



Board of Drainage and Flood Control

Minutes for the Tuesday, April 25, 2023 Meeting

Meeting called to order by Ms. Eavenson at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Eavenson asked the Board to do quick introductions since it had been a while since the last meeting. She explained that she is serving in a new role as the City Engineer and was previously the Assistant City Engineer.

In attendance from the Board were:

Christina Eavenson, City Engineer
(Chair)

Ray Ford, Ward 1

Paul Balog, Ward 1

James Cleveland, Ward 4

J.D. Gontkovsky, Ward 4

Ken Wilson, ward 3

Cliff Winkel, City Council

Ed Dunham, Ward 2

Georgia Awig, City Council

Also, in attendance were:

Kyle Almodovar, Resident

Old Business

A. Minutes for July 26, 2022 Meeting

Ms. Eavenson asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the July 26, 2022 meeting. Mr. Winkel made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Awig seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved by vote as presented.

New Business

A. Review of 2022 Service Department Ditch Maintenance

Mr. Ford is a board member and is the City's Stormwater Foreman. Mr. Ford prepared a presentation showing the tasks accomplished during the 2022 Ditch Maintenance Program. There are 75 miles of ditches in the city, which makes it difficult to maintain all of the ditches annually, but the averages since 2019 are shown. Depending on the type of ditch, there could be more tree clearing needed, which cuts down time for other tree clearing and bank work. He noted that so far

this year, they are on par to be ahead of where they were last year, but there is a lot more tree clearing to be done. Mr. Winkel asked if some of the numbers may be attributed to availability of equipment needed. Mr. Ford said areas closer to Mills Road can be accessed with a chipper and other equipment that makes work go faster. They are working on the Phelon Ditch right now which is next to a farm field with no easy way to get in and out. Some of the bigger machines they have makes it easier to accomplish those tasks too.

In Mills Creek South, the Service Department worked on the other side of Frontier Park and up through the condos. The area was rough because of the roadway project. A tree is still hanging over the ditch because North Barton Road was being worked on at the time and they did not want to shut the road down twice. They will get a machine over there to take care of the tree. The maintenance has dropped the water level 6 to 8 inches. Mr. Winkel asked if the work included the area around the swimming pool facility. Mr. Ford said they went all the way to the bridge where it crosses over into the condos at Willowbrook. The other side was not as overgrown and did not have any blockages. Mr. Winkel thought that area may be prone to blockages. Mr. Ford explained that everything crossing under Mills Creek wants to take precedence at the "Y" and the branch coming in from the other side gets backed up. They couldn't do any more clearing without getting permission from the property owners.

Mr. Ford showed a photo of the box culvert and headwall on the UH property that the service department cleaned out. There was a buildup of rock and sandstone rubble that was cleared out of the culvert. The project became necessary for work that was being done on the Lorain Road water main extension. They are trying to keep it clean but it is hard to maintain. Ms. Eavenson added that it is only open on one side, making it more difficult to clean. The south side of the culvert has a manhole but it makes it challenging to jet or get equipment in the culvert. Mr. Winkel asked how it gets cleaned out. Mr. Ford explained that the sewer vac is used to drag everything out in addition to some laborers with shovels. The silt builds up so they try to get it pushed to the side to allow the water to flow. Mr. Ford has talked to other storm water management utilities to see if there is a better solution, but has not found one yet. For smaller situations, they can use an I-beam to drag it through, but this is more difficult. Using a remote-controlled skid steer would require damming the area and blocking the flow to maintain the area. He is currently talking to one of the City's current vendors to see if there is an attachment for the sewer vac that can be purchased next year. Once it has a really good cleaning, he does not think it would need annual cleaning, but for now they have to go back and forth due to the amount of silt. Ms. Awig asked if they are monitoring these areas on a regular basis. Mr. Ford said the areas they know are problematic are checked regularly to see what their condition is. Mr. Balog asked how deep these areas are that they need to reach, Mr. Ford believed the bank is about four to five feet tall. Ms. Eavenson said in order to clean the area, they need to go about 60 feet to reach the other side of the road and there is only one junction box on the south side of the culvert. Mr. Ford added that they use the hydrants in the area to help push the silt through and then clean it up. Ms. Eavenson said it is a strange situation because there is confluence at the north side of the culvert that is designed to spill over to the west once it reaches a certain elevation.

On Hedgerow Park Drive, water comes from the highway and erodes the bank of the ditch. The Service Department has stabilized the area for the utility poles using some of the repurposed materials from the 2022 Full Depth Concrete program. A similar process was used for the Brian Street retention by Braemore. Historically, there had been water in the retention area and staff did not know there was a concrete trough at the bottom. Since this has been maintained, the basin is

dry more often. This also leads into the Phelon Ditch which leads to the Fortune Ditch. There are two sections that they need to clean yet. Once they are done with the project, everything south of Lorain Road tying into the Fortune Ditch will be finished. There is a lot of silt, growth and weeds from the farm field next to the ditch.

A map showing all of the ditches was shown with the areas mentioned shown in red. They are currently working on the ditch out to SR-83. They did work on the rear wall for the West Point retention where a lot of the water running off of the highway goes. They made the area as big as possible to retain more water in heavy rain events to minimize flooding in the area. This project will continue during downtime. They are trying to focus on key areas. Ms. Eavenson asked what the amount of ditches was that has already been maintained, Mr. Ford said he could get the data for the next meeting. When reporting numbers, Mr. Ford is only using linear feet, which is not including the square footage of the bank work associated with the maintenance.

On Chesterfield, Mr. Ford said there had been a lot of issues. He has not seen it rise to a level that made him worry since it was cleaned out. Through maintenance and inspection, they are trying to address issues before they happen to prevent as much flooding as possible. Mr. Dunham said the pipes going from the streets did not help previously. He has lived in the area for 47 years and there was a lot of water around at the beginning but it is altogether different now. Mr. Ford said a lot of drain tiles or sump pump lines have been tied into over the years and are extended to the ditch when discovered to help everything flow like it should.

Mr. Wilson asked if there are main channels that are the biggest priority based on volume. Mr. Ford said the Mills Creek going to Mills Road, French Creek and Ridgeway tying into Chapel Creek are the main arteries. They knew Mills Creek North and South needed work and they knew what they could tackle while knowing the Boulder project is years down the road but would fix the problem. Work was done on the French Creek and they got 60-70% of the creek taken care of in the city. Knowing the mains are flowing, allows them to work on the smaller arteries. Almost everything flows north except a few ditches that flow south. Sometimes the issues arise from lack of maintenance in the past and other issues may not be apparent until the ditch line is walked to see what needs to be taken care of.

B. Mills Creek Flood Control Basin Project Update

Ms. Eavenson explained that a study was done in the area several years ago which determined that the best course of action was determined to divert some of the water from Mills Creek into a stormwater storage area. They are moving forward with the alternate chosen to divert the water in Mills Creek which comes from I-480, Lorain Road and North Olmsted down Cypress Avenue and currently goes to Lear Nagel. The water will be diverted away from Lear Nagel using pipes and channels to move it north to 20 acres that will be improved with cascading basins and channels. Plans were received from Bramhall Engineering a couple weeks ago showing storage for 100 acre-feet. The storage amount was a little less than what they were hoping for, but it may still change due to some recent hurdles that have encountered. The reviewer for the Army Corps permit application was not thrilled with the onsite mitigation proposed so he is asking for additional information. We submitted to the Army Corp. the support received from neighboring communities and ODNR so they are hoping that helps persuade their decision. Instead of buying into a wetland bank somewhere else, the City would like to do wetland creation onsite to maintain themselves. Some of the other challenges have included changes in ownership in neighboring properties. The current

owner is amenable to the City acquiring property or an easement if needed. TC Energy owns a high-pressure gas main in the area and the City is moving forward with some due diligence, including potholing to assure the alignment and will then move forward with the utility in the area.

A grant of \$500,000 was received from Lorain County for a public improvement grant. Altogether, with the ODNR grant monies, the funds are up to \$2.3 million. Unfortunately, the recent construction cost estimate came in at about \$6 million. The city will continue to look for more grant opportunities to cover the construction cost deficit, but will continue to move forward with the planning.

Ms. Eavenson showed the plan from Bramhall. It was not as cascading as originally described but she still thought it would be a nice feature to view. A walking path would be installed around the two major ponds. There may be some opportunities to install boardwalks also. The entrance would be off Lear Nagel to Boulder to Cary with a private drive to the parking area on the southwest corner of the property. The area will always have some water which will be diverted through channels in the property, but will only be full after significant storm events. The smaller basin and channels will be dry most of the time but the larger pond will be wet. Ms. Awig asked when the project would be completed, Ms. Eavenson responded that if everything is in place, they are hoping to get a permit and start the work next year. The site is about 20 acres. Mr. Winkel asked if the city was able to capitalize by selling the trees for logging. Ms. Eavenson said that was not part of the scope but that may have happened since the contractor's bid was so much lower. It has not been decided how to cover the additional construction costs yet if grants are not secured. A loan could be taken out or bonds issued, but they are not sure yet. Mr. Almodovar asked if there is money for maintenance this year because the orange fencing and landscape material is blowing around and the area is unsightly. Ms. Eavenson has asked the contractor to re-establish the silt fence, establish vegetation in the bare areas and clean out the channels. Mr. Dunham asked if the areas appear convoluted because they are trying to make a park out of the area or if it is needed for the mitigation. Ms. Eavenson said they are trying to minimize the impact to the wetlands as much as possible. It is her understanding that they are trying to create wetlands to counter those that are being mitigated through the project. Mr. Dunham thought it may be cheaper to have a simpler design. The area was chosen to accommodate the water coming from the other areas. She also thought the big basins are not as aesthetically pleasing, so creating the meandering channels would use the elevation drop going from east to west to have constant water flow. Staff is still pursuing state grant funds but nothing has been secured. The construction estimate for the project before the pandemic was close to \$5 million. Ms. Eavenson said an easement from Greenquest is still in progress. Mickey Mann from the Cypress area is on board with the project but the easement has not been secured yet.

C. Fortune Ditch Update

Ms. Eavenson said the County is moving forward with the Fortune Ditch project. The project starts in the southeast corner of the city, just south of the Ridgefield development. The project was started by petition and they just had their final hearing a couple weeks ago. She spoke with Don Romancak from Lorain County and it is currently in the appeals process because they have to give it 30 days. Once the appeal period is over and if there are no appeals, they will proceed. The ditch is under county jurisdiction and they will be cleaning up the area since there have been a lot of issues. They will also clean up the Dixon Ditch. There is not a lot of fall available so they will be dredging as much as possible to create more fall. The drainage area impacts 724 acres and goes to SR 83. They are hoping to bid in June, award the project in late summer and possibly start construction at the

end of the year. The estimated construction cost is \$1.8 million and the City's share would be about \$275,000. Mr. Dunham asked if the water comes back through North Ridgeville as it flows to the Black River. Mr. Ford said it does not because once it gets to the golf course by Sprague Road, the area is flat. The Dixon Ditch runs into the Phelon Ditch so they wanted it to be cleaned to ensure there will be no issues. The project will include 2.7 miles of ditches and 1,500 feet of the Dixon Ditch is included.

Ms. Eavenson shared some of the drone footage provided by the county. Some of the culverts will be replaced with the project. All of the residents in the area were notified of the hearings at the county, which included the assessment fees for the residents. The City of North Ridgeville will be covering all of the assessment costs for the residents in the City of North Ridgeville. They are trying to minimize the impact, but will need to clear some areas to maintain the ditches. The County will work with the neighbors to see if they want the dirt or trees that will be removed during the project.

D. Meeting Adjourned

Ms. Awig made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. Mr. Balog seconded the motion.