

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
MICHIGAN CITY REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
APRIL 10, 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, April 10, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. local time; the date, hour, and place duly established for the holding of said meeting. The meeting was also available via Zoom and streaming live on My Michigan City, Indiana Facebook. Access LaPorte County Media hosted Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER

President Christopher Chatfield called the meeting to order at approximately 5:03 p.m.

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; Attorney Alan Sirinek; Administrative Assistant Debbie Wilson (all in person).

Also present in person from the Planning Department was Associate Planner Kyle Anthony-Petter.

MINUTES

The chair entertained a motion for approval of the minutes of the 03/13/23 executive session, the 03/13/23 hybrid regular meeting, and the 04/04/23 special meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Dennis – seconded by Commissioner Deutch approving the minutes of the 03/13/23 executive session, the minutes of the 03/13/23 hybrid regular meeting, and the 04/04/23 special 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 April 10, 2023, noting that payroll for March 2023 totaled \$14,138.36. Mr. York read the claims listed into the record. In summary,

April claims totaled: (Operating) \$300.00; (North TIF) \$80,364.53; (South TIF) \$24,750.00; (Northeast TIF) \$12,500.00.

The chair entertained a motion.

Motion made by Commissioner Behrendt – seconded by Commissioner Dennis approving the claims list dated 4/10/23. 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 02/28/23, summarizing cash balances as follows: Operating Account \$206,400.48; South Side TIF Account \$7,722,474.57; South Side TIF Debt Reserve Account \$336,308.50; South Side TIF Capital Account \$16,482.11; North End TIF Account \$3,407,076.04; East TIF Account \$135,036.29; Northeast TIF Account \$581,167.55; for total cash of \$12,404,945.54. Loans Receivable include the County Business Loan Fund in the amount of \$133,333.00, bringing total assets to \$12,538,278.54.

The chair entertained a motion.

Motion made by Commissioner Behrendt – seconded by Commissioner Werner approving the 2/28/23 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.

FRANKLIN STREET 2-WAY STREET CONVERSION BID

Mr. York reported that one bid was received at the bid opening on 4/4/23. He said at this time he did not have a recommendation and requested that it be tabled to come back later, hopefully in May. He mentioned the concern with timing of the street conversion, assuring that if it cannot happen by Memorial Day weekend, they will wait until after Labor Day weekend, so the project does not disrupt traffic during the summer season.

The chair entertained a motion.

Motion by Commissioner Deutch – seconded by Commissioner Dennis to table the recommendation for the Franklin Street 2-way street conversion until the Director brings it back before the Commission. 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.

SOUTH TIF CONNECTIVITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Ryan Laughlin, Haas & Associates, appeared via Zoom – audio. He gave a project update on the CC1 portion of the project, stating they are still on track with providing the Notice to Proceed to the contractor by the end of this month. Although, this would depend on Attorney Sirinek’s progress on securing a final easement from Belle Tire. Assuming that is secured, they will give Notice to Proceed at the end of April.

Regarding the base project, Mr. Laughlin reported that they are still communicating with the regulators regarding the Fadi Daoud property and the potential use of that for wetland credits. They are also waiting for a response from the regulators regarding when to apply for official environmental permits from them, given the lack of ownership of all land required; and whether to wait to apply until all land is acquired, or if applications can be submitted prior to that.

Regarding final design for the remaining parts of the project, Mr. Laughlin reported they are finalizing that proposal and should have it ready for review by the Commission by the end of this week.

Attorney Sirinek advised that he will be meeting with the last owner tomorrow for easements for the CC1 portion of the project. He said he expects it to end positively. Regarding the roads for the Towne Center Drive portion of the project, Attorney Sirinek reported that they are at least half way there.

Commissioner Chatfield talked about the importance of this project for Michigan City, thanking Haas & Associates for their assistance on this project. He said he believes taking traffic off Franklin Street and allowing for sidewalks both on Franklin Street and the off streets is important.

STATION BLOCK

Mr. York gave an update, stating that they have received a copy of the addendum/final agreement with Flaherty & Collins. Currently, the staff is reviewing it, and he hopes to bring it back to the Redevelopment Commission for approval soon.

YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL SITE

Mr. York gave an update, stating that they will be receiving an addendum soon. They are waiting to hear back from the State on the tax credits.

Commissioner Dennis said the Public Art Committee is wondering if there is an idea of when the You Are Beautiful sculpture needs to be removed from the site.

Mr. York replied that he did not have a date at this time but would ask the developers.

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.

On a side note, Attorney Sirinek shared with the Commission that he and his wife recently traveled to Nashville, stopping at a deli in Louisville. The owner asked where they were from, and then said he has heard a lot of great things are happening in Michigan City and that it must be a great place to live right now. Attorney Sirinek commented that Michigan City is getting to be known nationwide for good reasons.

REPORT BY DIRECTOR

Mr. York commented that they are working on getting the agreements done so they can start moving forward with some other things with respect to the station block and the You Are Beautiful site.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bob Bailey (appearing in person) stated he has been a resident of Michigan City since 1960; his address is 311 Kenwood Place. He commended and congratulated the current members of the Redevelopment Commission and its predecessors for the incomparable good they have done in advancing the general welfare of Michigan City. He said their responsibility is vital as a continuing success of this community. Mr. Baily told Commissioners that he was the inaugural Executive Director of the Redevelopment Commission, being appointed in July 1960, and served in that capacity for 13 ½ years. He said that they were initially so seriously challenged that at one point, he and the Commission resigned in mass rather than compromising their standards. Although, with the promise of support he said they were convinced to return.

Mr. Bailey pointed out one exception to their work, stating that the North End Urban Renewal Program was approved by the Common Council over formal remonstrances, and those contesting filed suit. He said it took two years to work through the Indiana Supreme Court with a decision in their favor, and the success of the Redevelopment Commission carried on. Mr. Bailey said with significant and immeasurable opportunities on the horizon, he hopes the Commission will continue.

Commissioner Chatfield thanked Mr. Bailey, acknowledging that Mr. Bailey understands the importance of what they do as a group to push through economic development. He commended Mr. Bailey, stating that he appreciated him speaking on their behalf because people need to understand that this is not easy stuff.

Mr. Bailey said it was a challenging job, stating that they started with the Westside Urban Renewal Program. He said with the quick organization of the neighborhood and their support, the program went well. Then in turn, with the ultimate objective, they got involved with the North End, but had a lot of opposition to the point of mass resigning.

With the attention from the rest of the community on the importance of what was being attempted and their assured support, they stepped back into their responsibilities and with the help of the Commission, carried out a real improvement for Michigan City. Mr. Baily said his only disappointment is they did not proceed as he had hoped, which had to do with the attitude in Michigan City. When they started the North End program, there were people in Michigan City who said they did not want the Chicago people coming here. He said it was rough, but they prevailed, and he sees Michigan City's future quite brilliant, and the Redevelopment Commission will be carrying a lot of responsibility in that achievement.

Commissioners gave Mr. Bailey a round of applause.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Dombkowski said he appreciates Mr. Baily for setting the ground work. He said that stance which happened at that point is what was needed. He said Commissioners need to make that same stance even now. He stated it is great for Michigan City and he is excited.

Commissioner Dennis also thanked Mr. Bailey for speaking this evening. She agreed with Commissioner Dombkowski that the things Mr. Bailey did at the beginning of the Redevelopment Commission have carried over all these years. She acknowledged the importance of his work and thanked him.

Commissioner Deutch echoed comments, stating that she also appreciates Mr. Bailey. She said there is a lot more to come because of those efforts. Commissioner Deutch stated that everybody is starting to recognize Michigan City and what is being done. She said it is heartfelt to hear that, especially since they have been beat up so much by negativity; now people want to be here, developers want to be here, and people want to live here. She commented that they must keep it moving.

Commissioner Werner also thanked Mr. Bailey, stating that Michigan City was a great place for him to grow up.

Commissioner Behrendt shared a side story, stating he got his start in redevelopment in the 8th grade when he had a school project on Michigan City's population. He said he went to City Hall and interviewed Mr. Bailey, which got him interested, and he has been involved now for 20+ years. He said he appreciated Mr. Bailey, calling him a mentor, and thanked him.

Commissioner Chatfield stated that this is what communities are built on; people having longevity and having been involved. He said he truly appreciates everyone on this Commission, staff, and people that trust what they do day to day; and they appreciate the trust from the city. He referred to Commissioner Behrendt's comments, stating it is important, and pointed out that what we are missing today is understanding that we do

have people that are mentors who we need to look to. He said he appreciates Mr. Baily, what he has done by laying the groundwork, and moving forward to help get to where we are today.

NEXT MEETING DATE

President Chatfield announced that the next regular meeting is scheduled for May 8, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The chair called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Behrendt and unanimously approved. The chair declared the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:30 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angie Nelson Deutch", written over a horizontal line.

Angie Nelson Deutch, Secretary