

STARKE COUNTY DRAINAGE BOARD MEETING
FEBRUARY 4, 2025
@ 8:30 A.M.

Pursuant to adjournment the Starke County Drainage Board met in regular session in the Starke County Government Building meeting room this 4th day of February, 2025. The following members were present: Ed Jernas, Merlyn Lucas, Greg Troike, Charlie Chesak, Matt Lawrence, Gwen Rentz: Starke County Surveyor, Sara Dingman: Drainage Board Recording Secretary and Autumn Ferch: Drainage Board Attorney. The following proceedings were held to wit:

IN RE: MINUTES

Charlie Chesak made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 7, 2025 drainage board meeting. Merlyn Lucas seconded and the motion passed with all ayes.

IN RE: COLEMAN DITCH

Mark Dedloff came before the board to discuss cleaning out and maintaining the section of the Coleman ditch that runs through his property. The Coleman ditch does not collect maintenance tax for the county.

IN RE: PETERSON DITCH VARIANCE

Mediacom requested a variance to run a fiber optic cable 8 feet below the Peterson ditch. Ed Jernas made a motion to approve the variance request for Mediacom. Merlyn Lucas seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes.

IN RE: NEXT ERA DISCUSSION

Gwen Rentz went over the quotes she had received from engineering firms to review the solar drainage plans. Rentz also noted that she requested the plans from Next Era so she could review the drainage plans. Rentz showed a map reflecting that there is one regulated drain located on the parcels involved in the project. Attorney Ferch asked if it would be possible to contract with Bob Aloï since he is familiar with the project. Bob Aloï spoke to the board regarding his role with Starke County currently. Aloï also explained what he sees in the reports provided by Next Era. Aloï's opinion was that the drainage board needed to examine the ditch crossings and the 75 foot right of way for the project. Charlie Chesak asked Surveyor Rentz what she had asked the engineering firms to review when she contacted them. Rentz explained that she asked the firms to review the plans and inform the board of culvert and boring locations. Ed Jernas noted that if Next Era had that information in their plans, the board shouldn't hire anyone new, the solar company should explain the information in their report. A representative from Next Era was present and noted that he believed that Next Era could provide a cheat sheet type of document that showed culvert locations to the drainage board. The drainage board will determine what they want on the cheat sheet and provide that to Bob Aloï, and Aloï will then communicate that to Next Era.

IN RE: OLD BUSINESS

Allsop Excavating contact the surveyor and asked for an extension on the Zedock tile. They were approved for an extension on another project until May 31st with the Starke Pulaski board and requested an extension with the Starke Regular board as well. Matt Lawrence made a motion to approve an extension of the Zedock tile job until May 31st. Merlyn Lucas seconded and the motion was approved with all ayes.

IN RE: NEW BUSINESS

Gwen Rentz received confirmation from the board that the surveyor would need prior approval from the board for any spending over \$2,000. Gwen asked if it would be possible to allow an exception to that limit for beaver dam removals. Rentz noticed that looking through some old claims, beaver dam removals can cost more than \$2,000. It was agreed that the surveyor could call the board president when a beaver dam removal is needed but prior board approval will not be required.

With no further business to come before this board at this time, Matt Lawrence made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ed Jernas seconded the motion and the motion passed with all ayes.




Greg Troike President



Charlie Chesak, Secretary



Merlyn Lucas, Member



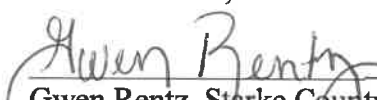
Sara Dingman, Drainage Board Recording Secretary



Ed Jernas, Vice President



Matt Lawrence, Member



Gwen Rentz, Starke County Surveyor