (drainage assessments) he would be paying for this project. Maintenance versus reconstruction was discussed along with establishing an annual maintenance fund. Once a project is determined, all project costs are calculated and a hearing will be scheduled for all landowners within the watershed. John Myers requested that virgin tile be used for the project and was agree upon by landowners that were present. Exploratory digging was discussed and funding for exploratory digging need to be determined. Drainage Board members and landowners were in agreement that the Drain remain a county regulated drain and to pursue maintenance / reconstruction of the drain.

Present: Tony Krom; John Myers; Max Meyer and Hunter Krom

Henry Keaffaber Drain

Reconstruction certification

The Surveyor told Board Members she completed the reconstruction certification assessments for the Henry Keaffaber Drain. Rate per acre was finalized at \$458.84 / \$200.00 minimum. She noted that after calculations, Herb Ringel will be refunded approximately \$500.00. Board Members reviewed the paperwork and signed the reconstruction certification for the Henry Keaffaber Drain.

Miscellaneous Drainage business

Mike Benson – private drainage issue

Ryan Smith, Highway Superintendent, stated that Mike Benson has some concerns with a culvert that might be causing a drainage problem on his property. After discussion, it was agreed that most likely this was a private drainage issue and asked Mr. Smith investigate the culvert to verify that conclusion.

Building Permits

The Drainage Board agreed at the January 17, 2023 meeting to allow the county surveyor approval to allow for minor impact construction permits meeting the requirements established. The varied requests were for the following: Double J Dairy, 85-19-08-400-027.000-005, commodity building; Mr. Niccum motioned to approve the building permits as presented. Mrs. Ross second. Roll call vote, motion carried 3-0.

Claims

The Board reviewed drainage invoices: Maintenance: Garber Bechtold #558, \$36,309.00 to Bolinger Agricultural Drainage; John Gilbert #559, \$2500.00 and Staver Eckman #641A, \$8,372.50 to Troy Eads Excavating; Reconstruction; Henry Keaffaber (retainage due), \$13,345.81 to Smith's Excavating; Mr. Niccum motioned to accept the claims as presented. Mrs. Ross seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

There being no further business Mr. Niccum made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Ross seconded the motion. Roll call vote, motion carried 3-0.

Jeff Dawes, Chairman

Cheryl Ross, Vice-Chairman

Tyler Niccum, Member