

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
MICHIGAN CITY REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
JANUARY 9, 2023**

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, January 9, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. local time; the date, hour, and place duly established for the holding of said meeting. This meeting was also available via Zoom and streaming live on My Michigan City, Indiana Facebook. Access LaPorte County Media hosted Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER

The first meeting of the year was called to order by Redevelopment Commission Executive Director Skyler York at approximately 5:04 p.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. York opened the floor to nominations for President.

Angie Nelson Deutch nominated Christopher Chatfield for President. There were no other nominations. Mr. Chatfield accepted the nomination. The roll was called, and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Behrendt, Chatfield, Dennis, Deutch, Werner – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. York turned the meeting over to President Chatfield to continue with election of officers.

President Chatfield opened the floor to nominations for Vice-President.

Angie Nelson Deutch nominated Kenneth Behrendt for Vice-President. There were no other nominations. Mr. Behrendt accepted the nomination. The roll was called, and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Behrendt, Chatfield, Dennis, Deutch, Werner – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the MOTION CARRIED.

President Chatfield opened the floor to nominations for Secretary.

Kathy Dennis nominated Angie Nelson Deutch for Secretary. There were no other nominations. Ms. Deutch accepted the nomination. The roll was called, and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Behrendt, Chatfield, Dennis, Deutch, Werner – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the MOTION CARRIED.

Officers for 2023 are: Christopher Chatfield, President; Kenneth Behrendt, Vice-President; Angie Nelson Deutch, Secretary.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners in attendance: Kenneth Behrendt, Christopher Chatfield, Kathy Dennis, Angie Nelson Deutch, Timothy Werner, and non-voting advisor Thomas Dombkowski (all in person)

Commissioners absent:
None

Staff in attendance:

Executive Director Skyler York; Assistant Planning Director Sylvia Collins; Attorney Alan Sirinek; Administrative Assistant Debbie Wilson (all in person).

President Chatfield noted that John Hendricks stepped down from the Commission last year. He introduced the newly appointed Commissioner, Timothy Werner.

Mr. Werner gave his background, noting that he grew up in Michigan City, moved away at a point in time, but moved back with his family in 1999. He spoke about his education and career in engineering, as well as working for a consultant in Michigan City and LaPorte and working for INDOT LaPorte District. He indicated he is happy to be serving on the Commission.

MINUTES

The chair entertained a motion for approval of the minutes of the 12/12/22 executive session and the 12/12/22 hybrid regular meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Deutch – seconded by Commissioner Behrendt approving the minutes of the 12/12/22 executive session and the minutes of the 12/12/22 hybrid regular meeting. The roll was called, and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Behrendt, Chatfield, Dennis, Deutch, Werner – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the MOTION CARRIED.

CLAIMS

Mr. York reviewed the claims list dated January 9, 2023, noting that payroll for December 2022 totaled \$23,613.71. Mr. York read the claims listed into the record. In summary, January claims totaled: (Operating) \$358.60 (North TIF) \$638,081.47; (South TIF) \$935,915.20; (East TIF) \$114,235.97; (Northeast TIF) \$2,640.60; (2019 Double Track Bond) \$1,350.00; (2019 Refunded Lafayette/Barker Bond) \$1,350.00.

The chair entertained a motion.

Motion made by Commissioner Dennis – seconded by Commissioner Deutch approving the claims list dated 1/9/23. The roll was called, and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Behrendt, Chatfield, Dennis, Deutch, Werner – 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 11/30/22, summarizing cash balances as follows: Operating Account \$253,782.37; South Side TIF Account \$7,479,184.90; South Side TIF Debt Reserve Account \$336,308.50; South Side TIF Capital Account \$16,572.25; North End TIF Account \$2,596,432.95; East TIF Account \$101,330.54; Northeast TIF Account \$421,330.25; for total cash of \$11,204,941.76. Loans Receivable include the County Business Loan Fund in the amount of \$133,333.00, bringing total assets to \$11,338,274.76.

The chair entertained a motion.

Motion made by Commissioner Behrendt – seconded by Commissioner Deutch approving the 11/30/22 financial report as submitted. The roll was called, and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Behrendt, Chatfield, Dennis, Deutch, Werner – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the MOTION CARRIED.

REQUEST TO UTILIZE REDEVELOPMENT-OWNED PROPERTY

Mr. York acknowledged Justin Post and Arturo Pozos being present in person representing Michigan City Mainstreet Association.

Justin Post stated his address as 2024 Oriole Trail, Michigan City, Indiana, and Arturo Pozos stated his address as 514 Holliday Street, Michigan City, Indiana. Mr. Post talked about utilizing Redevelopment-owned property for the annual Shelf Ice Brew Fest from February 23, 2023, through February 26, 2023, using vacant lots on the west side of Franklin Street at 7th/Franklin Streets, up to the alleyway going west. The area will be fenced off; there will be a warming tent with music. On the other side will be Lucky Hatchet with their axe throwing venue. He explained that damage to the grass area will be kept to a minimum. He recognized there was a problem with litter last year, so this year they are working on ways to mitigate the litter especially by reducing the amount of packaging for samples from the beer and wine vendors. After the event, the site will be cleaned up by volunteers. They will provide the necessary liability insurance. They have already received approval from the Board of Public Works & Safety.

The chair entertained a motion.

Motion by Commissioner Deutch – seconded by Commissioner Behrendt approving the request by Michigan City Mainstreet Association to utilize Redevelopment-owned property on the west side of Franklin Street at 7th/Franklin Streets, up to the alleyway going west, for the annual Shelf Ice Brew Fest from February 23, 2023, through February 26, 2023, subject to providing the appropriate insurance. The roll was called, and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Behrendt, Chatfield, Dennis, Deutch, Werner – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays, the MOTION CARRIED.

Commissioner Chatfield commented that the Shelf Ice Brew Fest makes Michigan City a 12 month year round destination, bringing a lot of people to Michigan City. He said he appreciates Michigan City Mainstreets' hard work to continue the tradition.

SOUTH TIF CONNECTIVITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Mr. York acknowledged Sylvia Collins (in person) and Jeff Wright (via Zoom) being present to give a project update.

Ms. Collins introduced herself as the Assistant Planning Director, stating she has been project manager for this project since she started working here. She gave an update stating that the project is moving forward successfully and that they are in the process of property acquisition to move forward with the second portion of the project.

Jeff Wright (via Zoom – audio) stated that he is with Haas & Associates, 526 Franklin Street, Michigan City, Indiana. He reported on the CC1 portion of the project, noting that Ryan Laughlin is the project manager but is on vacation. Mr. Laughlin provided Mr. Wright with an email, informing him that there were no significant updates other than a meeting being held with Mr. York, Ms. Collins, and Attorney Sirinek to discuss the project's next steps. Haas is waiting for a response from the Redevelopment Commission with regard to moving forward with the final design. Once there is approval with moving forward with the final design, Haas will provide an amendment to their agreement. Regarding the CC1 portion of the project that was bid on, Mr. Wright indicated that the contract was awarded but they are in a holding pattern until spring when a Notice to Proceed will be issued.

With regard to Mr. Wright's comment about a response back from the Redevelopment Commission, Mr. York stated that the response is in regard to the extent of design work. At their meeting they reviewed the project boundaries to make sure there is enough space for things like sidewalks, bus shelters, and pathways. They are in the process of surveying the right-of-way to determine how much is needed and how much will be constructed.

Attorney Sirinek added that with regard to the first contract (sidewalks, easements), it has been negotiated, approved, and executed by both parties. This work will be done in 2023 but will be done at the 2022 quoted prices.

LAFAYETTE/BARKER STORM SEWER MODIFICATIONS

Jeff Wright (via Zoom – audio), Haas & Associates, 526 Franklin Street, Michigan City, Indiana, gave an update on the project, stating that they did an inspection of the pipe as part of the project. He reported that the pipe itself is in spectacular condition; there are no flaws that they could see, the joints are intact, there are no cracks, there is no significant leakage through the joints that can be seen.

STATION BLOCK

Mr. York reported that the station block will be going through development review on January 24th. Since this is a new building, it must go through this process. At that time, they will get feedback from the various departments. He also reported that they have finalized their terms with IEDC and are waiting on getting those in writing; they are working on the Development Agreement; and in February they will start the bonding process for our portion of funding. The bid for the pre-cast garage went out before Christmas, so they are currently receiving bids. Once the bid is awarded, the contractor will be announced. He pointed out that there are a lot more bid packages to go out for this project.

YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL SITE

Mr. York reported that the developer has been notified that they have received funding from the state as well, and they are in the process of finalizing their terms with the state. He said most people are waiting on the letters right now because the state does them all at once. Mr. York said they are looking to close in the next few months and will work on the local financing as well.

Commissioner Chatfield pointed out that Michigan City was awarded two of the large project dollars throughout the state, which says a lot. There were 60 others that did not get any funding at all. He stated that it says a lot for how Indianapolis feels about these projects and Michigan City's longevity. He applauded everyone that was involved.

1215 E. SECOND STREET

Mr. York reported that the Burn 'Em Brewing project can be taken off the agenda going forward as it is now a completed project in that all the documents have been signed and they are ready to start their construction. All incentives are in place and the Commission has started to pay for other incentives to them. The property has been conveyed; they anticipate construction to start at the end of January or early February. Mr. York congratulated everyone, stating that it was a long time coming. He said it shows the difficulty of these projects, both big and small, even though they are all equally important.

Commissioner Chatfield commented that it has been two hard years to make sure that it came to fruition. The Redevelopment Commission has had the property for quite awhile. He stated that the gentleman from Burn 'Em worked very hard with Centier Bank to get an approval for the loan dollars, and the Redevelopment Commission stepped in, so it is now back on the tax rolls.

Commissioner Werner added that at INDOT they had meetings regarding the sidewalk from the casino to this property. He announced that it will be added in their current improvement project for sidewalk on the south side of US 12 up to this property from the casino property.

Commissioner Chatfield also pointed out that there is a rail spur that abuts against the property which was dedicated from one of the railroads. He said that will be hard packed to use with the Singing Sands Trail, creating access to all three breweries in the North End.

REVOCAION OF 3-WAY ALCOHOL LICENSE

Attorney Sirinek explained that there are specific requirements for the 3-way alcohol license program that the Redevelopment Commission has been using over the past 10-15 years as it relates to promoting economic development in Downtown Michigan City. One of those requirements relates to availability and being open. He recalled last month he identified four restaurants that there were concerns with and the fact that they had not opened when they were planning on opening. One was undergoing reconstruction for a better part of the year, and one was Agave Mansion. Attorney Sirinek advised that he had conversations with representatives of all four establishments. Chickpea is supposed to be opening up again next week; Café Farina will be opening at the end of the month; Vita Del Lago is open, so no action is needed with those three. Agave Mansion is permanently closed for financial reasons and overall operations. Attorney Sirinek stated that he has talked with their attorney and they have no objections to revoking the license. Attorney Sirinek advised that pursuant to state statute the Commission can revoke that license, and he recommended they do.

Motion by Commissioner Deutch – seconded by Commissioner Dennis to revoke the 3-way liquor license for Bocce Brothers, LLC d/b/a Agave Mansion located at 110 W. 9th Street. The roll was called, and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Behrendt, Chatfield, Dennis, Deutch, Werner – 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 commented about the state funding, stating that there are a lot of requested funds from the state with only \$50 million for tax credits on a yearly cycle, so for Michigan City to receive a nod for two awards is a big deal. Most of that money normally stays in larger cities. He said we should be proud that the state is seeing the merit of investing in Michigan City.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Tommy Kulavik (appearing in person) stated his address is 1316 Ohio Street, Michigan City, Indiana. He talked about businesses closing and not taking their signs down. He said that was a code violation, citing Section 19.05 of the Michigan City Municipal Code.

President Chatfield responded that this matter is not Redevelopment related but appreciated his comments, and directed him on who to contact.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Dombkowski commented on the progress being made with projects and agreed that receiving the state awards is an important thing for Michigan City.

Commissioner Dennis also commented on Indianapolis choosing us and recognizing what Michigan City is doing when there were so many other places they could have looked at, stating that it says a lot about the hard work that everybody does in Michigan City. She said the progress we are making is exciting.

Commissioner Deutch dittoed comments made, stating that it is a good way to start the year with two awards. She said it is unprecedented for a city our size to receive something like that. She said she is excited for the Shelf Ice Brew Fest to be continuing; thanking Mainstreet for continuing to support the city in bringing events like that. Commissioner Deutch expressed her excitement for all the things going on, and with the station block and You Are Beautiful site. She congratulated both developers, stating it is a phenomenal opportunity for the city.

Commissioner Behrendt welcomed Timothy Werner to the Redevelopment Commission. He said we are off to a good start for this year and that he is looking forward to it.

Commissioner Werner stated that he appreciates the opportunity to join the Commission and he thanked everyone for all their work.

Commissioner Chatfield stated he is proud of where we are. He said Northwest Indiana is never able to get state funding, although Merrion County does and is able to do projects. He said this is monumental what was accomplished – completed the Burn “Em Brewing project, with two other projects coming down the line which will be bonded within the next couple of months and breaking ground. There are more projects that will be moving forward. He added that Indiana has some of the best universities in the country. Commissioner Chatfield stated that he believes in Michigan City, where we are headed and what we are doing. He said we are making a difference and heading in the right direction.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next regular meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The chair called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Behrendt – seconded by Commissioner Deutch and unanimously approved. The chair declared the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:55 p.m.



Angie Nelson Deutch, Secretary