

October 20, 2025

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

Correction of Minutes

Jeff Dawes initiated review of the minutes from the October 6, 2025 meeting, Tyler Niccum was not in attendance.

Drainage Board Minutes

Chairman Tyler Niccum initiated the review of the minutes from the October 6, 2025 Drainage Board meeting. Mr. Dawes moved to approve the minutes as written, and Mrs. Ross seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 2-0 Board vote.

Staver Eckman Drain #641A Drain Relocation Project

The Surveyor reported that both appraisals for the approximate ½ acre land acquisition from the Dale-Niccum Farms have been received and she presented them to the Board as listed below.

Metz - \$6500.00

Lundquist Appraisals - \$6000.00

She has discussed the Metz appraisal (the only appraisal received at that time) with Dave Dale and he felt like the \$6500.00 was too low for the land sales in the area. It needs to be taken into consideration that that the land will be used for ROW, and the County is not purchasing it but utilizing it for drainage benefits. After review of the appraisals, Board Members agreed that \$6500.00 was a fair amount for the approximate ½ acre. Mrs. Ross motioned to approve the payment of \$6500.00 to Dale/Niccum Land Partnership for land acquisition on the Staver Eckman Drain Relocation Project. Mr. Dawes second. Motion passed 3-0. Mrs. Slee questioned if the land acquisition payment for the easement should be taken out of EDIT since all invoices for the project have been taken out of this fund. Board members agreed to take the land acquisition payment out of EDIT.

We have also received the performance bond from Ingram Excavating and both the contract and Notice to Proceed have been signed. Kirk Ingram stopped in the office last week and stated that he did not think the pipe through the road needed replaced. It looked as though it was newer and he would like to connect at the end of it and extend it out into the new drain. Pictures were presented showing the condition of the pipe. Board Members agreed that the pipe looked like it was in good condition and was not in need of replacement. Mr. Smith said he would check records to see when the pipe was installed. Mrs. Slee stated that a change order and deduct would be required with the change to the project and she would contact the engineer concerning the change.

Henry Keaffaber Drain # 584 Reconstruction

The Surveyor informed Board Members that the bid bond for the project and contract documents were received. The contract documents and the Notice to proceed will be dated with today's date. Mrs. Ross motioned to sign the contract with Smith's Excavating for the Henry Keaffaber Drain reconstruction. Mr. Dawes second, motion passed 3-0. Board members proceeded to sign the contract.

Taylor Smith would like to start the State highway portion of the project first as long as weather permitting and asphalt is available. The representative from INDOT stated that claims from the county should be sent once the work has been done for the State portion of the project and they would be paid once they were received. Board members agreed that upfront costs will be taken out of EDIT funds for the INDOT portion and to make sure the Auditor was aware of their decision.

William Talbert Drain

Mrs. Slee explained that Gary Kratzer was concerned with a neighboring property (next to farm ground) in connection with the location of a county regulated drain. After inspection, it was found there are dirt bike ramps and trees that have grown along the ditch that could cause drainage issues. Mr. See inspected the site and presented pictures for Board Members to review. Mrs. Slee said that the tree growth is a concern and it will be hard to get the area mowed with the dirt structures that have been constructed. After discussion, Mr. Niccum said he would contact the property owners to ask them to come to the next drainage board meeting to address the issue.

Spray quotes 2026

The Surveyor stated that the office is getting ready to get quotes for the 2025 ditch spray. We received a letter from Dalton's which stated that they would continue to honor 2025 pricing. They have not increased their prices for three years and this would be the fourth year for the same pricing. To get this pricing, Dalton's has requested that we sign the contract for 2026 spray by December before quotes will be taken in January. It was questioned if it was required to take quotes after 3 years as this would be the fourth year without taking bids. Board Members suggested contacting the County Attorney for verification on taking quotes.

North Ridge Estates

Mrs. Slee updated Members that she had spoke with Mr. Frantz (County Attorney) and he confirmed that the Town of North Manchester should be responsible for any drainage issues regarding North Ridge Estates. The Drainage Board had reviewed the drainage plans for the Town as a courtesy and the final drainage plans (approved by Banning Engineering) were presented to the Town. Since the Town of Manchester gives final acceptance of sub-division plat, it would be their obligation to address any issues, including drainage issues from the residents of North Ridge Estates. Mr. Frantz said he would contact Matt Mize, the town's attorney, and Adam Penrod, town manager, to discuss the situation and have not heard back from him at this point.

John Farr Drain

The Surveyor received a request from Duke Energy requesting permission to replace utility poles along the John Farr Drain easement. The poles are 25 feet from the center of the ditch and her only concern to was that no equipment or activity be directly on the ditch which will be noted in the encroachment permit. After discussion, Mr. Dawes motioned to approve the ROW encroachment permit for Duke Energy. Mrs. Ross second. Motion passed 3-0.

Miscellaneous Drainage business

Ordinances and Policies

Mrs. Slee said she has been reviewing policies, ordinances and resolutions from other counties and have found one for authorizing reconstruction of a regulated drain that we could use as a guideline for future reference. There are a lot of issues regarding the ditch ROW's coming into the office and we need policies and permits in place to address them. Mr. Niccum told her to gather the information on permits, have the county attorney review them and then the Drainage Board will review for approval.

Lexis & Aaron Frahm – Pond

Information provided by the Plan Commission for a pond permit for Lexis & Aaron Frahm (85-10-01-300-013.000-010, PT N1/2 E1/2 SW1/4, 1-28-6) was brought before the Board for their consideration.

The Surveyor stated that the Plan Commission has given a favorable recommendation for this pond and will be presented at next week's BZA meeting. We did not present this to the Drainage Board last month because the plans we received were inadequate concerning the pond outlet and we were waiting for more information. The contractor was contacted today and said he had not been to the site and has no plans for the pond at this point. Board Members agreed to table until plans for the pond have been received and reviewed from the contractor.

Adam & Rachel Hovermale – Pond

Information presented by the Plan Commission for a pond permit for Adam & Rachel Hovermale (85-15-27-300-008.000-003, PT SW ¼, 27-27-7, 2.62 ac) was brought before the Board for their consideration.

Mrs. Slee explained that this property is next to the field that Bowman's system drained and they stated that they were to install tile around the Hovermale property to ensure they pick up all the private tile for proper drainage. According to the landowner, there is a 5 inch tile which runs north east of the property but it's unsure Bowman's have installed the perimeter tile at this time. Mr. Niccum suggested contacting the Bowman's and the contractor to make sure they are aware of the situation. After discussion, Mr. Dawes motioned for favorable recommendation for Adam & Rachel Hovermale pond pending discussion with Bowman's concerning the connection of Hovermale's private tile. Mrs. Ross second. Motion carried 3-0.

Building Permits

Building permits meeting the requirements established by the County Drainage Board at the January 17, 2023 meeting to allow the County Surveyor's approval for minor impact construction were presented to the Board for their acknowledgement. The varied requests were for the following; Dargo LLC, 85-14-33-200-005.000-007, new LP Tank; Nick Adams, 85-07-21-200-007.000-001, garage lean to; Anthony & Hannah Heagy, 85-06-10-200-026.000-012, home addition; Tabitha Welch, 85-14-53-200-010.000-007, shed; Timothy Eviston, 85-15-25-100-002.000-003, pole barn; Charles & Sharon Adock, 85-15-13-200-013.000-003, detached garage; Joe & Madison Frieden, 85-14-05-400-037.000-007, new home; Keith & Cindy Bailey, 85-07-33-100-003.000-001, barn; Harold Cripe, 85-18-27-401-006.000-013, shipping container; Town of Roann, 85-09-01-101-172.000-011, 2 pavillions; Danny & Danielle Bickerstaff, 85-06-13300-029.000-012, carport; James Kastner, 85-10-06-400-005.000-010, garage; Steve & Jane Rogers, 85-14-33-300-016.000-007, pole barn; Virgil Shultz, 85-12-29-400-018.000-003, shed; Jack Smith, 85-15-16-300-057.000-003, new home; Mrs. Ross motioned to approve the building permits as presented. Mr. Dawes second. Roll call vote, motion carried 3-0.

(Claims)

The Board reviewed drainage maintenance invoices: Reconstruction: Ray Figert #552, \$4327.50 & \$1780.00 to Banning Engineering; Henry Keaffaber #584, \$288.75 & \$762.50 to Banning Engineering; EDIT funds: Staver Eckman #641A, \$400.00 to Lundquist Appraisals.

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

Tyler Niccum, Chairman

Jeff Dawes, Vice-Chairman

Cheryl Ross, Member