

LA PORTE COUNTY REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

July 22, 2026

The La Porte County Redevelopment Commission meeting was held on Wednesday, July 22, 2026, 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.

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Vice-President Parkman at 4:00 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL

Adam Koronka – Absent

John Carr – Present

Scott Cooley – Present

Jennifer Heath – Present

Mark Parkman – Present

Connie Gramarossa – Absent

Brett Kessler – Present

Jennifer Farley, La Porte Community Schools Ex-Officio – Present

Others Present: Attorney Guy DiMartino, RDC Attorney; Michael Rosenbaum, La Porte County Auditor; Mitch Bishop, La Porte County Planner; Matt Reardon, MCR Partners; and Mary Jane Thomas, MjThomas & Associates.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Vice-President Parkman announced an addition to the agenda of “Kingsbury Industrial Park (KIP) Switcher Agreement” under “Old Business”. Scott Cooley motioned to approve the agenda with the additional item of the Kingsbury Industrial Park (KIP) Switcher Agreement. Jennifer Heath seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tony Kazakovich of the Chicago South Shore & South Bend Freight Railroad spoke regarding the proposed KIP Switcher Agreement. Concerns were expressed regarding governance of rail operations within Kingsbury Industrial Park, the proposed \$200 per-car fee, and future maintenance and investment obligations.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Brett Kessler motioned to approve June 24, 2026, meeting minutes as presented. Jennifer Heath seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER’S REPORT

421/I-94 #1 - \$664,185 .

421/I-94 #2 - \$-63,368.

KIDC - \$238,451.

39 North - \$277.

I94/35 - \$10,436.

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Jennifer Heath motioned to approve the treasurer's report. Brett Kessler seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

CLAIMS

<u>TIF</u>	<u>VENDOR NAME</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>
KIDC	MCR Partners	July '26 Professional Services	\$1,000.00	
	Guy S. Di Martino, PC	July '26 Legal Services	\$1,500.00	
	Herald Dispatch	Claims Legal Publication	\$22.87	
Subtotal				\$2,522.87
US 421 #1	MCR Partners	July '26 Professional Services	\$4,000.00	
	Subtotal			\$4,000.00
39N	MCR Partners	July '26 Professional Services	\$1,000.00	
Subtotal				\$1,000.00
TOTAL OF REGULAR CLAIMS				<u>\$7,522.87</u>

Vice-President Parkman read the claims as presented for payment for the Kingsbury Industrial Park (KIDC) TIF area from the Claim Docket. Scott Cooley motioned to approve the Kingsbury Industrial Park (KIDC) TIF area claims in the amount of \$2,522.87. John Carr seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Vice-President Parkman read the claims as presented for payment for the US 421 #1 TIF area from the Claim Docket. John Carr motioned to approve the US 421 #1 TIF area claims in the amount of \$4,000.00. Scott Cooley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Vice-President Parkman read the claims as presented for payment for the 39 North TIF area from the Claim Docket. Jennifer Heath motioned to approve the 39 North TIF area claims in the amount of \$1,000.00. John Carr seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

1. 421/94 KIP Update – Matt Reardon; MCR Partners

Matt Reardon announced that Michigan City has placed a moratorium on extending its sanitary sewer service, and the water department is possibly taking a similar position.

Mr. Reardon reported the hotel appears to be open now. There had been some issues, likely related to the elevator, but those appear to have been resolved. There is a significant amount of property between the county line and the landfill along US421 that may be a strong candidate for future distribution-related activity. The team plans to begin discussions with landowners in that area to determine whether there is interest in selling. Van Air is already located in that area, and the existing water and sewer extension provides the capacity needed to support additional connections. For that reason, the area appears to be a logical location to continue promoting growth opportunities for the county. He noted the area is high and dry, which supports future development potential. Vice-President Parkman asked if there is existing water and sewer capacity

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for the development, that the current moratorium doesn't affect the site. Mr. Reardon responded no, it does not affect the site.

2. Kingsbury Industrial Park (KIP) Update – Matt Reardon; MCR Partners

Mr. Reardon noted the switcher agreement's purpose is to establish a clear framework for rail service at the park. South Shore has provided rail service to customers for many years, and that service is appreciated. JBC, however, was selected through the bidding process to serve as the designated switcher. The agreement is intended to bring both parties together so operations can proceed cooperatively and consistently under the rules established for that role. South Shore's proposed agreement included language regarding potential investments, which was appreciated. During a call with Tony Kazakovich, Senior Director of Sales & Marketing for the Chicago South Shore & South Bend Railroad, and Todd Bjornstad, Anacostia Rail, earlier today, it was suggested that any specific ideas for investment in Kingsbury Utility should be brought forward for discussion. Mr. Reardon noted the following:

- JBC and Lindborg have invested millions of dollars to establish the rail connection in the park.
- Both the private parties and the county have significant capital at risk.
- JBC Rail is in the process of repaying the council \$550,000.
- \$200-per-car fee, will assist in the repayment.
- The County's note for the track connection was approximately \$6 million, which is why recouping revenue remains important.

For these reasons, the agreement is structured to support coordinated rail service while helping the county recover a portion of its investment.

Mr. Reardon reported a proposal has been presented for a battery energy storage system facility at Kingsbury Industrial Park. The estimated investment is approximately \$300 million. The project team has worked with the LaPorte County officials and the engineering team to discuss the proposed location and how the project would operate. The expectation is that the applicant will continue with its filing to locate the project at Kingsbury. The project team was directed to coordinate directly with the local fire departments and obtain sign-off from the chiefs so emergency response expectations, procedures, and statutory requirements are fully understood. The proposal represents a significant potential tax revenue opportunity. With an estimated project cost of approximately \$300 million, applying 65% of that value against the tax rate provides a general sense of the property tax revenue the project could generate. The applicant will also continue working with MS4 and stormwater officials to ensure those requirements are addressed, particularly given the concerns that can arise with this type of operation.

Mr. Reardon noted Kingsbury Industrial Park is well suited for projects of this size and nature because it is intentionally separated from residential areas. The park is approximately five miles long and three miles wide and was designed to support industrial uses away from population centers. The LaPorte County Plan Commission has also approved rezoning for a project near Stillwell outside the substation, which appears to be another appropriate location. For projects of

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this scale, Kingsbury remains one of the most suitable areas because it is zoned M1 and M2 and can accommodate controlled, county-approved industrial investment.

3. 35/I-94 TIF Update – Matt Reardon; MCR Partners

Matt Reardon reported the update focused on Michigan City's utility moratorium. Until additional utility capacity is available in a manner similar to the 421 and I-94 area, related development activity may remain at a standstill. Based on the available communication, Michigan City appears to be pursuing a rate case that could increase utility costs. The city may also have capital projects planned or underway. Wendy Vachet, Director of Public Works for the City of Michigan City, has been asked to forward any projected bond or capital project information when it becomes available. MCR Partners will continue to monitor the project and provide updates as details develop.

4. Kingsbury Industrial Park (KIP) Switcher Agreement – Matt Reardon; MCR Partners

Matt Reardon explained that JBC Rail was previously selected as the designated switcher for the park through an open process. South Shore also serves customers in the park. The proposed switcher agreement is intended to clarify responsibilities, align operations, and ensure that rail activity follows the park's established operating rules such as

- Chicago South Shore would remit a \$200-per-car fee.
- South Shore would participate in maintenance obligations for the park.
- South Shore would comply with park operating rules and coordinate with JBC Rail.
- Required insurance coverage would remain in place.

The county invested approximately \$6 million in rail infrastructure at Kingsbury. Because the original project did not materialize, the county now owns the rail assets and is seeking a modest revenue stream to help recover value from that investment. The agreement runs through 2028 and aligns with the related CSX agreement. At that point, the board can review rail activity and determine whether to continue the current structure, modify the arrangement, or consider other options for the assets.

Attorney DiMartini suggested South Shore, JBC Rail, and county representatives should meet directly if South Shore returns substantive comments or amendments. The goal would be to resolve outstanding issues between meetings and avoid recurring delays. The discussion also emphasized that the county owns the easements, track, and park infrastructure. Because of that ownership and the level of public investment involved, the county expects appropriate compensation for use of the assets.

Brett Kessler motioned to approve the Kingsbury Industrial Park switching agreement. Jennifer Heath seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The agreement will be sent to Chicago South Shore, and if substantive comments or changes are returned, the parties will attempt to meet before the next board meeting to move the matter forward.

NEW BUSINESS

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ADJOURNMENT

Scott Cooley motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:42p.m. Jennifer Heath seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The next meeting will be held on August 26, 2026.



Mark Parkman, Vice-President

Adam Horonka, President

Attest: _____

Connie Gramarossa, Secretary