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MICHIGAN CITY

INDIANA

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE MICHIGAN CITY REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AUGUST 18, 2025

The Michigan City Redevelopment Commission held their regular monthly meeting in the Common Council Chambers, City Hall, 100 East Michigan Boulevard, Michigan City, Indiana, on Monday, August 18, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. local time; the date, hour, and place duly established for the holding of said meeting. This meeting was rescheduled from August 11, 2025. The meeting was also available via Zoom and streaming live on the Access LaPorte County Facebook page. Access LaPorte County Media hosted Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER

President Sheila Matias called the meeting to order at approximately 2:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The chair called the roll.

Commissioners present: Clarence Hulse, Philip Latchford, Sheila Brillson Matias, Tracie Tillman, Sheree Wilson, and non-voting adviser Thomas Dombkowski (all in person)

Commissioners absent: None

Also in attendance: Executive Director Skyler York, Attorney Alan Sirinek, and Redevelopment Business Manager Debbie Wilson (all in person)

MINUTES

The chair entertained a motion to accept the minutes of the July 14, 2025 executive session and the July 14, 2025 regular hybrid meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tillman and seconded by Commissioner Wilson accepting the minutes of the July 14, 2025 executive session and the July 14, 2025 regular hybrid meeting as submitted. The chair called for the vote: (Ayes)

Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Matias, Tillman, Wilson – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With 5 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.

CLAIMS

Mr. York read the claims listed into the record for August 18, 2025, Revised 1. Payroll for July, 2025 totaled $23,933.15. July claims totaled: (Operating) $515.03; (North TIF) $163,414.56; (South TIF) $7,896.50; (Northeast TIF) $2,010.00; (East TIF) $2,010.00.

Regarding the Highstreet Insurance invoice, Mr. York explained that this is for the parking garage. This was prorated and will be the Commission's final pay. Next year this will be in care of the City and be a part of the City's insurance.

The chair entertained a motion to approve the claims as presented.

A motion was made by Commissioner Latchford and seconded by Commissioner Hulse approving the claims for August 18, 2025 Revised 1 as presented. The chair called for the vote: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Matias, Tillman, Wilson – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With 5 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. York reviewed the financial report ended June 30, 2025. Cash balances are: Operating $257,460.31; South Side TIF $8,642,057.60; South Side TIF Debt Reserve $336,308.50; South Side TIF Capital $16,199.79; North End TIF $2,781,026.91; East TIF $792,261.62; Northeast TIF $1,401,517.60; Transit Development District $241,451.17, for total cash of $14,468,283.50. Loans Receivable include the County Business Loan Fund in the amount of $94,829.59, bringing total assets to $14,563,113.09.

The chair entertained a motion to approve the financial report as presented.

A motion was made by Commissioner Latchford and seconded by Commissioner Tillman approving the financial report ended June 30, 2025 as presented. The chair called for the vote: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Matias, Tillman, Wilson – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With 5 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Tommy Kulavik (in person), 1316 Ohio Street, Michigan City, Indiana, announced that a Sheriff's sale will be taking place for the old train depot building at 100 Washington Street, and that there will be a demolition hearing at the Board of Works meeting for 1402 Franklin Street. He commented that Michigan City is losing a lot of their historic buildings and he hopes the City can work with the owners to keep the buildings instead of having them demolished. He reported that there are dead fallen trees laying on the utility lines along

Highway 20 on wetland property owned by the Redevelopment Commission between Advanced Auto and Von Tobel. He suggested that the dilapidated and faded sign for the Wabash Street green infrastructure project be removed. He reminded the Commission that they need to keep their lots mowed.

Regarding the train depot building, Attorney Sirinek shared that the Redevelopment Commission is not involved in that, and even if they did have an interest in it they do not have any standing. He said it has been hung up in court since 2022 with litigation between the two buyers and a seller. In the interim, the mortgage company that owns the mortgage on that building from the original seller, is the one doing the auction. There is $20,000+ in property taxes that have not been paid. In the middle of all that there was a bankruptcy proceeding.

REQUEST FOR FUNDING – MCAS

Mr. York recalled that there was a presentation by Kevin McGuire on this at the Commission's last meeting. He wanted Mr. McGuire to be aware that they have not forgotten about the request, but in light of Senate Bill 1 they are asking Baker Tilly to do an analysis to make sure the Commission can provide the requested funding or what they can provide. He pointed out that the Commission also has a couple of other asks of them right now so they want to make sure they are able to provide this and not over commit on funding. Mr. York commented that the Commission appreciates the partnership with the schools and all the things they do with the money provided to them. He hopes to have the analysis within the next couple of weeks.

Mr. York explained that Senate Bill 1 affects all the cities and affects our TIF proceeds as well. It resets our assessed values. TIF is provided to cities based on assessed value. It will not be fully understood until five years from now because the adjustments gradually take place over a four year period. Baker Tilly will do projections to make sure there is enough money to cover over the next four years. They do know the South TIF and North TIF will lose money and the North TIF will go away in two years, leaving just the Southside to carry the TIF.

President Matias acknowledged MCAS Superintendent Dr. Wendel McCollum and Director of Technology Kevin McGuire being present in person. She asked them if they wanted to add any comments indicating where this project fits in with community development. Commissioner Matias stated that the Commission values the collaborative relationship they have with MCAS and the City. She commented that they are not only educating children, but this is also a larger mission.

Dr. McCollum agreed that they have a great partnership with the Redevelopment Commission going over the past decade, stating that it has gone tremendously in terms of supporting their teachers, their technology, and ultimately their students and the community. He said that is what they are looking forward to continuing with this partnership. He said they too are trying to understand the legislation and how it will impact them and that they are also working with Baker Tilly and other consultants to determine what the next five years looks like.

Mr. McGuire stated the big thing they did over the last two grants was staff development and they also highlighted the need for district security, both physical and cyber, as well as the curricular components that go along with that. They will be working with the high school in creating those curricular pathways for the students when they leave. Mr. McGuire said it goes hand in hand with what they have tried to do on the workforce development side and how they can help impact the students in their future and careers and prepare them for when they leave the school district that they are ready for a job outside. He said the difference with this grant from the other two is that there is more focus in that regard.

Proposal: Marquiss Electric – remote access City light controllers

Mr. York explained that it was not known the City can control the lights via our computers. During the last administration, Marquiss Electric was not doing that for the City and they quit managing it. This contract would get them to set it up for the City again so it would then be under the management of the City Engineer. Marquiss will show the City Engineer, an employee from the Park Department, as well as a couple other staff how to do it. This will give the City control over the lighting in the downtown/Franklin Street.

Mr. York explained that this relates to development in that it is integral to our downtown; if you cannot see walking around downtown you are not going to walk around, not going to shop, not going to buy things, or go to the restaurants. There are also new residents coming downtown and it needs to be lit up so they can live and enjoy the downtown. He said the City already pays for this service, but this proposal will be for Marquiss to get it set up and show the City how to control and manage the system. The proposal is in the amount of $1,455.

The chair entertained a motion.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wilson and seconded by Commissioner Hulse to approve a proposal by Marquiss Electric in the amount of $1,455 to refresh the remote access capabilities to the City and train selected City staff on how to manage the system. The chair called for the vote: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Matias, Tillman, Wilson – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With 5 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT & RELEASE – 742 E. 8TH STREET

Attorney Sirinek explained that this relates to the Trail Creek litigation and clean up. This is one of the remaining property owners and primary pollutants. Negotiations and multiple court hearings have been going on for 2-3 years with this specific company. He said he thought it was at a point of settlement so he provided the Commission with a proposed settlement agreement knowing that the Commission would have to approve it in a public meeting before making an agreement with this primary pollutant. Although, he said as of two weeks ago they still have not signed off on it from the respondent's viewpoint. Attorney Sirinek said the Commission should approve this but given the fact that the other side has not approved it yet, he said he would come back to the Commission with this next month.

The chair entertained a motion to table this matter until the September meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tillman and seconded by Commissioner Latchford to table consideration of the Settlement Agreement and Release for 742 E. 8th Street until the September meeting. The chair called for the vote: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Matias, Tillman, Wilson – 5; (Nays) None – 0. With 5 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.

SoLa UPDATE

Mr. York reported that there is one more Council meeting for the declaratory resolution and then it will come back to the Redevelopment Commission in September for the confirmatory resolution. He gave an update, stating that the EID has been set up, the bonds are in place, and the TIF has been started.

Attorney Sirinek explained the process in that the Redevelopment Commission approved a resolution a couple of months ago. Since then, it has gone to the Plan Commission for approval and now it is at the Council level for approval. It will come back to the Redevelopment Commission for final approval in September.

Mr. York said the developers have started their financial preparation to get their financing in place. They are waiting on the final confirmation of the TIF. There will be an organizational meeting of the EID with owners of the property. They have made the August 19th deadline. The next deadline is December 19th to have all their financing in place.

11TH STREET STATION GARAGE AND RESIDENTIAL TOWER UPDATE

Mr. York said the garage is being used more now. He explained that the Commission had builders risk insurance for six months on the garage during construction. It was prorated and switched to general insurance. The Commission paid for the entire year in advance to help the City. At that point in time, it will transfer to the City's regular insurance. Mr. York said the tower is coming along; the southern portion is complete and is as tall as it will be. The northern portion will go up another five floors.

REPORT BY LEGAL COUNSEL

Attorney Sirinek stated for the record 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.

In another matter, Attorney Sirinek recalled previous discussions about the Riverfront Liquor License Program with the Commission approving two different changes to the program narrative; 1) to expand the riverfront district to what is permitted under the 2019 statute change, and 2) creation and subsequent enforcement of the riverfront dining marketing fund annual fee of $2,500. He advised that a resolution is now on the Council agenda for consideration to approve the modifications that the Redevelopment Commission has already made. If the Council approves that, it will then go into effect and all future applicants will be subject to the new rules. It would then include the party that previously inquired into being included in the district, so they can make application. The Controller's Office will set up the dining fund.

Mr. York said he would work with Councilwoman Tillman on getting the fund set up, more than likely by doing an ordinance. He said he assumes it would be a non-reverting fund. The Commission would be the enforcer, but things would not come back to the Commission for approval. The Council would determine who would control it.

Mr. York added that Attorney Sirinek created a new simple application since there previously was no application; it previously was more in an essay form to apply. It also helps streamline the requirements making them easier to understand. He said there will be a physical map and there will also be a map widget created to go on the website.

REPORT BY DIRECTOR

(None)

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Hulse commented that it is exciting times ahead with everything going on in Michigan City. He and Mr. York have been reviewing the draft housing study. It has great potential for what the future could look like in terms of demand. They are going through it to make sure it is presented properly to the Commission and easier to understand because it is very analysis focused. He hopes they will have it ready by the next meeting. Commissioner Hulse said it is exciting to see that there is a big demand for housing in Michigan City. Buyers are people that are here and want to move up instead of moving out like they did in the past.

Commissioner Hulse said the EDC is working on potential projects with a lot of industrial/commercial prospects looking on Highway 20. He hopes to see some of those come to fruition in the next 6-12 months.

Commissioner Matias said that needs to be accentuated because the criticism heard around the community is that we are only doing things for tourists and people that do not live here yet by enticing them with things to make them come here. She said the companies and industries that want to come here will bring jobs and develop land.

Commissioner Hulse said the downtown is the face of your city; any time a prospect comes to visit the city they want to see the downtown. That is the reason the Redevelopment Commission has been trying to make the downtown come back from 30-40 years ago when it fell apart. He said when clients come in the EDC takes them downtown to the mom and pop restaurants instead of the chain restaurants.

NEXT MEETING DATE

President Matias announced that the next meeting date is Monday, September 8, 2025.

ADJOURNMENT

With all agenda items addressed, the chair declared the meeting adjourned at approximately 2:45 p.m.

Clarence Hulse, Secretary