

July 20, 2026

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

Drainage Board Minutes

Chairman Jeff Dawes initiated the review of the minutes from the July 7, 2026 Drainage Board meeting. Mrs. Ross moved to approve the minutes as written, and Mr. Niccum seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with a 3-0 Board vote.

Lester Stuber Drain

The Surveyor explained that Evan Bowman (Bowman Farms) have requested to have the Lester Stuber Drain bottom dipped to lowered so they can place 5 additional lateral taps into the open drain. The Surveyor presented a map provided to the office by Mr. Bowman showing their project and location of the taps. She stated that the surveying for the Stuber Drain has not been completed at this time. He is also requesting to have the John Rudicel / J.M. Hoover Regulated / Non Certified Drain cleared and bottom dipped, possibly lowering it for more depth (this drain is the outlet for Lester Stuber Drain). He stated that they would do the work and pay to have it cleared and dipped. She stated that she contacted DNR regarding the permitting process and she was told that since Bowman's are wanting to do the work themselves and also pay for the project, they will have to obtain permitting through the Division of Water as a private citizen. We had planned to bottom dip the Lester Stuber prior to the Bowman's request and questioned if work on the drain should be postponed until it Bowman's project is clarified. Board Members agreed to hold off on dipping the drain until the Bowman's have an approved plan for bottom dipping the drain.

Mr. Niccum joined the meeting per phone call at this point.

Nipsco-encroachment permits Henry Keaffaber Drain / Kentner Creek

Mr. See stated that Nipsco applied for encroachments permits to do some investigative maintenance on gas lines that are located within the ROW (and on filter strips) of the Henry Keaffaber and Kenter Creek regulated drains. This would involve hand digging a 5' x 5' square foot which would be minimally invasive. After review, Mrs. Ross motioned to approve the encroachment permits on the Henry Keaffaber and Kentner Creek Drains allowing them to work within the ROW.

(Abraham) Lukens drain Jason Groninger - encroachment permit extension

The Surveyor presented an encroachment permit that was granted in August 2020 she explained that at that time Jason Groninger requested approval to build a barn within the ROW of an open ditch. The Drainage Board at that time gave him permission to build 35 feet from the waters edge and 25 feet from the top of the bank. Along with the approval was the understanding that the Drainage Board were not reducing the 75 foot ROW, just allowing him to build within it. Any damage to his structure from any work on the ditch, the County would not be liable. Mr. Groninger agreed to this condition and also said he would keep that area of the creek cleaned out. The structure was not built at that time and he is now wanting to erect the structure. The Plan Commission Director would like the Drainage Board to review the original request and approve an extension for the permit. After review, Mr. Niccum motioned to extend the permit with original conditions. Mrs. Ross second. Motion passed 3-0.

Budget 2027 review

Mrs. Slee presented the proposed 2027 budgets and explained the only change from last year's budget was the 3% increase for salaries. After review, Board Members approved the 2027 budgets as presented.

Miscellaneous Drainage business Kevin Bowman – Private drainage issue Obstruction Removal

The Surveyor explained that the U.S. Government and Army Corps have requested that the hearing date of August 3, 2026 be changed to allow their attorneys more time for travel. The dates they suggested are August 5th, 6th, or 7th, 2026. The County Attorney is only available on August 5th. Board Members agreed to tentatively change the date to August 5th, 2026 since Kevin Bowman will need to be notified of the date change.

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; David & Sheena Yeakley, 85-10-07-400-010.000-010, shed; MSD of Wabash Bldg Corp – SES, 85-15-60-300-002.000-007, contractor trailers (5) shipping containers (3); Steven & Deborah Freshour, 85-02-23-200-0030000-012, pavilion; Micheal Banter, 85-07-25-100-010.000-001, garage; MSD of Wabash Bldg Corp – SHS, 85-15-60-300-001.000-007, contractor trailers (7) shipping containers (6) parking lot; Jason & Angela Isley, 85-01-35-403-197.000.012, covered patio/porch; Marsha Baumgartner & Don King, 85-10-28-301-006.000-007, porch; Amos & Barbara Graber; 85-15-01-200-031.000-003, storage shed; Denver Brown, 85-06-10-402-001.000-012, garage; 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 invoices: Reconstruction: John Maiden #600, \$19.23 to Paxton Media Group; Henry Keaffaber #584, \$3,515.66 & JH Elliott #543, \$18,336.46 to Crossroads Bank (loan payments)

Mrs. Ross motioned to accept the claims as presented. Mr. Niccum second. Motion passed 3-0.

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

Jeff Dawes, Chairman

Cheryl Ross, Vice-Chairman

Tyler Niccum, Member