

February 2, 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 present. 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 January 20, 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.

Kevin Bowman- Private Drainage issue

Mrs. Slee presented a copy of the letter that the Bowmans sent to the Natural Resource Specialist from US Army Corps of Engineers asking them to remove the obstruction. Bowmans received a response via e-mail from Andrew Shelton, USACE, which inquires if there is any evidence of the drain being a regulated. They have not found any records verifying that it is a county regulated drain. She stated that she had contacted Mark Frantz (County Attorney) about the issue and he will review the obstruction laws and make a determination after evaluating all of the information. An option for Bowmans could be to file an obstruction removal petition with the Drainage Board. USACE has requested a recorded easement and Bowman's have not found one in their research. The letter implies USACE would like to keep communication open to further discuss this issue. Board Members agreed to wait for a response from the County Attorney before further action. Mrs. Slee said she would forward all the information regarding this situation to Mr. Frantz this week.

Garber Bechtold

The Surveyor reported that Greg Michel, landowner, has concerns on a portion of small branch on the Garber Bechtold drain. The tile is shallow and is not draining well so he has been working with Andy Bolinger on maintaining it and it is now in disrepair and need of replacement. Mr. Bolinger has surveyed the area and has come up with a plan. The current (clay) tile size is 16", and because 16" tile isn't available, it can be sized up to 18" tile. After running the numbers on the acreage and the grade an 18" (smooth core) tile is recommended.

Two proposals were presented from Bolinger Agricultural Drainage; \$36,309.00 (15" dual wall tile) & \$39,782.00 (18" dual wall tile) for the project. Greg Michel has offered to contribute funding to the project to see that it's completed. There is enough in the maintenance fund along funding from fall collections coming in to cover the \$39,782.00 cost of the project. There will be additional costs for (the several) private lateral connections. Approximately 1100 feet of tile will need to be replaced. A reconstruction for the main drain is planned for next year. Mr. Niccum suggested that the County pay for the full cost of the project (\$39,782.00) and Mr. Michel pay for all the private connections. Board Members agreed to this proposal. Mrs. Slee said since the project is planned for next fall, she would contact Mr. Michel and Mr. Bolinger to get more information and report back to the Board.

Jerome Metzger

A corrected transfer of funds was presented to Board Members in the amount of \$5014.08 which was transferred from the Jerome Metzger Reconstruction fund to the Maintenance fund. Mr. Niccum motioned to accept the transfer of \$5014.08 from the Jerome Metzger Reconstruction to the Jerome Metzger Maintenance fund. Mrs. Ross second. Roll call vote, motion passed 3-0.

Roy Wertenberger

A claim of \$3,392.36 was presented for transfer of funds from the Roy Wertenberger Reconstruction to the Roy Wertenberger Maintenance. Indiana code allows for the transfer of funds from a reconstruction to maintenance if it has been dormant for two years and the last claim on the reconstruction fund was filed in 2017. Mr. Niccum motioned to transfer \$3,392.36 from the Roy Wertenberger reconstruction to the Roy Wertenberger maintenance fund. Mrs. Ross. Roll call vote motion passed 3-0.

Miscellaneous Drainage business

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: Troy Shidler & Amy Pennington, 85-11-12-200-004.000-003, shed; Proactive Reality Fund II, LLC, 85-19-22-300-008.000-005, manufactured home; 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: Ephriam Drudge #538, Hunter Hauling and Excavating for \$2,800.00. 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

