

Lower Kaskaskia Stakeholders, Inc.
Wednesday, October 22, 2025 - Noon
1860 Public House, 3rd Floor
102 South Main Street, Red Bud, IL 62278

The regular meeting of the Lower Kaskaskia Stakeholders, Inc. was held Wednesday, October 22, 2025 at 1860 Public House, 3rd Floor, Red Bud, IL.

Joe Behnken, LKSI President, called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. A sign-in sheet was available for attendees to sign. A total of 34 people were in attendance.

Minutes

Minutes of the August 27, 2025 meeting were distributed at the meeting. A motion was made by Carl Tebbe and seconded by Dave Holder to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Kevin Koenigstein presented the Treasurer's Report for September 2025. The checking account has a balance of \$7,914.86. The CD at North County Savings Bank has an amount of \$26,026.81, which will mature May 2026. The funds broke out include Operating Fund \$15,627.84, Barge Trip \$8,620.99, Eagle Fest \$2,328 and the New Athens fund at \$7,364.84 totaling \$33,941.67. A motion was made by George Obernagel and seconded by Joe Stukenberg to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion carried.

Vice President & Directors Reports

Governmental – Dave Holder

Dave Holder reported on projects in the area. The Randolph County Jail improvements will be completed late November, with some occupancy late October. The project costs approximately \$4.2 million, funded by a DOJ grant. Monroe Randolph County Enterprise Zone continues working on boundary changes for the district. Map amendment changes for the zone will be reviewed over the next week. Public hearings will take place early 2026. Egyptian Telephone is nearing completion on the fiber installation project in Baldwin and central Randolph county exchanges. Frontier Telephone is also continuing fiber updates on their lines in northern Randolph county. The Chester bridge project is proceeding nicely. The bridge is scheduled to open in late July 2026. All bridge supports and main structures are complete and steel erection is in process. Opening ceremonies are under development. The Randolph County Care Center improvements continue and should be complete by the middle of 2026. The improvements were funded by several coal transition grants from the State of Illinois.

Agencies – Ron Kaempfe, reporting for Ed Weilbacher

Ron Kaempfe reported that Ed Weilbacher and Brent Donovan are participating in the Fall IDOT Conference.

KRPD is in construction mode. Baxmeyer Construction has made tremendous progress putting in the second entrance road and the two laydown yards. They are scheduled to complete the majority of the work by the end of the year. The Port has two grants to support this project. One from EDA, and one from DCEO. The Port has had some feedback regarding the entrance road

and its intersection with IL Rt. 154. The complaint being it is too close to the hill. Rest assured, the engineers have checked the distances and the slope of the road and the location meets all standards. IDOT has to approve all connections to the state highway. They too, have approved the location of the entrance road. In fact, their concerns that were addressed dealt with the drainage and the location of culverts both under the highway and under the entrance. Our recommendation for all is to follow the speed limit, pay attention to the road, slow down if there is someone ahead of you, and stay off your cell phone.

Brent Donovan traveled to California to inspect the 10 rail cars that KRPD is purchasing. The cars will improve the efficiency and safety of unloading steel coils and moving the coils to the two new laydown yards.

Water Street in Evansville is taking more time than planned. The new docks are in and should be finished by the end of the month. There may be a soft opening this fall, but plan for a spring opening to the general public.

KRPD had to make emergency repairs to the bridge/culvert over Doza Creek on the rail between KRPD #1 and Lenzburg. Korte-Luitjohan from Highland, IL stepped up to assist and the project is near completion.

The most significant change to the Kaskaskia Regional Port District is the legislation that was proposed last Spring. That legislation was voted out of the Senate during the Veto session. It will go to the House and will pass next week. The Governor then signs it. The legislation will make several significant changes. One, that it merges the Southwest Port District into the KRPD. The five townships in St. Clair Co. along the river are the ones being added to the Kaskaskia Regional Port District. Those townships are Canteen, Centerville, East St. Louis, Stites, and Sugar Loaf. Southwest Port District is dissolved effective Dec. 1, 2025.

KRPD continues to wait for the ICC to finalize the application for the rail crossing at KRPD #1. Once that is approved and Lenzburg Township Road Commissioner signs the plans, KRPD will be ready to advertise for bids to build the rail loop.

Organizations - Jerry Phillips – No Report

Business - Dave Krebel – No Report

At Large – Doug Sachtleben – No Report

Corps of Engineers – Courtney Wilson – No Report

IDNR Report - Mic Middleton – No Report

Program – Southwest Connector PEL Study Update, Scott Manning – An informative presentation regarding the potential bypass was given by Scott Manning, HDR . IDOT has begun the PEL (Planning, Environmental and Linkages) study on the four-lane highway, which

is the first step of the project. Carrie Nelsen, IDOT, was also in attendance and provided information. Check out the website at www.southwestconector.com to stay up to date. A public meeting will be held in early Spring 2026. The final PEL Report will be available Fall/Winter 2027.

New Business –

John O'Donnell, HeartLands Conservancy, shared information on a water supply plan that HeartLands is working on for the Kaskaskia Watershed.

Norma Hall announced the annual 23rd Kaskaskia Watershed Association Summit will be held March 2, 2026 in Carlyle. All are invited to attend.

LKSI has a new email address which is lowerkaskakiastakeholdersinc@gmail.com.

The next regular meeting will be in January 2026.

With no other business to come before the group, a motion was made by Dave Holder and seconded by Mark Liefer to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 1:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Anna Guebert, Secretary