

EAST CHICAGO WATERWAY MANAGEMENT
DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING
CITY OF EAST CHICAGO, ENGINEERING/ANNEX BUILDING
4444 RAILROAD AVENUE
EAST CHICAGO, INDIANA
May 21, 2026
THURSDAY 5:00 P.M.

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS had in the
above-entitled matter on the 21st day of May, 2026 at
5:00 p.m. held at the City of East Chicago
Engineering/Annex Building, 4444 Railroad Avenue, East
Chicago, Indiana.

A P P E A R A N C E

MR. JOHN FEKETE, PRESIDENT

MR. JOHN BAKOTA, BOARD MEMBER

MR. HENRY RODRIGUEZ, BOARD MEMBER

MR. RAY LOPEZ, BOARD MEMBER

MR. JAYLAN ROBINSON, VICE PRESIDENT

MR. KEVIN GUADALUPE, BOARD MEMBER

MR. FERNANDO TREVINO, FMT CONSULTING

MS. ELLEN GREGORY, ELLEN GREGORY LAW

ALSO PRESENT:

MS. MONICA JOHNSON, CLA

MR. ROBERT SANTORI, BMO HARRIS BANK

MR. VAUGHAN COOLMAN, ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

MS. ELLEN GREGORY, COUNSEL

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MR. ROBINSON: All right. I would like to
3 call over East Chicago Waterway Management District
4 Board of Directors. Public. Regular Public board
5 meeting. Today's date is May 21, 2026 and it is 5:05
6 p.m. First, we will have a roll call. John Fekete?

7 MR. FEKETE: Here.

8 MR. ROBINSON: Ray Lopez?

9 MR. LOPEZ: Here.

10 MR. ROBINSON: Henry Rodriguez?

11 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Here.

12 MR. ROBINSON: John Bakota?

13 MR. BAKOTA: Here.

14 MR. ROBINSON: Kevin Guadalupe?

15 MR. GUADALUPE: Here.

16 MR. ROBINSON: Jaylan Robinson. I am here.

17 Next, we have the Executive Director's report.
18 Mr. Trevino?

19 MR. TREVINO: Yes. Fernando Trevino with FMT
20 Consulting. First, I wanted to mention in the interest
21 of transparency, I wanted to inform the Board that last
22 month the City of East Chicago approached FMT Consulting
23 Incorporated, which is my company, regarding the
24 potential for FMT to provide the city consulting
25 services on a grant application in partnership with

1 Ozinga Slag LLC. The project involves the construction
2 of a seawall along Ozinga's waterway frontage. Prior to
3 moving forward, I reviewed the opportunity with Board
4 member, or I'm sorry, Board Attorney, Ellen Gregory, and
5 Board President, John Fekete, to confirm there were no
6 concerns or conflict of interest and both indicated that
7 they had no concerns. Based on that guidance, FMT
8 Consultant Inc. has since entered into an agreement with
9 the City to provide grant and project support related to
10 this project. And Attorney, Ellen Gregory, included a
11 similar no conflict of interest statement in her Board
12 Report. If there are any questions on that, I'd be
13 happy to address them.

14 A couple days ago the District received a
15 check for 23,527.50 from West Shore Pipeline Company.
16 My initial review of the check is that it's for the
17 payment of a lease agreement that the District entered
18 into with West Shore Pipeline. However, that property
19 was transferred to Atlantic Richfield in our settlement
20 agreement with Atlantic Richfield. So I will continue
21 to look into it and report back at our June board
22 meeting on this check we received.

23 Regarding action items on today's agenda. We
24 have the two route, the routine ones, the Claim Docket
25 and Board Minutes for April 7th and April 16th. And we

1 have five additional action items. We have the Letter
2 of Authorization to transfer 160,000 to our operating
3 budget and the Board already approved that budget
4 amendment. This is the letter that authorizes the
5 transfer of that approved amount.

6 We have approval consideration of the section
7 402 permit for 404 permit construction and the floodway
8 permit and the TSCA work plan. And those four items are
9 affiliated with the Grand Cal River Junction Reaches
10 Remediation Project.

11 Tetra Tech Project Manager, Carol Neeson, will
12 present a summary of each permit and TSCA Work Plan when
13 we get to it on the agenda. And we also have a
14 presentation from Jessica Fernandez from the Nature
15 Conservancy to give a brief summary of their
16 organization, what they do and the recent survey of the
17 Roxanna Marsh in East Chicago.

18 Regarding the District's finances, as I
19 mentioned, the Board approved a budget amendment at the
20 April 7th board meeting and today's Letter of
21 Authorization approved the transfer of the budget
22 amendment funds to our operating power.

23 Last month there was an unexpected charge of
24 \$408.94 on one of our First Merchants statements, the
25 March statement, which has since been refunded. So I

1 want to thank Vanessa Vargas of CLA for bringing this
2 odd charge to my attention. I'd like to thank First
3 Merchants for refunding the fee.

4 Regarding User Fees, nothing new to report on
5 our 2025 User Fees. As previously mentioned, all
6 assessments have been paid. So we're at 100% collected.

7 Regarding the Great Lakes Legacy Act Projects,
8 the South Tank farm sheet pile wall project, the Barrier
9 Wall, Groundwater Management System for that wall is
10 ongoing. ARBP has reported that design is at 60%.

11 Regarding the Lake George Canal east section,
12 the Corps managing that portion of the project. Work on
13 Phase II of the Lake George Canal east dredging design
14 is ongoing. The project team recently reviewed the 90%
15 design. As part of that 90% design review, I submitted
16 comments on behalf of the District. The Phase II of the
17 Lake George Canal east dredging is scheduled to be bid
18 and awarded this year. However, the schedule of the
19 contractor's dredging work will be dependent on
20 contractor schedule, but most likely will -- the work
21 will be done in 2027.

22 As previously reported, the dredging of the
23 sediments, the current plans are for it to go into the
24 CDF, the local CDF here in Chicago.

25 The Cleveland Cliff SEP dredging is currently

1 forecasted to be done in 2028.

2 Regarding the Lake George Canal Middle Cap
3 Project, the Army Corps of Engineers is also managing
4 that portion of the project. As previously reported,
5 the CAP construction has been completed. However, ECO
6 Construction activities and adaptive management plan
7 activities are ongoing. The Corps work currently
8 working on coordinating field activities related to the
9 Adaptive Management Plan.

10 Regarding the Lake George Canal West, that
11 project is between BP and EPA and that's in Hammond.
12 Based on the latest site characterization data for the
13 Lake George Canal West, BP recommended no further action
14 is necessary. The Corps and EPA continued to assess
15 BP's no further action recommendation which is currently
16 expected to include additional sampling.

17 Regarding the Grand Cal River Junction Reaches
18 Remediation Project, Tetra Tech remedial design work is
19 ongoing. The project team is currently reviewing and
20 incorporating stakeholder comments to the 95% design.
21 Some of the ongoing project activities include the
22 remedial design completion, junction marsh coordination,
23 coordination with the former city dump, coordination
24 with the Marquette Trail project, community engagement,
25 property access coordination, including access

1 agreements. And the project team continues to work on
2 various permits necessary for construction.

3 Last month the Board approved the submittal of
4 the 401 permit related to this portion of the project.
5 That permit was successfully submitted electronically
6 yesterday with the assistance of Tetra Tech. Other
7 permits that we're working on in the Grand Cal River
8 area is a 402 permit which is also known as the NPDES
9 permit, the 404 permit construction and the Floodway
10 permit and the TSCA work plans. And as reported
11 earlier, Tetra Tech Project Manager, Carol Neeson, who's
12 in attendance today, will present a summary of each
13 permit and the task of work plan when we get to it.

14 On the agenda regarding the Great Lakes Legacy
15 Work in Kind Reporting, in March I submitted the
16 District 2025 year end Great Lakes Legacy Act Work in
17 Kind report for EPA review and consideration.

18 In the fourth quarter of last year I submitted
19 a proposed Work in Kind report affiliated with the city
20 dump work. EPA has submitted a response that they
21 intend to approve our proposal. I continue to work on
22 the City's CS0 Work In Kind report. EPA continues their
23 review on 2024 and prior year Work In Kind reports
24 regarding the schedule for the Grand Cal River Junction
25 Reaches.

1 We're forecasting completing the remedial
2 design this year, contractor procurement in the fourth
3 quarter of this year and mobilization in the spring of
4 2027. Construction is anticipated to take approximately
5 two years.

6 Regarding the area near the Canal Street
7 Bridge as reported in the past there was that situation
8 where the ship barge struck the Canadian National
9 Railroad Bridge. Our last report was that the bridge is
10 intended to be replaced. So it's going to be demoed and
11 replaced at some time. We have not heard a timeline on
12 its replacement construction.

13 Legal update. Attorney Ellen Gregory was not
14 able to make today's meeting. However, she provided me
15 a written report to read to the Board. And going over a
16 couple items, usually I do the Board package summary at
17 the beginning. So let me do that now.

18 In your Board packet, you have today's agenda.
19 The public meeting posting for today's meeting, the
20 Board Minutes for April 7th and April 16th of this year.

21 You have the Letter of Authorization from
22 Board Member, Ray Lopez, to First Merchants dated
23 May 21, 2026 to transfer 160,000 to our 2026 Operating
24 Budget.

25 You have a copy of the board approval. The

1 board approved the April 7, 2026 budget amendment
2 spreadsheet as referenced for that Letter of
3 Authorization.

4 You have a CliftonLarsonAllen financial report
5 dated April 30, 2026. And that's for the month of
6 April.

7 You have the Claim Docket dated May 21, along
8 with copies of the purchase order and check register.

9 First Merchants bank statements for the month
10 of April. You have BMO Trust Reports dated April 30,
11 2026, and BMO non-Trust Report also dated April 30,
12 2026.

13 Tetra Tech's monthly progress report is in
14 your packet for the month of April. And a copy of the
15 permits 402, 404, construction and the floodway permit
16 and the TSCA work plan.

17 Copy of Attorney Ellen Gregory's report to the
18 Board with the revision date of May 19th and a copy of
19 the Army Corps report to the Board dated May 21, 2020.

20 MR. ROBINSON: Any questions? Next, we have
21 approval consideration for board meeting notes for the
22 following meeting, April 7, 2026.

23 MR. LOPEZ: Motion to accept.

24 MR. BAKOTA: Second.

25 MR. ROBINSON: We'll have a roll call vote.

1 John Fekete?

2 MR. FEKETE: Yes.

3 MR. ROBINSON: Ray Lopez?

4 MR. LOPEZ: Yes.

5 MR. ROBINSON: Henry Rodriguez?

6 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

7 MR. ROBINSON: John Bakota?

8 MR. BAKOTA: Yes.

9 MR. ROBINSON: Kevin Guadalupe?

10 MR. GUADALUPE: Yes.

11 MR. ROBINSON: I vote yes. Next, we have a
12 approval consideration for Board Meeting notes dated
13 April 16, 2026.

14 MR. TREVINO: Yes.

15 MR. BAKOTA: Motion approved?

16 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Second.

17 MR. ROBINSON: All right. Roll call vote.

18 John Fekete?

19 MR. FEKETE: Yes.

20 MR. ROBINSON: Ray Lopez?

21 MR. LOPEZ: Yes.

22 MR. ROBINSON: Henry Rodriguez?

23 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

24 MR. ROBINSON: John Bakota?

25 MR. BAKOTA: Yes.

1 MR. ROBINSON: Kevin Guadalupe?

2 MR. GUADALUPE: Yes.

3 MR. ROBINSON: Jaylan Robinson. I vote yes.

4 Next, we have approval consideration, a Letter
5 of Authorization reference board approved 2026 budget
6 amendment. Is there a motion?

7 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Motion to approve.

8 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

9 MR. ROBINSON: All right. There's been a
10 motion and a second. Roll call vote.

11 MR. ROBINSON: John Fekete?

12 MR. FEKETE: Yes.

13 MR. ROBINSON: Ray Lopez?

14 MR. LOPEZ: Yes.

15 MR. ROBINSON: Henry Rodriguez?

16 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

17 MR. ROBINSON: John Bokota?

18 MR. BAKOTA: Yes.

19 MR. ROBINSON: Kevin Guadalupe?

20 MR. GUADALUPE: Yes.

21 MR. ROBINSON: Jaylan Robinson. I vote yes.

22 Next, we have the Accounting Consultant
23 Report.

24 MR. TREVINO: Monica, you there?

25 MS. JOHNSON: Yes.

1 MR. TREVINO: We can hear you.

2 MS. JOHNSON: Great. So I'm going to start
3 with the Statement of Cash Receipts and Cash
4 Disbursements. Total receipts for the month ended
5 April 30th, \$321,287.20. You also have a disbursement
6 of \$277,376.07. This results in an increase in cash of
7 \$44,111.13. Added to your cash balance on January 1st
8 of 2026 of \$14,951,631.66. Brings your cash balance on
9 April 30th to \$14,995,742.79.

10 This is held in your operating account at
11 \$1,358,622. Your User Fee Account, \$1,770,187.50 and
12 your Certificate of Deposit for \$11,866,862.18.

13 I'll move us to the Schedule of Cash Activity
14 for April 30th, Page 3 for your following -- within your
15 operating account you have a cash balance on January 1st
16 of 1,308,221 --

17 MR. TREVINO: Monica, yeah, our Court
18 Reporter -- if you can go just a little bit slower so
19 she can catch you. Thanks, Monica.

20 MS. JOHNSON: Your activity within this
21 account resulted in an increase of \$50,589.90, bringing
22 your operating cash balance on April 30th to
23 \$1,358,692.11.

24 In your User Fee Account, you had a cash
25 balance on January 1st of \$1,900,236.71. You had a

1 decrease that's four months of \$130,049.21. Account
2 balanced on April 30th to \$1,770,187.50.

3 Your Certificate of Deposits, January 1st, you
4 had a balance of \$11,743,292.78.

5 You had interest earned for four months of
6 \$123,570.00, which brings the Certificate of Deposit
7 balance on April 30th to \$11,866,863.18.

8 Moving on to the Supplementary Information, we
9 have the Schedule of 2026 available budget as of May 21,
10 2026. This is on Page 4. Starting with your 2026
11 budget appropriation, we have a total of \$1,553,089.
12 We've had two items added. The first being the accounts
13 payable 12/31/ 2020 \$5,695 in a 2026 budget amendment in
14 the form of 116,000. This brings the total 2026 total
15 appropriation to \$1,783,784.50.

16 We've had Cash Disbursement for the four
17 months and then it got -- \$277,376 -- your claims --
18 presented to you today of \$47,596.32. Bringing your
19 unused budget for 2026 to \$1,458,812. I'll pause and
20 see if there are any questions.

21 MR. TREVINO: Thanks, Monica.

22 MS. JOHNSON: Hey, thank you.

23 MR. ROBINSON: Next we have approval
24 consideration for accounts payable voucher register.
25 May 21, 2026. Is there a motion?

1 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I make a Motion to Approve.

2 MR. GUADALUPE: Second.

3 MR. ROBINSON: We have a motion and a second.

4 Roll call vote. John Fekete?

5 MR. FEKETE: Yes.

6 MR. ROBINSON: Ray Lopez?

7 MR. LOPEZ: Yes.

8 MR. ROBINSON: Henry Rodriguez?

9 MR. FEKETE: Yes.

10 MR. ROBINSON: John Bakota.

11 MR. BAKOTA: Yes.

12 MR. ROBINSON: Kevin Guadalupe?

13 MR. GUADALUPE: Yes.

14 MR. ROBINSON: Jaylan Robinson. I vote yes.

15 Next we have the BMO Trust and Non-Trust Reports.

16 MR. FEKETE: Yes.

17 MR. ROBINSON: Hello.

18 MR. SANTORI: Good afternoon, everybody. So
19 the first two reports there, one showing the combined
20 Money Market holdings, balances on April 30, 2026.
21 Combined balances of the two accounts of \$4,219,748.11.
22 There was interest earning on the Money Market of
23 \$501.14. No interest earned on the CD.

24 The next interest earning on the CD will be
25 June 18th, which also is the maturity date of that CD.

1 So as we get closer to that date, you know, depending on
2 you want to renew the CD or close it. I'll provide
3 interest rates at that time.

4 The second page is showing the historical data
5 of the distribution for this Trust. The year 2026 to
6 date. You have a distribution of \$38,490.

7 The next report is the multiple CDS for the
8 District itself. 4/30/2026 was \$11,866,863.18. There
9 was also no interest earnings during this period. The
10 next interest earnings will be on May 23rd. So actually
11 this month you'll see some interest on a follow up
12 report.

13 MR. ROBINSON: Next we have a presentation
14 from the Nature Conservancy. Jessica.

15 MS. FERNANDEZ: Hi everyone. Good afternoon.

16 MR. BAKOTA: Hi.

17 MS. FERNANDEZ: My name is Jessica Fernandez.
18 I work for the Nature Conservancy and I have a little
19 handout for you guys. It includes the compiled survey
20 results like a summary and the results survey that we
21 put out in the summer of last year regarding Roxanne
22 Marsh and community members input on like, future
23 improvements at the marsh. And then the last few pages
24 are just my talking points from today so that you have
25 those to reference if you want to look back at them.

1 So the Nature Conservancy is a global
2 nonprofit, specifically here in Indiana. We do
3 ecological restoration or habitat restoration within the
4 Grand Calumet River area of concern. And I'm sure most
5 of you guys are familiar with Roxanna Marsh, which is
6 located in between Indianapolis Boulevard and I-90.

7 COURT REPORTER: Please slow down.

8 MS. FERNANDEZ: Cool. Roxanna Marsh is
9 located in between Indianapolis Boulevard and the I-90
10 Toll Road along the Grand Calumet River. And it's part
11 of the Grand Calumet River area of concern. It's owned
12 by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and has
13 been managed in partnership with the Nature Conservancy,
14 the DNR and Lake County Parks and Recs since 2015. And
15 in 2024, the Nature Conservancy received funding from
16 the National Fish and Wildlife -- Cal Rivers Fund to
17 continue doing habitat restoration at the marsh and
18 other sites within the AOC. But within that funding we
19 also received, we submitted within the project proposal
20 to do community engagement work within East Chicago, but
21 also in Hammond and Gary as well. And part of that, one
22 of those projects was working with the social scientists
23 to develop a better understanding of the social
24 landscape within the area of concern, especially within
25 East Chicago and -- Marsh, to kind of better engage

1 local community members and community-based
2 organizations to see what people had to say about
3 revitalizing and restoring the marsh and making it more
4 accessible for public recreation.

5 So the first step of the project was to
6 interview to better understand the local community-based
7 organizations that are actually doing work in the area.
8 So we interviewed six different organizations. Each
9 interview is about an hour long and this happened in the
10 fall of 2024. So those organizations included -- Green
11 Spaces, Calumet Collaborative, Just Transition Northwest
12 Indiana, Faith in Place, the Student Conservation
13 Association, and Green EC, which is the local
14 sustainability group here in East Chicago.

15 And the second step of the project was to
16 interview the landowners for Roxanna Marsh. So that
17 includes the Indiana Department of Natural Resources,
18 and then NIPSCO also owns some land over by the marsh.

19 So those were two virtual interviews. Again,
20 both about an hour long happened in the fall of 2024.
21 And that was basically to see, like, what the landowners
22 would be open to doing on the site. So how would they
23 be open to opening the site for more public recreation
24 basically in the future? And overall, we were really
25 supportive of the project and hope to see an opportunity

1 to partner together in the future for community
2 supported visitor improvement and site enhancement
3 projects, which we partner with the DNR every single
4 day. And we also partner really closely with NIPSCO as
5 well.

6 So then after we gained a better understanding
7 through our community-based organization interviews and
8 the landowner interviews, it was time to start engaging
9 with the community. So our initial plan was to do three
10 90-minute in person focus groups that were supposed to
11 take place in January through March of 2025. And we did
12 successfully host one focus group. It took place on
13 February 2nd at the East Chicago -- Branch Public
14 Library. And we had pretty decent attendance, but a lot
15 of the people that attended were not necessarily from
16 East Chicago. They were more like conservation and
17 recreation folks who used the Grand Calumet River and
18 were familiar with Roxanna Marsh.

19 So it wasn't necessarily our target audience.
20 And then I'm sure as you guys remember about a year ago,
21 the political atmosphere kind of shifted and our key
22 partners also changed their employment. So we had to
23 pause our project for a little bit and kind of shift
24 gears so that we could one, continue working with our
25 partners, but two, make sure that we were getting a

1 clear understanding from actual community members within
2 East Chicago. So we shifted groups or we shifted gears
3 to a survey instead.

4 So we opened an online survey in June of 2025,
5 a voluntary online survey that aimed to gather community
6 members perspectives and priorities for the marsh. And
7 the survey was broken into two sections, Community
8 Connections to the marsh and Community Perspectives on
9 improvements at the marsh. So it was open for two
10 months and it closed at the end of August of 2025. That
11 data was collected and anonymized and summarized by our
12 social scientists that we had been working with. And we
13 shared them survey results back with the landowners,
14 with those community-based organizations that we
15 interviewed, and then the community members. And also
16 all of the people who took the survey, we also emailed
17 the results back to them as well.

18 So going into our results and the summary of
19 the responses, we had 53 survey Respondents, which is
20 pretty decent for two months. We were happy with the
21 survey results, how many Respondents we got. 70% of
22 those people lived in East Chicago and about 30% of them
23 lived within the Roxanna or south side neighborhood. So
24 neighborhoods adjacent to the marsh were located. And
25 about 2/3 of them visited the marsh frequently and

1 reflected the diversity of the region, the Respondents
2 did.

3 So while the responses vary, majority of the
4 Respondents said the marsh is a good place to walk or
5 run and view wildlife. They viewed it as very clean
6 from pollution and litter, viewed it as decently
7 well-cared for and a great place to learn about natural
8 ecosystems.

9 So overall, the community members are seeing
10 the marsh in like a pretty positive light. And the
11 results indicated that members want to see the following
12 things happen in the future. So they want to see the
13 marsh continued to be preserved and for habitat
14 restoration to continue, increase in public
15 accessibility, whether it be like a parking lot or a
16 walking trail or something that's a little bit welcoming
17 to the site and then beautification and community
18 events. So like art displays, garden and education,
19 signings and events, volunteer events, and an increase
20 in public communications about next steps and future
21 plans.

22 So these survey results were presented at our
23 annual festival, which is Festival de la Minerva, which
24 is held at Pasiusko Park every year around the end of
25 October, I'm sorry, the end of August or beginning of

1 September. And then, like I said, their survey results
2 were also shared with the Respondents via mail or email,
3 depending on how they gave us their contact information.

4 And then we also created a press release with
5 a summary of the results in the project, which is shared
6 online. And in order to save paper, I just included a
7 QR Code. So if you're interested in reading the press
8 release, you can scan the QR code and it will take you
9 right to the Nature Conservancy's website, straight to
10 the Press Release.

11 So our next steps, we were very clear during
12 our focus group and in the survey that we couldn't
13 promise the results, everything that people were
14 wanting, but that we would try our best to seek funding
15 to implement as much of those ideas as possible.

16 And so last year we applied for and received
17 funding from the Night Source Charitable Foundation that
18 will allow us to further ecological restoration and
19 enhance pollinator and monarch butterfly resources at
20 the marsh, while also providing opportunities to engage
21 volunteers, peers and community members. And that
22 funding started at the beginning of this year and passed
23 through January 2029. So it's three-year funding.

24 And with those funds we plan to continue doing
25 habitat restoration alongside our department that

1 Indiana DNR and Lake County Parks. Not only at the
2 marsh, but also at the adjacent NIPSCO right-of-way,
3 which has recently been turned from turf grass into
4 pollinator habitat. So we'll pick up the management on
5 that and kind of include it as one big natural area now.
6 And we'll also host volunteer events and workshops where
7 the community can observe NIPSCO's Rapid Biodiversity
8 Assessment Protocol. And they'll also be invited to
9 monitor for -- monitored butterflies and milkweed stems.
10 And hopefully we can do some monarch tagging as well if
11 there's monarch butterflies on site during the event.

12 So the restoration activities have already
13 started this year. Actually, I will be out there
14 tomorrow with our crew doing work at Roxanna and will
15 continue through the next three years. And we've got
16 volunteer events planned for both the spring and the
17 fall of 2027 in 2028. So both spring events will
18 include native plantings at Roxanna marsh that the
19 community will be invited out to participate in. And in
20 the fall, they'll do a biodiversity assessment with
21 NIPSCO. So someone from NIPSCO will come out and kind
22 of show them how they monitor. Do like a very quick
23 assessment for, like, plant life on the site. And then
24 that's also what we'll do, the monarch and milkweed
25 monitoring. So hopefully there will be some monarchs

1 out there that we can tag. But we'll also count
2 milkweed stems so we can see -- if you're not familiar,
3 milkweed is the host plant for monarch butterflies. So
4 monarch butterflies only lay their eggs on milkweed
5 plants. And then the caterpillars only eat milkweed
6 leaves. So you have to have milkweed to have monarchs,
7 which is why we're pushing both of those things.

8 And then also we'll have newsletters that will
9 be mailed out to households in nearby neighborhoods at
10 least once a year over the next three years to give
11 updates about the project, monitoring results, and
12 upcoming events. So this year, this one will be in the
13 summer. It'll kind of be like a kickoff. Like, hey,
14 this project's about to start. We've received the
15 funding. And then next year it'll be like, hey, we did
16 these. We did this monitoring, and here's the results.
17 And then same thing for the year after that.

18 We'll also have -- we have a staff member who
19 writes a monthly column in the Northwest Indiana Times.
20 So the monitoring results will be featured in one of her
21 columns then two times. And there will be yearly
22 updates on the project. We'll have a special booth at
23 the Monarch Festival.

24 MR. TREVINO: Does that mean the article --
25 yeah, that's the article you shared with me?

1 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yeah.

2 MR. BAKOTA: Very good article.

3 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yeah. She's an awesome
4 writer. And monthly she comes up with those topics. I
5 don't know how. But yeah, so she'll be writing at least
6 twice a year. Those columns will be specific to this
7 project. And then a Press Release will be published
8 this summer announcing the funding project detail. So
9 we haven't created a Press Release announcing that we
10 received this funding from DSource yet, but we will
11 release something throughout the summer. As soon as it
12 gets released, I'll be sure to share it with you guys..

13 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you. Thank you.

14 MR. BAKOTA: Thank you for being here. Please
15 attend our meetings, if you can.

16 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yeah. I appreciate it.

17 MR. BAKOTA: And just a question, you know, I
18 asked about the invasion phragmites and the rivers, you
19 know, are covered with it. Some time ago I heard it was
20 just word of mouth. There was nothing on paper that the
21 state will do control of phragmites on the river. I
22 don't know if that's true or not, but our project, our
23 scope of project is years away on that. But being a
24 river, you know, you would need to clean it up at the
25 mouth of it because a seed delivery is going to come

1 through the whole river.

2 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yeah, yeah. Phragmites
3 actually spreads really like through its roots and it's
4 got an insane root system. And it'll still spread
5 through the roots. Like the seed, it's the seed too.
6 But if there's phragmites upstream or downstream, if
7 there's soil for that, those roots to spread out into --
8 it will spread out and it will even go like underneath
9 the road. So like even if there's a road that's --

10 MR. BAKOTA: Yeah, I've seen it. Yeah, but
11 they -- I see where they use a systemic herbicide. But
12 is that able to use it with wildlife around there?

13 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yeah. So that's how we do
14 treat the phragmites on our sites is with a herbicide.
15 But it's a very targeted application. So we're -- we're
16 being very careful about the way we're doing it. We're
17 using it at a very low percentage and we're doing it
18 very targeted. So we're trying to have as minimal like
19 off target damage to either other plants or animals.

20 MR. BAKOTA: So is it controllable though?

21 MS. FERNANDEZ: Like the herbicide?

22 MR. BAKOTA: Yeah. Yeah.

23 MS. FERNANDEZ: I mean the way that we do it
24 is controllable. So when you guys do your remedy, your
25 remediation of the river, you'll likely scoop out a lot

1 of that phragmites which is kind of how it happened for
2 us on our -- like at Roxanna and from like Kennedy to
3 Cline, along the river when they remediated those
4 sections, they like, they scooped all of the phrag out
5 and like brought it somewhere else like a landfill. So
6 but obviously, you know, the roots are still in the
7 ground. They're not going to clear out all of the roots
8 and it's still going to spread from other places.

9 So a lot of what is along the river like by
10 the junction might get taken out when you guys do the
11 remediation of the river and they actually come and
12 dredge it. But of course you're still going to need to
13 do like a follow up treatment because there's still
14 going to be a root system.

15 MR. BAKOTA: It'll be -- it'll be an ongoing
16 process.

17 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yeah. But the more we clear
18 up and clean up, the better all of our sites will be.

19 MR. BAKOTA: So please let us -- at least let
20 me know when you do the Monarch thing. I'm very
21 interested.

22 MS. FERNANDEZ: Oh yeah, yeah, definitely.
23 The Monarch Festivals is scheduled for August 29th of
24 this year. And we'll have lots of information there
25 about like upcoming events related to like this funding

1 that we'll receive from my sources too.

2 MR. BAKOTA: Thanks again.

3 MR. TREVINO: Yeah, thanks.

4 MR. LOPEZ: Thank you on the presentation.

5 MS. FERNANDEZ: Thank you.

6 MR. TREVINO: Yeah. I just wanted to say
7 thanks to Jessica for accepting our invitation to come
8 and present.

9 MR. BAKOTA: Yeah. I'm glad to see that.

10 MR. TREVINO: I think it helps understanding
11 what the Nature Conservancy does and gives her a little
12 background on what we do and, you know, when we do -- at
13 some point in time we're going to do an economic and
14 recreational assessment of the whole waterway. We'll be
15 sure to incorporate all the good work you guys have
16 already done.

17 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yeah, definitely. Yeah.

18 MR. TREVINO: We'd love to work together and
19 even make you guys part of the process as a stakeholder.
20 So thank you very much.

21 MR. BAKOTA: Wonderful.

22 MR. ROBINSON: All right. Next we have the
23 Great Lakes Legacy Act and Grand Cal River Junction
24 Reaches Project update.

25 MR. TREVINO: Yes, Carol.

1 MS. NEESON: Hi everybody. I'm here.

2 MR. BAKOTA: Hi.

3 MS. NEESON: The design update for this month,
4 we received the comments from just two weeks ago and got
5 another packet of comments a week ago. So Tetra Tech is
6 currently adopting the incumbents on the 95% and I hope
7 to submit it in June. That will be the 100% in June.
8 And for tonight we have some applications to review for
9 four separate permits associated with the project. The
10 first one is the NPDES 402 permit. And this is a permit
11 we obtained from -- it's to allow the remediation
12 contractor to discharge -- water to the waterway. The
13 dredging process, as you know, will generate slurry
14 watered and there will be a significant amount of water
15 generated. We want to give the contractor that option
16 to discharge the treated water back to the river or to
17 discharge to the East Chicago Sanitary District because
18 the NPDES permit process is. We want to initiate it
19 currently.

20 So thus you have the application to be signed
21 by the Board by John Fekete. And this, when a
22 contractor is finally selected, they will have to update
23 this permit application. There are eleven separate
24 places for general design in this application to certify
25 about as well as general information and an affidavit

1 for the permits.

2 The second permit package that you all have is
3 for the 404 permit.

4 MR. TREVINO: Hey, Carol?

5 MS. NEESON: Yeah?

6 MR. TREVINO: Let's do one at a time and then
7 that way if there's any questions on it, they can, they
8 can ask. And if there's not, then they could take
9 action on it rather than do them all at once.

10 MS. NEESON: Okay.

11 MR. LOPEZ: All right.

12 MS. NEESON: Yeah. Summarize this 402 permit
13 and this retreated water discharge. Any questions?

14 MR. LOPEZ: No. When you dredge it, where's
15 that sediment going to go? Where are you going to put
16 it?

17 MS. NEESON: It gets pumped through a tube as
18 a slurry because it was very wet. So it's pumpable and
19 we're going to pump it to -- we're planning to use the
20 Buckeye Terminal property where we lay it out and pump
21 it into geotubes. And the geotubes allow it to -- the
22 water to leave out. So it dewateres the sediment. And
23 then once the sediment is dry enough, it goes to a
24 landfill for disposal. And the water that gets
25 generated needs to be treated and it needs to be

1 discharged somewhere because there will be a significant
2 quantity of water associated with the work. So the
3 NPDES permit allows us to potentially discharge water
4 back to the river system, or the contractor could decide
5 they want to go through East Chicago Sanitary District
6 to keep the options open for them. There are different
7 cost implications for either discharge location.

8 MR. LOPEZ: Okay. Thank you.

9 MR. TREVINO: And as Carol said, the timeline
10 for getting a permit is very long. So we want -- we
11 don't want to be, you know, have a contractor on site
12 and then wait six to eight months to get a permit. So
13 we're applying for it now.

14 MR. ROBINSON: So we have approval
15 consideration for Section 402 permit NPDES. Is there a
16 motion?

17 MR. BAKOTA: Motion to approve?

18 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

19 MR. ROBINSON: There's a motion and second.
20 Roll call vote. John Fekete?

21 MR. FEKETE: I vote yes.

22 MR. ROBINSON: Ray Lopez?

23 MR. LOPEZ: Yes.

24 MR. ROBINSON: Henry Rodriguez?

25 MR. LOPEZ: Yes.

1 MR. ROBINSON: John Bakota?

2 MR. BAKOTA: Yes.

3 MR. ROBINSON: Kevin Guadalupe?

4 MR. GUADALUPE: Yes.

5 MR. ROBINSON: Jaylan Robinson? I vote yes.

6 MR. TREVINO: The next one is the 404 permit.
7 Carol?

8 MS. NEESON: Yeah, so the next one is the
9 Section 404 permit. And that is to -- they regulate the
10 discharge of dredged or filled material into the waters
11 of the United States. And it includes wetlands. So
12 this Section 404 permit is associated with the Clean
13 Water Act. The permit application also allows you to
14 authorize Tetra Tech to act with your agent to ensure
15 compliance with the Water Act. So, any questions?

16 MR. ROBINSON: All right. So we have approval
17 consideration for Section 404 permit. Is there a
18 motion?

19 MR. RODRIGUEZ: I make a motion.

20 MR. GUADALUPE: Second.

21 MR. ROBINSON: A motion and second. Roll call
22 vote. John Fekete?

23 MR. FEKETE: Yes.

24 MR. ROBINSON: Ray Lopez?

25 MR. LOPEZ: Yes.

1 MR. ROBINSON: Henry Rodriguez?

2 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

3 MR. ROBINSON: John Bakota?

4 MR. BAKOTA: Yes.

5 MR. ROBINSON: Kevin Guadalupe?

6 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yes.

7 MR. ROBINSON: Jaylan Robinson. I vote yes.

8 MR. TREVINO: All right. The next one is the
9 construction in a Floodway Permit. Carol?

10 MS. NEESON: Yes. The next one it's called
11 Construction in a Floodway and it's issued by the
12 Indiana Department of Natural Resources. And this
13 permit application requests authorization from Indiana
14 DNR to excavate or place spill within a floodway, which
15 the project definitely entails excavation and placing
16 fill within the floodway on the Junction Reaches, the
17 area. So any questions?

18 MR. LOPEZ: No.

19 MR. ROBINSON: All right. We have approval
20 consideration for the construction in a Floodway Permit.
21 Is there a motion?

22 MR. BAKOTA: Motion approved.

23 MR. LOPEZ: Second.

24 MR. ROBINSON: There's been a motion and
25 second. Roll call vote. John Fekete?

1 MR. FEKETE: I vote yes.

2 MR. ROBINSON: Ray Lopez?

3 MR. LOPEZ: Yes.

4 MR. ROBINSON: Henry Rodriguez?

5 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

6 MR. ROBINSON: John Bakota?

7 MR. BAKOTA: Yes.

8 MR. ROBINSON: Kevin Guadalupe?

9 MR. GUADALUPE: Yes.

10 MR. ROBINSON: Jaylan Robinson. I vote yes.

11 And next we have the TSCA work plan.

12 MS. NEESON: Yes. It's Toxic Substances and
13 Control Act, which is TSCA. That one is necessary
14 because there are PCB concentrations in the IHC that
15 exceed the 50 milligram per kilogram, which indicates
16 that material is regulated by the TSCA regulations.

17 So our TSCA work plan is to provide a
18 notification to PA, an item, and also to obtain their
19 approval of our procedures to conduct the PCB cleanup
20 activities for the IHC. That one is a joint review by
21 federal EPA and -- any questions?

22 MR. TREVINO: I think the work plan that's in
23 the packet now, Carol, there might be some minor
24 modifications, correct? I think we've -- or do you
25 think it's at the final point?

1 MS. NEESON: I think it's ready to be
2 submitted to --

3 MR. TREVINO: Okay.

4 MS. NEESON: And I believe that -- has to
5 submit to EPA for review. They may, of course, come
6 back with more questions and require another iteration.

7 MR. TREVINO: Okay. Yeah.

8 MR. LOPEZ: Another question. One more
9 question on Page 6 you guys found PCB where?

10 MS. NEESON: The Indiana Harbor Canal. It's
11 just north of 151st Street in the canal, in the
12 sediment.

13 MR. LOPEZ: It's adjacent to the -- the
14 housing complex. USS lead site.

15 MS. NEESON: That material is regulated
16 differently from the rest of your sediment. So we need
17 to go in first and excavate or dredge out this PCB
18 contaminated material. And we have to handle it
19 separately from all your other waste streams. Because
20 it's so heavily regulated and it costs more to dispose
21 of. So we have -- we are very restrictive when we work
22 in that area to keep the volume down.

23 MR. LOPEZ: Okay. Thank you.

24 MS. NEESON: You're welcome.

25 MR. ROBINSON: Next, we have approval

1 consideration for the TSCA work plan. Is there a
2 motion?

3 MR. LOPEZ: Motion to approve?

4 MR. GUADALUPE: Second?

5 MR. ROBINSON: There's a motion and a second.
6 Roll call vote. John Fekete.

7 MR. FEKETE: I vote yes.

8 MR. ROBINSON: Ray Lopez?

9 MR. LOPEZ: Yes.

10 MR. ROBINSON: Henry Rodriguez?

11 MR. LOPEZ: Yes.

12 MR. ROBINSON: John Bakota?

13 MR. BAKOTA: Yes.

14 MR. ROBINSON: Kevin Guadalupe?

15 MR. GUADALUPE: Yes.

16 MR. ROBINSON: Jaylan Robinson. I vote yes.

17 MR. TREVINO: Thanks, Carol. Next job on the
18 summaries.

19 MS. NEESON: Thank you, everyone.

20 MR. ROBINSON: Next, we have the U.S. Army
21 Corps of Engineering Board Report. yes.

22 MR. COOLMAN: So for the CDF, the Wastewater
23 Treatment Plan, they're pretty much done with the
24 testing. I think they're waiting on one result. And
25 that should resume next week and for the next five

1 years. The contractor had assembled it last fall and
2 then finished up. Had to replace some parts and kind of
3 do some -- a little bit of redesign, I think. And then
4 we're also still working on completion of the project.
5 Closeout of CDF dyke raises that we're going on two
6 years. But we should have that wrapped up soon for the
7 dredging. Maintenance dredging, we'll resume in early
8 mid September of this year. And that will be with Roen
9 Salvage. They were the contractor for the last dredging
10 cycle.

11 Sediment sampling, we're still using and
12 analyzing those results to ensure that we can get the
13 best means and methods and maybe increase efficiency on
14 the maintenance dredging projects.

15 For the oil boom coordination, we're still
16 actively maintaining and operating them as needed. And
17 the installation of tide slides, which Fernando
18 mentioned in a different meeting a couple weeks ago,
19 that has been completed and is operational.

20 Still maintaining the parkway monthly to clean
21 and remove debris.

22 The rail bridge collision, I don't have too
23 much new information on that other than the demolition
24 design is currently ongoing at CN Rail. So that hasn't
25 started yet. And I don't think that the design is

1 complete.

2 MR. GUADALUPE: Question?

3 MR. COOLMAN: Yes.

4 MR. GUADALUPE: The Roen Salvage Project, do
5 you know how many cubic yards they're planning to pull
6 out this year?

7 MR. COOLMAN: I think the base contract was
8 for 41,500. But I can actually check that here and get
9 back to you in a couple minutes on it.

10 MR. GUADALUPE: Okay. For the exact amount.

11 MR. COOLMAN: We do have options. But we're
12 not sure which ones of those will be awarded. So that
13 would add to the quantities.

14 MR. GUADALUPE: Also, their contract, is it
15 year-to-year then?

16 MR. COOLMAN: This is a single contract.

17 MR. GUADALUPE: So for next year, if you're
18 going to dredge for next year, then it opens up again,
19 right?

20 MR. COOLMAN: Yeah. And generally we get
21 funded every other year, dredging at that.

22 MR. ROBINSON: Any other questions?

23 MR. GUADALUPE: One more. So for the dredge --
24 you get funded every other year. So then if there's any
25 dredging -- would there be money allocated? Like, if

1 there was something for next year? The money that's
2 allocated for -- the funding that you get, okay, you're
3 doing this year's project now. If there's need for next
4 year, is there money allocated already saved for that,
5 or does that mean you would have to find -- you would
6 have to find where the money's going to come from for
7 that?

8 MR. COOLMAN: If there was like an emergency
9 dredging event from like a storm surge or something like
10 that in a year that we didn't have a contract awarded
11 for that time period, then we would have to seek, like,
12 emergency funding. And we do have mechanisms for that.
13 There's different unfunded needs kind of accounts or
14 pots of money for when things like, say, for example,
15 the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore, when it got
16 struck and collapsed, funding was removed from certain
17 projects across the country to cover that emergency.

18 So if there was something where it really was
19 an emergency dredging event, it would be similar to
20 that. However, the dollar run will be a lot lower than
21 directly. It's a Scott Key bridge situation.

22 MR. GUADALUPE: So if the project that's going
23 on this year, at the completion of this year, unless
24 there's another area that you find along the canal that
25 needs to be dredged, there won't be any dredging next

1 year?

2 MR. COOLMAN: Then there will be dredging next
3 year with FY '26 funding. The dredging that's occurring
4 in September was funding that was from FY '24. And even
5 though FY '26 started in October, we don't get the
6 funding on October 1st, even though we know we might be
7 getting it a lot of times because of the way Congress
8 works, it takes a lot longer. The funding for the FY
9 '26 dredging. So FY '26 money that came in, like a few
10 weeks ago. So for the upcoming contract, which we are
11 in the plans and specs process for that right now, and
12 we'll be advertising in July or August, I think.

13 MR. GUADALUPE: So for next year, there's no
14 anticipation of dredging other than this project that
15 we're doing like with Roen?

16 MR. COOLMAN: No, the one that we're working
17 on right now with plans and specs, we would expect them
18 to dredge in Calendar Year -- however, that contractual
19 behavior, it is of the order, material that we find in
20 several of the reaches. And so that'll be a slightly
21 different -- the maintenance strategy which is the
22 regular sentiment that's easily processed.

23 MR. GUADALUPE: Thank you.

24 MR. ROBINSON: All right. Next we have
25 Attorney Ellen Gregory's report.

1 MR. TREVINO: Attorney Gregory wasn't able to
2 make the meeting today, so she did prepare a summary for
3 me to read out to the Board. Legal matters handled
4 during the past month include review permit applications
5 with Carol Neeson and Tetra Tech and FMT related to the
6 Grand Cal River Junction Reaches project including DNR
7 Construction and a Floodway Permit.

8 The Section 401 Water Quality Certification,
9 the MPDS permit and the Section 404 permit. Review of
10 the TSCA work plan for the Grand Cal River Junction
11 Reaches Project, review and negotiate access agreements
12 between EPA and the City of East Chicago for the Grand
13 Cal River Reaches Junction Reaches Project. Consult
14 with FMT regarding Work in Kind Reporting for costs
15 associated with the city dump site. Consult with FMT
16 regarding potential memorandum of understanding with the
17 city related to the economic and recreational
18 development, including Brownfield's Grant Application.
19 That concludes her report.

20 MR. ROBINSON: Any other business, new
21 business or announcement?

22 MR. LOPEZ: I'm just circling back to Vaughn.
23 Vaughn, were you able to get the volume?

24 MR. ROBINSON: Any public comments? Our next
25 Board meeting will be June 18, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. Is

1 there a Motion to Adjourn?

2 MR. BAKOTA: Motion to adjourn.

3 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Second.

4 MR. ROBINSON: Motion and seconded. Roll call
5 vote. John Fekete?

6 MR. FEKETE: I vote yes..

7 MR. ROBINSON: Ray Lopez?

8 MR. LOPEZ: Yes.

9 MR. ROBINSON: Henry Rodriguez?

10 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

11 MR. ROBINSON: John Bakota?

12 MR. BAKOTA: Yes.

13 MR. ROBINSON: Kevin Guadalupe?

14 MR. GUADALUPE: Yes.

15 MR. ROBINSON: Jaylan Robinson. I vote yes.

16 Meeting adjourned.

17

18 (WHEREUPON the hearing was
19 adjourned at 6:00 p.m.)
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25

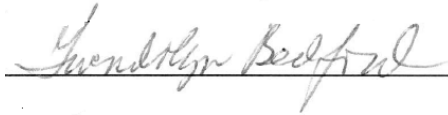
1 STATE OF INDIANA)
2)
3 COUNTY OF LAKE)
4

5 C E R T I F I C A T E
6

7 The within and foregoing hearing was taken
8 before GWENDOLYN BEDFORD, Certified Shorthand Reporter
9 in the City of Gary, County of Lake and State of
10 INDIANA.

11 The undersigned is not interested in the
12 within case, nor of kin or counsel to any of the
13 parties.

14 IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
15 hand this 12th day of June, 2026.

16 
17

GWENDOLYN BEDFORD, C.S.R.

No. 084-003700