

LA PORTE COUNTY REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 30, 2016

(Please Turn Off All Cell Phones)

A Regular Meeting of the La Porte County Redevelopment Commission was held on Wednesday, March 30, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. (CDT) in the Assembly Room #3 of the La Porte County Government Complex, 809 State Street, La Porte, IN 46350.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 4:05 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pledge of Allegiance led by Matthew Bernacchi.

ROLL CALL

Joe Coar – Present
Patricia Harris – Present
Vidya Kora – Present
Terry Larson – Present
Matthew Bernacchi– Present
Mark Kosior, Ex-Officio Member – Present
Lois Sosinski – Present
Randy Novak- Present

GUESTS

Dave Christiansen; La Porte County Redevelopment Director, Shaw Friedman; LaPorte County Redevelopment Commission Attorney, Mary Jane Thomas; Thomas and Associates, Karl Cender; Cendar & Company, and Frank Patton; CEO Great Lakes Basin Railroad.

Vidya Kora motioned to add to the agenda a presentation regarding Great Lakes Railroad Basin by Principal Frank Patton and Shaw Friedman. Lois Sosinski seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Vidya Kora motioned to nominate and elect by unanimous slate the current slate of officers for 2016: Joe Coar-President, Patricia Harris-Vice President, and Randy Novak-Secretary. Lois Sosinski seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dennis Metheny, 6757 W. 450 N. requested agendas for the public be available.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The December 1, 2015 special meeting minutes were presented for review. Vidya Kora motioned to approve meeting minutes as presented. Matthew Bernacchi seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mary Jane Thomas; La Porte County Office of Economic Development, presented the Treasurer's Report prepared by the La Porte County Auditor. The fund balances are as of March 30, 2016. The Fund 4001 KIDC Project TIF balance is \$152,720.00, Fund 4501 I94/US Route 421 TIF balance is \$211,367.51, Fund 4504, I94/US421 /11/26/2008 TIF balance is \$175,644.92 Report for the 39 North TIF will be provided as soon as the Auditor has the information. Matthew Bernacchi motioned to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Vidya Kora seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried.

OLD BUSINESS

KIP Development Update. Dave Christian: Director La Porte County Office of Economic Development reported there continues to be a lot of activity at KIP. JBC Rail has invested \$4 million in rehabbing track and in the spring will start rehabbing additional track. Additional companies have shown interest in KIP with the track rehab. More news will be forthcoming on a La Porte County company that will be expanding due to the efforts of the Office of Economic Development. Shaw Friedman; Redevelopment Commission Attorney, reported on the results of a settlement with NIPSCO. NIPSCO will invest \$3.5 million in new infrastructure for the aging electrical system at Kingsbury Industrial Park.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Consideration of Cender & Company 2016 Consulting Service Agreement- \$15,000.**
Karl Cender presented the annual Redevelopment Commission professional services agreement for financial advisory services. Professional services include preparing and filing the annual comprehensive report as required by state statute and providing financial analysis for incentives for potential businesses. Vidya Kora motioned to approve the Cender & Company 2016 Consulting Service Agreement in the amount of \$15,000.00, as presented. Lois Sosinski seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- B. Resolution of the LaPorte County Redevelopment Commission Concerning 2017 Budget Year Determination for Tax Increment For La Porte County**

Redevelopment Commission Allocation Areas: Karl Cender: Cender & Company, explained the proposed resolution authorizes the Commission to file a determination to not release any of the captured assessed value, to County Auditor, for each of the TIF districts for the 2017 budget year. Matthew Bernacchi motioned to approve the Resolution 2016-1 as presented. Terry Larson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- C. **Consideration of FY2015 Annual Report of the LaPorte County Redevelopment Commission.** Karl Cender: Cender & Company presented the FY 2015 Annual Report of the La Porte County Redevelopment Commission to be filed with the State Board of Accounts. The report summarizes the finances for each of the allocation areas, income, expenses, ending cash balances and any outstanding debts, lists commission members, offices and employees and any other activities of the Commission. A parcel list for each allocation area is also included. Vidya Kora motioned to approve the FY 2015 Annual Report of the La Porte County Redevelopment Commission as presented. Matthew Bernacchi seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- D. **Consideration of engaging Cendar & Company to undertake a payment in lieu of taxes analysis of potential service to new St. Anthony Hospital on the northwest corner of I94/421.** Shaw Friedman: Commission Attorney explained St. Anthony hospital will potentially be relocating within a County TIF district. There has been discussion with Michigan City providing water and sewer, police and fire services. A financial analysis needs to be performed if that is to occur that would analyze the loss of income to the TIF, and financial impact to both organizations. Shaw Friedman reported the cost for the study will be shared equally between Michigan City and La Porte County Redevelopment Commission. The analysis will be completed in the next 30-45 days. Karl Cender & Company explained the contract would not exceed \$25,000. Terry Larson motioned to approve the contract as presented. Vidya Kora seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- E. **Consideration of Assignment of Tax Certificate.** Shaw Friedman; Commission Attorney reported the County Commissioners have removed a parcel of land from tax sale that would help the development. The three (3) acre parcel can be assigned the La Porte County Redevelopment Commission for development purposes. The first step is to assign a tax certificate which triggers a 120-day redemption period. Matthew Bernacchi motioned to accept the tax certificate for the three (3) acre parcel at Kingsbury Industrial Park. Vidya Kore seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- F. **Presentation regarding Great Lakes Basin Railroad project by Principal; Frank Patton.** Shaw Friedman: Commission Attorney, reported the Commission has given the challenge to the Economic Development team is to undertake steps necessary to bring high wage ,distribution and manufacturing jobs to development areas like Kingsbury Industrial Park but also to protect quality of life, the environment, and public health and

safety. The Great Lakes Basin Railroad project will bring freight on a bypass rail route around Chicago with an ending point at Kingsbury Industrial Park with potentially 1,000 jobs. The challenge is to find a route that is minimally invasive. The project involves all private sector dollars. The developers are willing to meet with every landowner individually. Public hearings are scheduled to occur in the next two weeks. Shaw Friedman introduced Mr. Frank Patton, CEO of Great Lakes Railroad Corporation. Frank Patton presented the Great Lakes Basin Railroad project to the Commission.

LaPorte County Redevelopment Commission members asked questions concerning the project to Frank Patton. Shaw Friedman explained the project has a long process ahead with the first public hearing on April 13th at the Wanatah American Legion Hall and April 14th at the La Porte Civic Auditorium. Questions arose over the timeline of the project and potential job impact. Frank Patton explained, after the public hearings completed, the Environmental Impact Statement process takes 18-36 months with permitting expected to finish the end of 2017 and the project built 2 years later. 10,000-12,000 people will be needed to build the project, plus 500 employees for the main office. Shaw Friedman explained investors have guaranteed 100% union trades and wages regardless of right to work.

Public Comment

Glen Minich, local farmer, stated many good points were made but does feel there a fatal flaw in a section of the route going into Kingsbury Industrial Park that could save money by utilizing existing CSX rail. Mr. Minich requested that option be reviewed.

Dennis Metheny, 6757 W. 450 N asked if eminent domain will be used. Will there be a garage dump at the end of the track hauling out of state or out of county trash? How much tax payer money will be used?

Tom Fath, 410 Ash Parkway, Westville, representing Westville Planning Commission, believes the Town of Westville was missed in the study. The proposed rail route divides the town. Mr. Fath requested the route through Westville be reviewed and changed around Westville. Shaw Friedman stated there is flexibility in the route and towns will not be split.

Frank Patton addressed Mr. Metheny's questions. The project will not cost the taxpayers and the project does not involve a garbage dump. Property owners will be negotiated with after all the public meetings. Shaw Friedman reiterated the policy in place by La Porte County for over 10 years that eminent domain will not be utilized by the County. Mr. Patton did acknowledge that there is federal railroad eminent domain law but negotiating is the preferred form of land acquisition.

Other Business

None

ADJOURN

Vidya Kora motioned to adjourn the meeting at approximately 5:50 PM. Matthew Bernacchi seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously .