

Lower Kaskaskia Stakeholders, Inc.
Wednesday, May 27, 2026 - Noon
Vistra Power Plant, Training Building
10901 Baldwin Road, Baldwin, IL 62217

The regular meeting of the Lower Kaskaskia Stakeholders, Inc. was held Wednesday, May 27, 2026 at Vistra Power Plant, Training Building, Baldwin, IL.

Joe Behnken, LKSI President, called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. A sign-in sheet was available for attendees to sign. A total of 36 people were in attendance.

Joe Behnken thanked Mr. Mark Liefer and Vistra for hosting and providing lunch.

Minutes

Minutes of the March 25, 2026 meeting were distributed at the meeting. A motion was made by Norma Hall and seconded by Jerry Phillips to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Kevin Koenigstein delivered the Treasurer's Report for May 2026, noting a checking account balance of \$40,848.23. Recent expenses included payment for West Bend Event and Director Insurance and the license renewal for the LKSI-owned trailer. The CD at North County Savings Bank, which held \$26,714.62, matured in May 2026 and was subsequently transferred into the checking account. The funds broke out include Operating Fund \$17,120.29, Barge Trip \$14,247.10, Eagle Fest \$2,118.00 and the New Athens fund at \$7,362.84 totaling \$40,848.23. A motion was made by Red Becker and seconded by George Obernagel to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion carried.

Vice President & Directors Reports

Governmental – Dave Holder – No Report

Agencies – Brent Donovan

Construction on the loop track project at KRPD #1 is expected to begin in roughly three to four weeks, according to Brent Donovan. Because the project is fully funded by the state, a ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held once work is underway.

KRPD has awarded Meta Transportation and Taylor a package that includes two battery-electric locomotives, a forklift, and charging infrastructure to modernize port operations. The locomotives are anticipated to arrive in about 16 months and will be deployed at both KRPD #1 and KRPD #2. In addition, KRPD secured a \$16.2 million grant for improvements at the KRPD #2 south dock, which will add new rail, a 200-foot sheet-pile dock, and dolphins, increasing cargo capacity and providing operational redundancy.

The district recently received nine board reappointments, welcomed one new member, Jha'Shaira Farmer, and currently has two vacancies representing St. Clair County.

Brent also submitted a Community Project Funding request to Congressman Bost for Kellogg for rail rehabilitation and site-readiness efforts aimed at attracting new business; the request was approved for \$200,000. A separate request was submitted to Senator Duckworth to fund Phase I of the Pipeline Study, covering engineering and environmental work.

Regarding the Water Street Bar and Grill, Brent noted the barge hulls are scheduled for inspection on Friday, construction is ongoing, and the anticipated opening is in approximately six weeks.

Organizations - Jerry Phillips – The campgrounds in New Athens have seen steady, high activity lately.

Business - Dave Krebel – No Report

At Large – Doug Sachtleben – No Report

Corps of Engineers – Water Control Report – Joan Stemler, Liam Wallace, and Tim Lauth delivered a presentation on the revision of the water control manual. Their team oversees nine watersheds—two in Missouri and three in Illinois. The updated version of the water control manual is expected to be finalized by September.

Corps of Engineers – Garrett Fleming – Courtney Wilson has accepted a new position at Johns Hopkins Medical Center, and Doug Wasmuth will serve in her place for the next 120 days. Travis Little has transitioned to the Service Base, where he is now working as a project manager. Management of the Kaskaskia River—previously overseen by the Carlyle office—will shift to the River Project Office, which supervises the St. Louis District’s locks and dams. This transition will take place over the next several months.

Work on the dam gates is ongoing, with crews preparing to move on to the second gate. Approximately 18 months of work remain. An RFP for dredging at the river mouth has been issued and is scheduled to close next week.

IDNR Report – Jesse Walter, Site Superintendent for the historic sites with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), reported that Fort de Chartres is prepared for the 56th annual Rendezvous, scheduled for June 6–7, with opening ceremonies at 10:00 a.m. on both days. He also shared that the 187 steps connecting the Pierre Menard Home to Fort Kaskaskia have been fully refurbished. Updated signage and trail maps are being installed to improve visitor navigation. Randolph County’s America’s 250 celebration will take place on June 20 at Fort Kaskaskia from 12:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Three bands have been scheduled to provide live music.

September 11, 2026 Barge Trip – Committee member Susan Harbaugh reported that the Barge Trip is set for September 11, 2026, departing from Hank and Lilly’s Water Street Bar and Grill in Evansville. Cowbells will be provided as gifts, and t-shirts will be available for purchase at \$10 each. Speakers are being lined up. Contribution letters have been emailed, and planning efforts remain underway.

Old Business – None

New Business – Joe Behnken is seeking a successor for the role of President. Anyone interested is encouraged to contact Joe, Anna Guebert, or Kevin Koenigstein.

With no other business to come before the group, a motion was made by Will Harbaugh and seconded by Jerry Phillips to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Program – Mark Liefer shared reflections on his career at the Vistra Baldwin Power Plant, where he worked for 40 years before retiring. Michael McIntosh and Brandon Wobbe, both Renewables Technicians with Vistra, also spoke about their work at Baldwin, Coffeen and Newton, and ongoing renewable energy initiatives. A tour was provided for members following the presentations.

Respectfully submitted, Anna Guebert, Secretary