

MINUTES
WHITLEY COUNTY REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Tuesday, November 1, 2022

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

MEMBERS	PRESENT	ABSENT	STAFF	
Jim Argerbright	X		Nathan Bilger	Scott Wagner
Chad Banks	X		Brent Bockelman	Tamela Tincher
Frank Kessler	X		Cami Hippenhammer	Dale Buuck
Michael Schrader	X		Tiffany Deakins	Brad Allen
Kim Wheeler	X		LEGAL COUNSEL	
Jill Western	X		Andrew Boxberger	
GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE			GUESTS ON-LINE/PHONE	

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Argerbright called the regular meeting to order at 8:00 A.M.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Argerbright read roll call. All members present and absent are listed above.

RAIL CONNECT PROPERTY UPDATE

Mr. Boxberger stated that an offer of \$75,000 was received on the Lot 502 property from Ambassador Enterprise. He stated this matched the appraised value. Discussion was made about reducing the Commission’s asking price of the other property, Lot 4, by \$75,000. Discussion was also made regarding the improvements planned for the test track area. Motion was made by Mr. Kessler to accept the offer of \$75,000 from Ambassador for the Lot 502 property, seconded by Mr. Schrader. Motion carried by a vote of 5-0. Mr. Kessler made a motion to approve the reduction of the price of the Lot 4 property by \$75,000, seconded by Mr. Schrader. Motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

BUSCHE PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. Argerbright discussed the meeting that was taken place with the mayor’s office. An agreement was made for the City of Columbia City to pay \$140,000 for engineering and half of the project cost. He stated that the Commission would fund the project with the City of Columbia City to repay the Commission over time with earnings from the utility line and final balloon payments at the end of the 9–10-year timeframe. Discussion was made about funds to be used. Mr. Boxberger discussed the City being the project manager and bringing invoices to the Commission for payment as claims. The Regional Sewer District area of service was discussed, as they would need to officially release the area involved from their service territory. Reconstruction of the 100 South and timing of the improvements was also discussed. Discussion was made about future expansion of the development. Consensus was to move forward with an agreement with the City of Columbia City.

GATTON PROJECT

Mr. Argerbright began the discussion of the jail project. Mr. Boxberger discussed that this would be almost identical to the request made by the school system, in that the Commission would pay for parts

of the construction activity that would benefit the TIF. These could include officers patrolling the area, workforce training, and rehabilitation. Like the school project, money would be put into an escrow account, and the money would only be used for that part of the construction project. He stated that the first step would be to amend the Economic Development Plan to make sure that those uses are included in the plan.

Mr. Kessler asked if this is within the statutes to allow. Mr. Boxberger stated that with it being outside of TIF district, the funding would need to directly support the district. The statutes do not give detail of what money can and cannot be going towards. Mr. Kessler expressed his reservations of supporting this use of funding.

Mr. Boxberger discussed the next steps that would be needed to move forward. First would be a declaratory resolution and then a contract agreement with the County. Mr. Bilger discussed the schedule timeframe for the Plan Commission and Commissioners. Notice of publication requirements were discussed. Mr. Argerbright asked for a motion to move forward. Mr. Banks made a motion to proceed with the amendment to the Economic Development Plan for funding to the jail project. Seconded by Mr. Wheeler. The motion passed by a vote of 4-1, with Mr. Kessler voting against.

BUDGET FOR 2023

Discussion was made regarding the budget. Mr. Kessler stated that there was an increase of \$4.2 million in capital expenditures to allow for the jail funding if it were to be approved. Other than that, it would be about a 3.5% increase over 2022. Training and educational grants were discussed. The budget was reviewed, with a reminder from Mr. Argerbright that it was still a guideline budget that could change with needs. Mr. Wheeler made a motion to adopt the budget as presented. Seconded by Mr. Schrader. Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

GATEWAY PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. Buuck discussed the progress of the Gateway Project, stating that all is almost done with some seeding that needs to be addressed. He made discussion about retainage on the project and claims.

MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

Mr. Bilger discussed the passing of the Solar Code. He stated that the first proposed Solar Project would probably be located in and near the southwestern area of the TIF.

Mr. Argerbright discussed a conversation he had with Chris Judy about some legislation passed regarding personal property taxes, and the effect it would have on our area. Mr. Banks discussed conversations he has had and that no one knows for sure what the effects might be.

CLAIMS

Claims were presented for review. The claims consisted of:

Column Software PBC	\$96.20	<i>Churubusco News/ Rail Connect</i>
Column Software PBC	\$95.46	<i>Post & Mail/ Rail Connect</i>
Bercot Inc	\$13,801.05	<i>Gateway Park Drainage</i>
Bercot Inc	\$32,519.74	<i>Gateway Park Drainage</i>
Carson LLP	\$2,088.00	<i>Legal Service Sept 2022</i>
Union Twp Trustee	\$50,000.00	<i>Fire Dept Equipment</i>
Good Valuation	\$1,800.00	<i>Appraisal RC lot 502</i>

Mr. Schrader made a motion to approve the claims as presented. Mr. Banks seconded. Motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

MINUTES

Discussion was made about approving the minutes for the previous meeting. Mr. Kessler made a motion to approve the minutes of October 11, 2022 as presented. Mr. Banks seconded. Minutes were approved by a vote of 5-0.

With there being no further business, Mr. Argerbright declared the meeting adjourned at 8:19 A.M.

**WHITLEY COUNTY
REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

ATTEST:

James Argerbright, President

Michael Schrader, Secretary