

April 20, 2026

The Pulaski County Drainage Board met in regular session on Monday, April 20, 2026, in the Courthouse Meeting Room. The meeting was called to order at 10:07 a.m. Those present: Members Mike McClure, Jennifer Knebel, Don Street, Surveyor Jenny Keller, Board Secretary Lynn Wilder, Board Attorney Tim Murray, Engineer Jake Ballah, Rudy DeSabatine, and numerous other attendees.

ED FRAIN TILE PUBLIC HEARING

The Surveyor reported that the Ed Frain Tile Improvement Project let out for bids came back with only one bidder. That bid was for \$908,852.00. It was the consensus of the Surveyor and the Drainage Board that the property owners within the watershed cannot bear the cost of a project of that amount. The project was to create a new 36" tile branching off the existing tile from the IMI property, through to the north side of the Galbreath property, then east to CR50E, then North crossing 150S, and continuing north through Kocher's field to the river. The floor was opened for the public's thoughts and discussion.

Debbie Straw:

I just want to say that Casey's was a swamp area at one time, so why do we have to pay for their swamp?

Jenny:

Because they're in the Ed Frain watershed Unfortunately, where you live or a business exists, it is in that watershed and you're contributing water to that tile. That's why you're being assessed on it, and everyone else that is in the watershed.

Debbie Straw:

I do know that Galbreath's over where that whole flooding was has gone down. So, we're thankful for that. But I just don't think we should pay for the businesses. I mean, that's something that's kind of unfair for us.

Rudy DeSabatine:

I contacted a company in Lafayette. They had a similar situation. I know what the situation is with this massive amount of money that the homeowners are going to get assessed at just an astronomical price and for a long time. He said that what their commissioners did was they decided to say, this is how much money we can spend and stay within the realm of what needs to be done to complete this project or do something with this project. I've come up with a few ideas on what could happen. I looked through all the plans. Gary had talked about blacktopping the road back at the county's expense, which there's \$80,000 that could be taken out of there. I looked at prices on tile alone. And the recommendation was for a 36-inch tile. It has capabilities of carrying up to like 10 million gallons in a 24-hour period. So, you could downsize to the possibility of a 15 or an 18-inch tile. What we're looking for here is something as an overflow to help control or speed up the process, relatively to speed up the process. So an 18-inch tile, I don't have the exact figure on what it carries per minute, but I think it's like 3,000 gallons per minute. So, it still has massive capabilities. But just by downsizing from 36-inch to 18-inch tile, there's over \$110,000 savings. So just in two little tweaks, you can save over \$200,000 on this project. And I think there's even more things that can be done than that. There's a manhole out in the middle of the field, which I think was silly.

Rudy:

Multiple things to cut down on the expenses of this thing. And I guess I'm just saying that I know I have briefly heard that there's a thought about not doing it at all. There is the possibility that it can be done. And this gentleman told me that at the next meeting, if you would like, he would come up from Lafayette and explain the entire situation and how they went about it and the legalities of doing it without any complications and stuff. He said, to take the time to do whatever you do, if you have any interest in doing that. So, I guess what I'm trying to do is just relay the idea that this can be done at probably half the price.

Mike:

Sewell, how much problems are you still having?

Sewell Dunn:

Bad.

Sewell Dunn:

About two and a half feet.

Jenny:

Did it get in your shed during the last rain event before Easter? I know I didn't see water out there in your yard, but I didn't know if that was that rain or this past one.

Sewell Dunn:

I think that was when we had those eight inches of rain last year.

Rudy:

Did the rain get in the building last month?

Sewell Dunn:

Not in the last month.

Jenny:

So, this last rain event, did you not get any water in your shed?

Sewell Dunn:

No.

Jenny:

Well, that's good because we had quite a bit of rain.

Jenny:

I agree that flooding is an issue, but the biggest inconvenience as of right is that we've been struggling financially because it is a huge burden. I spent last week trying to dig up on how we were going to even begin to assess everybody out there. And I'm only halfway through and the numbers I don't even want to say. Everyone's going to have to be treated a little bit differently, the lots and acreage and then businesses, obviously because of the runoff water, the businesses and everything, you will run off the asphalt and all that should be charged more. I went through their assessment sheets and tried to come up with a chart and stuff and break it down to be fair to everybody. But it still comes up to a lot of money. And as you guys know, we've been struggling with that part of it for a long time.

Jenny:

Is there anyone else that has any concerns that want to step up and talk?

Rudy:

One more thing that I would like to continue with. What you got to understand, going with a tile that is three feet in diameter and how everything is, manholes are twice the size, the trenches are twice the size, twice the stone, this can be reduced and still be very beneficial all the way across the board. I guess that's what I'm trying to just make sure you're aware of. It's not just one or two little things here or there that change it, it changes the whole perspective.

Jake:

Just as a kind of reminder, one of the reasons we went with the larger tile size is because the existing tile currently runs underneath the school buildings. And there was a concern that in the future, if that fails, it's not an easy fix because it's underneath the buildings. So,

we sized this so that if we needed to, we could eliminate that line and, in the future, everything would flow through this new tile. The thought being that if we're going to spend the time going out there and dig a hole and put in the pipe, let's at least do a little bit extra on it and make it bigger and be able to handle all the capacity in the future. Now, if that's no longer the goal, we're just looking to mitigate what we have and not have to replace the portion underneath the school or we don't have any concerns with that, then I agree with your statement that additional costs that could be bypassed.

Don

Are there any concerns with backflow into the school? If there's too much water, that would backflow into the property of the school.

Jake:

My understanding is that the line underneath the school hasn't been televised so the condition is unknown. If it were to ever collapse or plug or whatever, it would be difficult to get fixed. I mean, Rudy you have more history on this, so I'll defer to that.

Rudy:

To answer the question you asked, the size of the pipe that goes through the school is over... And when it gets out down to Sewells it's a 24 inch, and where it goes in the Kocher farm, it's 30 or 32 inch.

Eric Galbreath:

I think addressing the problem of maybe the one in the school going bad, that means you're only going to build from that point over, you don't have to build the whole thing. So, by what he said is doing the 24". I'd do the 24", and going on Kocher's property, which takes the relief off everything. And then if something happens at the school, we find out where it happens, then you should be addressing that at some point. Because that's dangerous. I know it happened. Then you build from the school over, and then get back to the river, which is a shorter distance. And it's probably only 24 inches there. I've spent a lot of money, you know, trying to get this fixed and everything that they've asked me for. And it is a big problem. We've gotten really, really far down the road. I agree, we've really helped it a lot. But we're not quite there again. We still need a little bit more. And I think that'll help and be good for many years. We weren't really assessed enough to justify this 30 years ago. I can help you a little bit. I can build from S&S Precast over to the road. I can take care of that. And it's my property anyway. But we really need to finish this directly. I think it's the best solution I've heard from many people. It's what we need to do. Now, how do you come up, re-bid it, figure out different ways... Brad was saying, and I agree with him, if you go smaller, you've got to go deeper, right?

Brad:

Correct

Eric:

I can counteract the cost a little bit. So somebody really needs to look at that and make sure, okay, this is apples to apples, because as you think smaller than I am, you've got to get deeper to get your angle, more work will take it deeper, doesn't always work out. Again, I'm here to help with whatever you guys need. I'll pitch in some just to help get it done. But we really need to get this thing finished onto the finish line.

Mike:

We really do. Well, what does it look like, Jenny? We need to go back to the drawing board.

Jenny:

I think so, but you guys also got to keep in mind, so the maintenance fund itself is in the red, almost \$100,000. So, everyone's still going to continue to be paying maintenance for quite a while, many years, at the rate we are. And you're right, years ago, for whatever reason, it was assessed \$4 an acre, \$4 a lot, and it should have been different. But that's how years ago, when through the hearing process, that's how it was set up, unfortunately. We did, finally, raise the rates. I know that was upsetting, and to be honest, it's still not enough.

Jenny:

The issue is finding money. We could use the GDI money, but it has to be paid back. Therefore, a project this size actually needs to be classified as a reconstruction project. So therefore, everyone would be paying a reconstruction fee and a maintenance fee. And at this point, the reconstruction, obviously, is costly when you put everything into it. So that's another additional fee on top of your maintenance fee, what they're already paying right now. I don't know if you remember years ago, we did try to get a grant. We didn't qualify. I plan on reaching out to the Community Foundation to see if she can help me find something that we can try. Our only other source right now if we go through with this is another funding source. We go to the bank and get a loan for this project, but that still falls back on the landowners have to have to repay that.

Eric:

How much money do we have? Do we really know what we can spend? Do we know what it is that's going to be acceptable?

Jenny:

Well, still though, even if you go at 300,000, is that still going to be acceptable to everyone in the watershed to have to come up with that money?

Eric:

That's what I'm saying. We'd sit here all day long and say, okay, \$100 is too much. Where is the number that you guys really think, you would have to do it? And then let's work towards that. You can start engineering based on that, see if there is a way to get it done.

Jenny:

Well, I mean, \$300,000 would be ideal compared to where we're sitting right now, but like I said, it still falls back on the landowners.

Eric:

So, we're going to have to pay more. I mean, that's just what it is. But what is the number? I think that's probably the key point. And then we go back to engineering and start looking. We have enough smart people around here between Brad & DeSabatine to be able to work forward and come up with a solution. There are ways to get this done. There really is. I think we've got to sit down and just figure out how to get this done. It may not be what we wanted, but at least moving forward would be better than what we've got.

Jennifer:

We talked at our last meeting about the possibility of a lift station as well. And Jacob, were you going to look into that as far as price and can you speak to what that would be and what that would accomplish and what it wouldn't?

Jake:

I don't have any pricing on that, but with the lift station, all it's going to do is dewater the area quicker. You're still going to have the flooding and the ponding out there to have pumps sized to handle the intensity of a larger rain event. I mean, you're talking about large dollar pumps that aren't necessarily worth it. You could go with smaller pumps, but again, it just takes a longer time to dewater the area, which is kind of the system you already have set up. That 24 inch fills up. And then as each rain sits above ground until that 24" clears and the rest comes behind it. So, it won't gain you a whole lot in terms of keeping down the flooding. There could be some. I can look into pricing for that if that's the route you want to go. I think last time as well we talked about a couple other smaller improvements you guys can make in the interim. I don't want to say key areas, but noticeable areas, in particular, the ones again, you took pictures of that showed some major flooding. And we're happy to look into that for you guys if that's the route you'd like to go.

Jennifer:

What would that alleviate? I mean, you said it would take care of some major areas of flooding.

Jake:

In the last rain event, based off the pictures that Jenny sent, my understanding is that some of the issue is that water can't get into the system quick enough, with it all being older swamp or hard surface or stone. A lot of it sits at grade and actually takes a while to soak down to get even into the top. So, by putting some surface drains in key areas, you'd be able to pull water directly from the surface, and that would allow it to get into the system faster and get out of the system faster, ahead of everything that's going to infiltrate into the ground and into the tile. So that would alleviate some of the ponding.

Don:

Who maintains that (lift station), and who watches that to make sure it's functioning correctly?

Jenny:

We don't have anyone.

Don:

I think that's something we just need to work out. Who would bear the lift station responsibility?

Jenny:

Probably to go out and look at it, yeah, but I would not be able to repair it. We'd have to call some outside resource.

Rudy:

You talked about more catch basins and stuff. And all that's going to do is get it to Sewell's house faster. The water came up there seven or eight feet. It's at maximum capacity. You can put 50 catch basins in there. Now, in my opinion about the pumps, I know some places where they work, but now you're going to have to buy a generator because the first time that electric goes out, that pump's done until you get electric back on. And it still has to go to a pressure line in the same direction that we're thinking about going.

Brad:

So, if you put a lift station in, that works great. That's not a 50-year fix. I mean, because if you're going to depend on that, then the existing tile, you haven't been draining anything. If that lift station goes outwards, that water's going to go nowhere. You'd probably have \$300,000 to put the lift station in with the generator and then you still have to force the main to the river. You're going to have to put something ahead of the river where it's not full force out into the river. Your best thing for down the road is a tile that's going to drain. You're going to have electric costs, you're going to have \$100 a month probably pretty easily in lift stations, plus maintenance. Plus, you're going to have \$7,000 to \$10,000 pumps every so often. So, then you've got maintenance. So, do they work? Absolutely, but...

Eric:

There are other options. We also need to look at a retention pond. Getting up around the county road, you can do a retention pond. You pump it to there. I mean, I think we just need to get out there and look, guys, and see what we can do with the money we have to do.

Jennifer:

Can we create some type of study group to have some different people who are familiar with this come out and put their minds together to come up with solutions, because you've got, Eric, you've got some great ideas. Rudy, you do. Jake, you've done all the work previous or prior to this, but if it's really about getting this cost down, because we are \$100,000 in the hole already, and it's going to be a huge expense to homeowners and businesses, if there are ways to reduce this to get the job done, I think we need to bring those people to the table to really problem solve this, to get the biggest bang for the least amount. We know we don't have any money available. But what money would be acceptable? That's what we need to find out.

Don:

As Jenny said, we'd have to dip in the GDI money or take a loan out, right?

Jenny:

And if you went with a loan, you obviously could extend that for however many years, because if you went through reconstruction, that's typically five years. First year is interest free, the remaining years are 10% interest tacked onto that. So, you're limited.

Jennifer:

Does GDI have to be paid back through the people and businesses in the watershed?

Jenny:

Yes.

Jennifer:

It does. You can't pay it back through some other funding.

Jenny:

Everyone in that watershed pays it back.

Unknown Speaker:

So, the \$900,000 price tag, does that guarantee you fixing the problem? You know, are you 100% guaranteed \$900,000, we're going to fix your issues, or can we cut it to \$450,000, but you're a 50/50 shot, so you spent \$450,000 and you've still got problems. Well, you might as well keep your money in your pocket.

Jennifer:

True. We've all said the best way is gravity through the 36-inch pipe. We know that that's the best way to do this, but I agree. Are there ways and do we have people here that have more knowledge than the rest of us do up here that could cut those costs significantly? And I think that's what we need to look at first.

Jenny:

We've replaced several spots with brand new tile. And we know that there's several spots that we still need to replace. So, is it something where if we continue on to where we have not replaced the tile that needs it? And then if we went over by the school and somehow did a reroute there instead of running all brand new 36, is that an option? That might be a cheaper thing too, but I don't know if that's going to help us.

Mike:

Jenny, can you and our engineer and Eric and Rudy get together and walk it and see what you guys could come up with and bring it back to the next meeting or the next month? Can you help out, Eric? I appreciate it. And get Zellers involved too.

Rudy:

To answer this gentleman's question, will it fix it? What happens when we get, I remember 12, 15, 20 years ago, we got 15 inches of rain, everything was flooded. It would fix it on 95% of the situations. But is there always going to be that time when we get 10 inches of rain in two days? Yeah, then you're going to see it could work. So, the answer is, regardless of what you do, there's still a possibility it might not handle it in every situation, in flood situations or whatever.

Mike:

So, well, it's never going to be 100%. I mean, you know, there's always something, but between you, and Eric, and Zellers, and the engineer, and Jenny ought to be able to come up with a realistic solution.

Kathy Lehman:

I'm Kathy Lehman. I'm here for the Friends of the Panhandle Pathway. I'm filling in for someone else and came here with very little knowledge of what's going on and how much it affects our trail. I wrote down questions. My questions were, which I did not realize, that it came from the school to the river. Is this correct?

Jenny:

Yes.

Kathy Lehman:

So, because we were wondering if all areas of it have been checked, if cameras have gone down, if there's blockage, if there's damage, if those have been checked, just like what you said, maybe go in and fix those. And, you know, a bandage job, if something more needs done down the road, that needs to be considered, which I think we are. Then why did this problem arise? Is this just something that has gradually gotten worse, the flooding over the years, it sounds, possibly?

Jenny:

So, this project's been, it's been going on for probably, I want to say probably 50 years plus, you know, with the flooding, the constant ponding of water and stuff out there. It's just the base thing is money. And yes, we have been band-aiding it for years and years and years, and it's time to try to get it rectified, but it is hard. We've been doing that, which is what we've had. And then as with the cameras, there are some areas that we've put cameras down, some areas are very hard to do. It's just been a problem for many years.

Kathy Lehman:

Yeah, and I'm sure you've been looking, but I just want to see if all those have been checked. Okay, thank you.

Mike:

Anybody else on the Ed Frain?

Don:

I'll make a motion to table the matter.

Jennifer:

I'll second the motion to table.

Mike:

We've got a second. All in favor say Aye. Motion carried to table.

CURRENT DITCH PROJECTS UPDATE

The Surveyor reported that all current ditch projects have been completed with the exception of some leveling. Potential projects for the fall are currently being worked on.

APPROVE CLAIMS

	PAYEE	AMOUNT	DITCH NAME/BUDGET LINE ITEM	APPROPRIATION #	FUND
A	Jim Dobson Ford	\$ 44.00	Gas, Oil, Etc.	22100.000.006	Co. Gen.
B	Howard's Marathon	\$ 84.18	Gas, Oil, Etc.	22100.000.006	Co. Gen.
C	Butler, Fairman & Seufert	\$ 12,655.00	Ed Frain Tile	50100.000.000	GDM
D	Gutwein Bulldozing	\$ 7,000.00	Lizenby Br. # 1 Ditch (1 of 2)	50100.000.000	GDM
E	Gutwein Bulldozing	\$ 999.00	Lizenby Br. # 1 Ditch (2 of 2)	50100.000.000	GDM
F	Gutwein Bulldozing	\$ 916.50	Lizenby Br. # 1 Ditch (Change Order)	50100.000.000	GDM
G	John Miller	\$ 490.00	Tyler Wiesjahn Ditch	50100.000.000	GDM
H	Beaver Excavating	\$ 6,996.00	Stone Dills Ditch (2 of 3)	50100.000.000	GDM
J	DeSbatine Bros. Excavating	\$ 187.50	Prather Ditch	50100.000.000	GDM
J	Gutwein Bulldozing	\$ 8,000.00	Slick Ditch (1 of 2)	50100.000.000	GDM
K	Gutwein Bulldozing	\$ 3,000.00	Uncoln Leach Ditch (2 of 2)	50100.000.000	GDM
L	Weaver/Fox Brothers Exc.	\$ 5,000.00	Graffis Ditch	50100.000.000	GDM
M	Pulaski County Press	\$ 8.75	Printing/Advertising (Ed Frain)	33200.000.063	Co. Gen.

Don motioned, Jennifer seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

APPROVE MINUTES

Jennifer motioned, Don seconded, all in favor, motion carried to approve the minutes from the March 12th Ed Frain Pre-Bid Conference, the March 16th regular drainage board meeting, and the March 20th Ed Frain Tile bid opening as presented.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT

Don motioned, Jennifer seconded, all in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:50am.

PULASKI COUNTY DRAINAGE BOARD

Michael McClure
MICHAEL MCCLURE-CHAIRMAN

Jennifer Knebel
JENNIFER KNEBEL- VICE CHAIRMAN

Donald Street
DONALD STREET - MEMBER

ATTEST:
LYNETTE WILDER
DRAINAGE BOARD SECRETARY