

MINUTES
WHITLEY COUNTY REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Tuesday, February 11, 2020

WHITLEY COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
1st FLOOR-COMMISSIONERS/COUNCIL MEETING ROOM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jim Argerbright
Frank Kessler
Michael Schrader
George Schrupf
Kim Wheeler
Jill Western

GUESTS

Steve Western

MEMBERS ABSENT

LEGAL COUNSEL

Andrew Boxberger

STAFF

Jon Myers
Jana Schinbeckler
Amanda Thompson
Tiffany Forrester

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Argerbright called the meeting to order at 8:00 A.M. and read roll call. All members present and absent are listed above.

IN THE MATTER OF MINUTES

The minutes for the December 23, 2019 regular meeting and the January 28, 2020 regular meeting were presented for approval. Mr. Argerbright asked for additions or corrections to the December 23, 2019 minutes. Hearing none, Mr. Argerbright called for a motion. Mr. Wheeler made a motion to approve the December 23, 2019 minutes as presented. Mr. Schrupf seconded, and the motion passed by a vote of 3-0. Mr. Kessler and Mr. Schrader abstained because they were absent from the meeting.

Mr. Argerbright asked for additions or corrections to the January 28, 2020 minutes. Hearing none, Mr. Argerbright called for a motion. Mr. Schrader made a motion to approve the January 28, 2020 minutes as presented. Mr. Schrupf seconded, and the motion passed by a vote of 3-0. Mr. Kessler and Mr. Wheeler abstained because they were absent from the meeting.

RAIL CONNECT ADDITIONAL LIGHT POLES

Mr. Myers stated that he received a cost estimate from Northeastern REMC for additional light poles on Rail Connect Drive. Mr. Myers reminded the Commission that there had been previous discussion of whether it would prefer to buy or rent the lights, and that the Commission had favored buying the lights and having the Rail Connect Owners Association cover the costs. Mr. Myers stated that the cost of purchasing the poles and lights along with installation was quoted at \$7,843.26.

Mr. Argerbright asked the Commission if it had any questions. The Commission and Mr. Boxberger discussed the Commission's previous discussions concerning adding lights along Rail Connect Drive along with its options for financing such improvements.

Mr. Kessler made a motion to purchase two poles and lights for Rail Connect Drive from Northeastern REMC for \$7,843.26. Mr. Schrader seconded, and the motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

RAIL CONNECT PARKING

Mr. Myers stated that he has had conversations with owners and tenants at Rail Connect Business Park concerning the potential of constructing a parking lot there for trucks to use while waiting to load and unload products at businesses located in the park. Owners and tenants had conveyed to him that there have been problems with congestion along Rail Connect Drive caused by a large number of trucks waiting to make deliveries. Mr. Myers stated that he recently had a conversation with Joe D'Italia about the potential construction of a parking lot on a lot in the Park. Mr. D'Italia had talked with Simon Dragon and he would transfer the land to the Commission if the Commission agreed to place a parking lot on the land. Mr. Myers stated that, after construction of the parking lot, the Commission could enter into an agreement with the Rail Connect Owners Association to deed the property over to the Association so that it would be responsible for maintenance of the parking lot.

The Commission asked Mr. Myers if he had any idea how much the site work would cost or the size of the parking lot. Mr. Myers stated that he did not know.

Mr. Schrader asked if the Rail Connect Owners Association has the time and resources required to maintain a parking lot. Mr. Boxberger stated that the Owners Association may need to raise fees to fund maintenance of a parking lot. He recommended that the Commission should enter into an agreement with the Owners Association that states that they agree to own and maintain the parking lot. Mr. Argerbright stated that any major repair would likely require assistance from the Commission.

Mr. Myers asked if anyone had concern with potential illegal activity. Mr. Schrader stated that keeping the parking lot well-lit should deter illegal activity.

Mr. Boxberger recommended that the Commission or Mr. Myers reach out to the Owners Association to gauge its interest in the project.

The Commission members agreed that cost will be a major factor in whether the project proceeds.

The Commission, Mr. Myers, and Mr. Boxberger discussed the number of trucks that would be entering and exiting Rail Connect Drive during an average business day. Mr. Boxberger suggested the possibility of entering into an agreement with Mr. D'Italia to construct a parking lot if the Owners Association is not interested.

FIRST RAIL CONNECT SPEC BUILDING

Mr. Schrupf asked Mr. Myers about prospects for the first spec building in Rail Connect Business Park. Mr. Myers stated that three companies have expressed interest, that it will be available in May or June, and that all three have been asking him how soon they could move in to the space.

MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

Mr. Myers stated that he had discussed next steps for the lotron expansion with Mr. Boxberger. He stated that Bond Counsel had quoted \$35,000 for its work related to acquiring a bond for the project. Mr. Boxberger stated that the Commission would have to determine what size of bond could be supported by additional tax revenues generated by the expansion. Mr. Boxberger added that the increment generated by the expansion would pay for the bond and reminded the Commission about the type of bond that could be issued for the project based on outstanding bonds.

Mr. Myers stated that he recently spoke with Mr. Argerbright about the Commission considering an increase of the amount it pays to the Whitley County Economic Development Corporation. Mr. Myers stated that the Commission currently pays the EDC \$6,250 per quarter. Mr. Myers stated that it would

be nice to see that amount increased by \$8,000-\$10,000 annually. Mr. Myers added that the EDC is not struggling financially currently, but that he wants to plan ahead as he will be retiring from the EDC soon.

Mr. Schrader asked Mr. Myers when the last time that the EDC fees were increased. Mr. Myers stated that the last increase occurred approximately 5 years ago. The Commission agreed that the EDC has made the Commission's work easier and more efficient.

Mr. Wheeler stated that he would like to see the Commission's annual financial report from Baker Tilly before making a decision, and that the Commission will look at a possible increase this July or August when it considers the 2021 budget.

Mr. Argerbright stated that he spoke with a representative of Red Star in Larwill and that their septic system has reached its capacity for their number of employees. Mr. Argerbright stated that they would like to see a sewer extension to the facility to permit continued expansion. He added that the sewer in closest proximity is located under US 30. There was discussion about the Larwill TIF district, Larwill Utility Infrastructure Study, and a potential extension of sewer infrastructure to Larwill.

Mr. Argerbright stated that has heard that there are still some drainage issues with a field tile along Raber Road related to the SDI sewer project. Drilling gel was found in the field tile. He stated that now is the time to correct the issue. The Commission discussed the topic.

CLAIMS

Claims were reviewed and consisted of Star Financial Bank Loan Services (Series A and Series B Redevelopment Loan payment), \$398,024.52; Whitley RC Investments II, LLC, \$76,351.46 (January and February road rent, 5627 E. Rail Connect Drive); and Weigand Properties, LLC, \$90,000.00 (January and February rent, Park 30 Business Center, Section III, Lot 21).

Mr. Boxberger clarified that the March road rent payment to Whitley RC Investments II, LLC will be the last full payment and that the April payment will be a half payment, as one year has passed since substantial completion.

Mr. Boxberger and the Commission discussed the payment to Weigand Properties, LLC.

[Note that there was no motion, second, or vote on the claims item. The claims were signed.]

Mr. Myers, Mr. Boxberger, and the Commission discussed road work being completed in Park 30 Business Center.

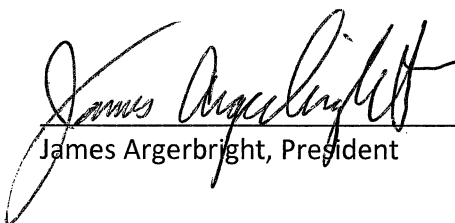
Mr. Argerbright asked Ms. Western about construction progress at the new Columbia City High School. She stated that the school is still planning to open in fall 2020.

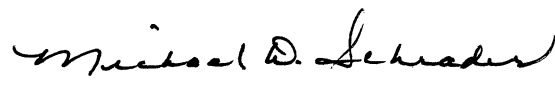
Mr. Myers stated that the EDC's annual meeting will be held March 19.

There being no further business, Mr. Argerbright declared the meeting adjourned at 8:41 a.m.

WHITLEY COUNTY REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

ATTEST:


James Argerbright, President


Michael Schrader, Secretary