

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
MICHIGAN CITY REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
AUGUST 9, 2021**

The Michigan City Redevelopment Commission held their regular monthly meeting in the Common Council Chambers, City Hall, 100 E. Michigan Boulevard, Michigan City, Indiana, on Monday, August 9, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. local time; the date, hour, and place duly established for the holding of said meeting. This meeting also being available via Zoom and streaming live on My Michigan City, Indiana Facebook. Zoom was hosted by Kaleb Goodwin, City IT staff.

CALL TO ORDER

President Chris Chatfield called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners in attendance:

Ken Behrendt, Chris Chatfield, Angie Nelson Deutch, John Hendricks, Michael Mack – all appearing in person

Commissioners absent:

Non-voting advisor Thomas Dombkowski

Staff in attendance:

Executive Director Skyler York, Attorney Alan Sirinek, and Administrative Assistant Debbie Wilson – all appearing in person

MINUTES

The chair entertained a motion for approval of the minutes of the 07/12/21 executive session and the 07/12/21 regular meeting.

Motion made and seconded approving the minutes of the 07/12/21 executive session and the 07/12/21 regular meeting as submitted. The roll was called, and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Behrendt, Chatfield, Deutch, Hendricks, Mack – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the MOTION CARRIED.

CLAIMS

Mr. York reviewed the claims list dated August 9, 2021, noting that payroll for July 2021 totaled \$13,750.08. Mr. York read the claims listed into the record. In summary, August claims totaled: (Operating) \$300.00; (North TIF) \$86,161.40; (South TIF) \$19,599.79.

The chair entertained a motion.

Motion made and seconded approving the claims list dated 08/09/21 as submitted. The roll was called, and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Behrendt, Chatfield, Deutch, Hendricks, Mack – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the MOTION CARRIED.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. York reviewed the financial report dated 06/30/21, summarizing cash balances as follows: Operating Account \$196,793.03; South Side TIF Account \$8,125,530.87; South Side TIF Debt Reserve Account \$336,097.41; South Side TIF Capital Account \$17,072.16; North End TIF Account \$4,287,317.27; Northeast TIF Account \$112,199.80; for total cash of \$13,075,010.54. Loans Receivable include a loan to the Eastside TIF from the Operating Account in the amount of \$21,028.49, and the County Business Loan Fund in the amount of \$133,333.00, for a total of \$154,361.49, bringing total assets to \$13,229,372.03.

The chair entertained a motion.

Motion made and seconded approving the financial report/balance sheet dated 06/30/21 as submitted. The roll was called, and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Behrendt, Chatfield, Deutch, Hendricks, Mack – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the MOTION CARRIED.

SOUTH TIF CONNECTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT UPDATE

Ryan Laughlin, Haas & Associates, appearing via Zoom (video and audio) gave a project update, stating that there have been changes to the project scope, explaining that since June 24th the Redevelopment Commission (RDC) has requested various infrastructure be added into the project including street repair and replacement and the addition of new sidewalk and pedestrian crossing infrastructure as well. He said those services have been compiled into their Professional Services Agreement (PSA) Amendment 1, which is before the RDC tonight for consideration.

Regarding access authorizations, Mr. Laughlin stated that this is something DLZ is working on for their scope of work regarding land acquisitions. He reported that Haas met with the project team leaders from DLZ along with members of the RDC on July 15th to discuss coordination of land acquisition services which DLZ is providing to the RDC and also securing access authorizations to allow Haas to get the surveying work done that is required for the design. He stated that none of the required access authorizations have been provided to Haas to date.

Regarding topographic surveying, Mr. Laughlin stated that not much has changed. He reported that they have completed the Towne Center Drive tree lawns and that the Ameriplex Drive extended area and Towne Center Drive area are in progress and

scheduled. Pending authorization of the PSA amendment, all the items in that would be completed as well.

Regarding geotechnical investigation, Mr. Laughlin stated that they do have more work that needs to be completed, however it is all on private property and they have not received authorization to do that work yet. Mr. Laughlin stated that the same thing goes for wetland surveying in that they are waiting for access authorization for that work as well.

Regarding the preliminary layout design, Mr. Laughlin stated that the roadways and Towne Center Drive sidewalks and bus shelters are in progress, but all the items in the PSA amendment are pending authorization.

Regarding permitting, Mr. Laughlin stated that they scheduled a meeting with the Army Corp of Engineers and IDEM on August 23rd to discuss the permitting feasibility of the Towne Center Drive extended section as well as the requirements they may have. Also, on July 13th they met with INDOT's permitting and traffic department who has confirmed they agree with a crossing on Highway 421 at Larkspur Lane; they believe it is acceptable and feasible and they essentially gave the go ahead on that work. Mr. Laughlin noted that the design of that work is include in the PSA Amendment.

Generally speaking, Mr. Laughlin reported that the project is moving along well, but noted that given the fact they have not received any access authorizations yet for any of the surveying work that needs to be done, it will have an impact on the timeline.

In closing, Mr. Laughlin spoke about the amendment to the PSA, highlighting the additional services and detailing each by referencing Exhibit A on a shared screen. The additional services include, a) Topographic Surveying for the expanded surveying scope as depicted on Exhibit A; b) Preliminary Design to develop preliminary layouts and configurations for the Highway 421 sidewalk, the Westwind Drive sidewalk, the Meijer Drive sidewalk, the pedestrian crossing of Highway 421 and dual Larkspur Lane sidewalks, and the Larkspur Lane extension; and, c) Opinion of Probable Cost associated with the additional proposed infrastructure. The cost for these additional services is a not-to-exceed amount of \$25,400.

Commissioner Chatfield commented that this is a great project for the city, and it will provide some connectivity.

Mr. York expanded on comments, stating that this is an excellent project and it will connect the two sides of Highway 421. He pointed out that there is not a lot of space on 421 to walk, so people walk in the roads. This creates an opportunity to do something to provide a safe pedestrian crossing across 421. He noted that Larkspur Lane improvements were recently completed up to 421; this project would get across 421. He said this is an area where much needed sidewalks can be put in, pointing out that this is

already a signalized intersection and will provide a funnel to get the west side to the east side of 421. In his opinion, he stated that this is some “low hanging fruit” that they can accomplish in a relatively quick timeframe as long as they can get the right of way and construction documents going, and the fact that they have confirmation from INDOT that this is something they will approve.

Attorney Sirinek clarified with Mr. Laughlin that what is being proposed before the Commission tonight is an addendum to the original agreement, and the amendment is in an amount not-to-exceed \$25,400 to the original agreement previously approved.

Mr. Laughlin confirmed that was correct.

The chair entertained a motion.

A motion was made and seconded to approve Amendment No. 1 to the Professional Services Agreement (PSA) with Haas & Associates, LLC for the South TIF Connectivity Improvements (STCI) Project in an amount not-to-exceed \$25,400 in addition to the previously approved PSA. The roll was called, and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Behrendt, Chatfield, Deutch, Hendricks, Mack – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the MOTION CARRIED.

8TH STREET / MICHIGAN BOULEVARD

Mr. York provided an update stating that they are moving forward with a developer for the property at 8th Street/Michigan Boulevard. He recalled the Redevelopment Commission put that site up for offering a few months ago. A developer has been identified and they are working through the Development Agreement. He anticipates that to be done within the next couple weeks for formal approval by the Redevelopment Commission.

1215 E SECOND STREET

Mr. York provided an update stating that they have a project they are working on for this Redevelopment-owned building which was a previous warehouse/transfer station. A developer has been identified and they are moving forward with a Development Agreement. Hopefully the agreement will be done within the next couple weeks for formal approval by the Redevelopment Commission.

YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL SITE

Mr. York explained that this property has been used every year for parking for the Grand Prix boat race event; although this year’s request did not make it in time for the event held this past weekend. Mr. York said he worked with Ed Shinn (Park Department Superintendent) to work out the details to utilize the site for parking. Mr. York suggested that from a formality standpoint the Redevelopment Commission should approve this even though it is retroactive.

The chair entertained a motion.

Motion made and seconded for post approval of utilizing the Redevelopment-owned You Are Beautiful site for parking for the Grand Prix boat race event which was held August 5 – 8, 2021. The roll was called, and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Behrendt, Chatfield, Deutch, Hendricks, Mack – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the MOTION CARRIED.

AUGUST MACK CHANGE ORDER

Attorney Sirinek recalled that several years ago the Redevelopment Commission secured a settlement agreement allowing them to clean up all the properties along Trail Creek on the north and south side of Michigan Boulevard. In addition to the Commission's cleanup efforts it is also an IDEM site, so the Commission is working with IDEM adhering to their regulations and requirements for a successful cleanup; the plume is being monitored, some of the contaminants have been removed, and a plan has been designed to flush out some of the contaminants. Attorney Sirinek explained that the change order is in the amount of \$46,600 for monitoring wells to be put on the outermost side of where the plume is with the idea being that they will come back clean with no contaminants, and that information can be taken back to IDEM. Attorney Sirinek advised that this is a necessary cost and task that needs to be done. He reminded everyone that this is not City money, not Redevelopment Commission money, and not public money, but that this is in fact being paid by the actual polluters themselves for the overall cleanup of the Trail Creek properties.

The chair entertained a motion.

Motion made and seconded to approve Change Order 2 to August Mack for further site investigation and groundwater sampling of the Trail Creek properties (project no JV0286.380) in the amount of \$46,600. The roll was called, and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Behrendt, Chatfield, Deutch, Hendricks, Mack – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the MOTION CARRIED.

REPORT BY LEGAL COUNSEL

Attorney Sirinek noted that an executive session was held prior to this meeting. No decisions were made, and nothing was discussed other than what is permitted by Open Door Law.

REPORT BY DIRECTOR

Mr. York explained that he has an opportunity to hire an Assistant Planner to help him out and to help on the Redevelopment Commission side of things. He would restructure things in the department and this person would be more of a project manager for infrastructure related improvements, etc. Currently the Redevelopment Commission funds \$17,411.32 for this position. Mr. York asked that another \$7,300 be added to that to bring the salary up to \$24,711.32. Mr. York stated that he researched other cities of

our size to see what their salary is; and he confirmed that this amount can be justified. Mr. York asked for the Commission's approval.

Attorney Sirinek pointed out that Indiana Code 36-7-14-12.2(15) gives the Redevelopment Commission the authority to set compensation for Department of Redevelopment employees. He advised that the Commission is well within their authority by statute to grant this request if they so choose to.

The chair entertained a motion.

Motion made and seconded approving an adjustment to the salary of the Assistant Planner position for an additional \$7,300, bringing the salary to \$24,711.32.

Commissioner Chatfield commented that Mr. York has done a phenomenal job over the last 18 months and has been doing double duty. He said from his perspective it will certainly help him concentrate his time on pressing things. He said the individual being considered for this position is well qualified, will hit the ground running, and will take over some of the responsibilities; there won't be a lot of oversight initially. He said this is a smart move on the part of the Redevelopment Commission.

The roll was called, and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Behrendt, Chatfield, Deutch, Hendricks, Mack – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. York recalled receiving funding from NIRPC a few years ago for a complete street project, or what he considers a spur. He explained from a trail standpoint a spur is something that takes you to the trail, like going from a neighborhood to the actual trail. He stated that the current Singing Sands Trail terminus on the east side is at Liberty Trail. Eventually it will go all the way to the county line and into Michigan. He explained that this money must be spent, and some things have fallen in place, so now is the time to put these pieces together. He asked Butler Fairman & Seufert (engineers who designed the entire Singing Sands Trail system) to help complete this project. This trail would be proposed on Liberty Trail and would connect from Lake Avenue down Washington Park Boulevard and across Highway 12, connecting to the trail on Liberty Trail. It could be an on street trail or a separated trail, and it could include sidewalks. The goal is a complete street (it may not warrant all these things, but it will at least consider all modes of transportation – pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, etc.). Mr. York stated that currently for 2022 there is about \$9,000 in engineering right-of-way that can be used; in 2024 there is about \$624,000 for construction. The City's match would be \$124,000. INDOT has indicated that they intend on resurfacing all the 8 miles through Michigan City in 2024 as well. There may be some right of way and lane adjustments. They will also be adjusting the signals at Liberty Trail, which is an opportunity for signalized intersections if pedestrians and bicycles are crossing there. Mr. York stated that he asked Butler Fairman

& Seufert to provide a proposal for engineering of this project. In support of the funding, Mr. York stated that the project is in the North TIF, it is an infrastructure project, it creates economic development in that people come here to ride the trail, they ride into the Downtown and spend money there, etc. He stated that he thinks this is a good project and it starts connecting our neighborhoods. There is a better path and walkway to get to this trail, so it provides a larger benefit to our immediate community. Mr. York asked for the Commission's consensus to solicit this proposal from Butler Fairman & Seufert. He added that this project is a 20/80 split, so it maximizes our money.

There was a consensus by all for Mr. York to move forward.

Commissioner Chatfield added comments, stating that this is a great project and brings connectivity to a wonderful pedestrian path; currently you can go from Michigan City to Chicago on this path. He stated that he is in support of getting to the next step.

Mr. York indicated that he should have their proposal before the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Tommy Kulavik (1316 Ohio Street), appearing via Zoom, requested that the 2040 Comprehensive Plan be reposted on the City's website. He also commented that the street lights on the Cleveland Avenue extension glow purple but should be white.

Mr. York stated that they would need to investigate the color of the lights and stated the Momentum 2040 Plan has been posted on the website.

Kaleb Goodwin, City IT, confirmed that it is posted on the home page carousel.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Deutch expressed her excitement and commented that there are a lot of great projects and updates, stating that hopefully there will be some announcements and presentations soon. She mentioned that she did a couple visits over the last month, specifically one with another Redevelopment Commission in central Indiana. She said Michigan City is sitting on a gold mine of opportunity like no other area in the northern part of Indiana. She hopes as a Commission they become very creative and get things moved along a lot faster as housing opportunities are created for existing and new residents, whether it be workforce housing or affordable housing. She said we need all types of housing including mixed use availability. She encouraged City Council members and members of the community to take pictures as they see different developments, walking paths, bike paths, etc. in other communities. She also agreed that Michigan City has an opportunity with the Singing Sands Trail. She stated that they just must keep moving forward.

Commissioner Mack commented that the boat race was outstanding, stating that it brings in a sense of excitement. He said it was an excellent event and it looks good for the city.

He echoed comments by Commissioner Deutch stating that there are a lot of things going on, but they must make sure they put the right people in place and maximize on the opportunity that Michigan City has.

Commissioner Chatfield stated that what is impressive about this boat race and group of boats, racers, and teams is that this is the only freshwater event this group does in the entire United States and they have indicated that Michigan City is the only freshwater venue they will ever have. He said the commentator talked about freshwater versus saltwater and how it impacts the boats. He stated that it was great to see so many people attend and the fact that Washington Park was full. He added that this event streamed live on Facebook, so people all around the world saw it.

Commissioner Chatfield thanked Ms. Wilson, the department's administrative assistant, for providing timely information and reminding Commissioner's of the meetings every month. He thanked her, recognizing her for her hard work and keeping them on track.

NEXT MEETING DATE

President Chatfield announced that the next regular meeting is scheduled for September 13, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. in person as well as Zoom and streaming on Facebook.

ADJOURNMENT

The chair called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion made and seconded to adjourn. The chair declared the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:50 p.m.



Angie Nelson Deutch, Secretary