



# MICHIGAN CITY

## INDIANA

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### MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE MICHIGAN CITY REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION FEBRUARY 9, 2026

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, February 9, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. local time; the date, hour, and place duly established for the holding of said meeting. The meeting was available via Zoom and streaming live on the Access LaPorte County Facebook page.

#### CALL TO ORDER

Vice-President Sheree Wilson called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 p.m.

#### ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Clarence Hulse, Philip Latchford, Tracie Tillman, and Sheree Wilson (all in person)

Commissioners absent: Sheila Brillson Matias and Thomas Dombkowski

Staff in attendance: Redevelopment Executive Director Skyler York and Attorney Tramel Raggs (all in person)

#### MINUTES

The chair entertained a motion for approval of the executive session and regular hybrid meetings of January 12, 2026.

***Motion by Commissioner Latchford and seconded by Commissioner Tillman approving the minutes of the executive session and regular hybrid meetings of January 12, 2026 as submitted. The roll was called and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Tillman, Wilson – 4; (Nays) None – 0. With 4 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.***

#### CLAIMS

Mr. York read the claims into the record for February 9, 2026. Payroll for January 2026 totaled \$12,766.25. February claims totaled: (Operating) \$501.00; (North TIF) \$37,851.68; (South TIF) \$20,176.25.

The chair entertained a motion.

***Motion by Commissioner Hulse and seconded by Commissioner Latchford approving the claims for February 9, 2026 as submitted. The roll was called and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Tillman, Wilson – 4; (Nays) None – 0. With 4 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.***

### **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Mr. York read the financial report into the record for the month ending 11/30/2025 Revised. Account balances are as follows: (Operating) \$147,267.02; (South Side TIF) \$8,289,972.15; (South Side TIF Debt Reserve) \$336,308.50; (South Side TIF Capital) \$16,199.79; (North End TIF) \$2,486,574.84; (East Side TIF) \$755,551.56; (Northeast TIF) \$1,406,255.51; (Transit Development District) \$242,747.37, for total cash in the amount of \$13,680,876.74. Loans Receivable include the County Business Loan Fund in the amount of \$94,829.59, for total assets in the amount of \$13,775,706.33.

Mr. York explained that the revision to the financial report was a reimbursement of \$503,932.81 which came in from insurance mining for Trail Creek properties.

The chair entertained a motion.

***Motion by Commissioner Tillman and seconded by Commissioner Latchford approving the financial report ending November 30, 2025 as revised. The roll was called and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Tillman, Wilson – 4; (Nays) None – 0. With 4 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.***

Mr. York read the financial report into the record for the month ending 12/31/2025. Account balances are as follows: (Operating) \$343,956.80; (South Side TIF) \$8,600,113.03; (South Side TIF Debt Reserve) \$336,308.50; (South Side TIF Capital) \$16,199.79; (North End TIF) \$3,150,692.33; (East Side TIF) \$961,258.35; (Northeast TIF) \$1,574,890.57; (Transit Development District) \$242,920.68, for total cash in the amount of \$15,226,340.05. Loans Receivable include the County Business Loan Fund in the amount of \$94,829.59, for total assets in the amount of \$15,321,169.64.

The chair entertained a motion.

***Motion by Commissioner Tillman and seconded by Commissioner Latchford approving the financial report ending December 31, 2025. The roll was called and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Tillman, Wilson – 4; (Nays) None – 0. With 4 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.***

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Tommy Kulavik (in person), 1316 Ohio Street, spoke about agenda item #10 regarding the maintenance of the I-94/421 overpass; requested removal of the banners and fencing at the SoLa site, spoke against a standalone hotel on the site, and instead of condominiums suggested some type of housing like Founders Square in Portage; mentioned Mike Noland from NICTD is retiring and Dean Mazzoni has left Franciscan; welcomed Tramel Raggs as the Commission's new attorney.

Scott Meland (in person), 200 Kenwood Place, agreed that the fencing should be removed from the SoLa site to utilize the lot this summer and felt that the City should get new development proposals; questioned what type of siding will be on the 11<sup>th</sup> Street building; questioned the structure of the \$2 million forgivable loan for the roadway for the Tailwinds project and if the benchmarks begin at the start of construction.

Mr. York responded that the payouts for the loan would be \$800,000, \$800,000, and \$400,000 respectively, with the benchmarks at the start of construction, the middle of construction after review by the City Engineer, with the final piece being the dedication and acceptance of the road through the Board of Works and the roadway being put into the City's inventory. That is when they receive the final tranche.

Mr. Meland asked if the loan would be forgiven upon completion of the road.

Mr. York replied that they have to develop first, so there is still a lot more to it.

Mr. Meland asked if the developers are on the hook for anything above \$2 million.

Mr. York replied affirmatively stating that it will be more like a \$6 million road, but they still have to go through entitlements. They are asking the Redevelopment Commission for what they think they need. The assessment has not been done yet by the City Engineer to review the entitlements of what exactly is going to go into that road.... stormwater, infrastructure, sewer, pipe, pavement, concrete, flatwork, etc.

Mr. Meland noted his confusion with the road layout, suggesting it would be great to see the layout on a map.

There were no other public comments; the chair closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

**REQUEST TO UTILIZE LOTS 7<sup>TH</sup>/FRANKLIN**

Antonio Conley (in person) stated his address is 362 Southwood Drive. Mr. Conley explained he is requesting permission to utilize Redevelopment-owned lots on 7<sup>th</sup>/Franklin every First Friday from April through October for the non-profit organization called

Buddingpreneuers. He said this year will be their fourth year. They will continue with their pop-ups that they do every First Friday. They have a center now with a computer lab so there will be more in-class assignments this year. Mr. Conley explained that Buddingpreneuers is where they teach kids financial literacy and entrepreneurship. During First Friday the kids create items and sell them to the public, giving them the exposure of being an entrepreneur. At the center, they teach the kids about stocks, how to invest, how to save money, and how to write a business plan.

The chair entertained a motion.

***Motion by Commissioner Tillman and seconded by Commissioner Hulse approving the request by Antonio Conley/Buddingpreneuers to utilize Redevelopment-owned lots at 7<sup>th</sup>/Franklin during First Friday from April – October, 2026. This approval is contingent upon providing the appropriate Certificate of Liability Insurance with the minimum amount of \$2,000,000, naming the City of Michigan City and the Michigan City Redevelopment Commission as the Certificate Holder/Additional Insured, as well as getting the request approved through the Michigan City Board of Public Works & Safety. The roll was called and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Tillman, Wilson – 4; (Nays) None – 0. With 4 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.***

#### **APPROPRIATE FUNDS: BFS FOR WASHINGTON PARK BLVD ROW**

Mr. York explained that bidding and construction will start this year on Washington Park Boulevard. This is a 20% match with money coming from NIRPC. He said he just received those numbers today and has not had the chance to review it and Attorney Raggs has not had the chance to review it either. Mr. York asked that this item be deferred.

The chair entertained a motion.

***Motion by Commissioner Hulse and seconded by Commissioner Tillman to defer appropriating funds to Butler Fairman & Seufert for Washington Park Boulevard right-of-way. The roll was called and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Tillman, Wilson – 4; (Nays) None – 0. With 4 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.***

#### **GENERAL COUNSEL RETENTION CONTRACT – MCRC/RAGGS LAW PC**

Mr. York stated that Attorney Sirinek retired at the end of December and the Commission has new counsel, Attorney Tramel Raggs. Mr. York mentioned that he has worked with Mr. Raggs on a lot of things over the past few years, noting his impressive knowledge of municipal law, specifically real estate law. Mr. York pointed out that the numbers in the contract were determined by staff looking at historical payments from the previous

attorney over the past four years as well as looking at all the projects the Commission is involved in.

Attorney Raggs thanked the Commission for consideration, stating he is here at the pleasure of the Commission.

The chair entertained a motion.

***Motion by Commissioner Latchford and seconded by Commissioner Tillman approving a General Counsel Retention Contract between the Michigan City Redevelopment Commission and Tramel Raggs of Raggs Law, P.C., effective from January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026, for a monthly flat rate of \$12,500. The roll was called and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Tillman, Wilson – 4; (Nays) None – 0. With 4 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.***

#### **ANNUAL MAINTENANCE REPORT TO INDOT FOR I-94/421 OVERPASS**

Mr. York explained that when the I-94/421 overpass was reconstructed, the Redevelopment Commission participated in the betterments/aesthetic improvements for this project that included things like the flag poles, ornamental/decorative lighting, painting, bridge railing, etc. The Commission committed to those betterments but does not provide maintenance. The responsibility for maintenance falls on the City if they choose to do so. The agreement with INDOT requires an annual maintenance assessment of those betterments to be submitted to them by March 31st. Global Engineering has provided those services in the past at a cost that normally does not exceed \$5,000. Mr. York noted that he does not have the proposal from Global, so he suggested the Commission approve it pending legal review by the Commission's counsel.

The chair entertained a motion.

***Motion by Commissioner Hulse and seconded by Commissioner Tillman approving a proposal by Global Engineering in an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00 (pending legal review by the Commission's counsel) for services to inspect and submit the annual maintenance report to INDOT by 3/31/2026 for the I-94/421 overpass. The roll was called and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Tillman, Wilson – 4; (Nays) None – 0. With 4 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.***

#### **TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT EASEMENTS FOR NIPSCO**

Mr. York explained that he has been working with NIPSCO, who has been making improvements above ground and below ground city-wide. There is a permanent easement on property owned by the Redevelopment Commission in front of the cooling

tower on U.S. Highway 12. This is a parcel with two pieces, although they will only be utilizing one piece that is horseshoe shaped. Mr. York does not see the Commission using that piece for anything else. The goal is to move the You Are Beautiful sign to that location and create a trailhead park there. The piece NIPSCO would utilize could be part of that passive use area there, and when they are done it will be planted and put back into its natural state. This would be a permanent easement. The temporary easement would be a "lay-down" yard for them while they complete their project, and once they are done, they will restore it.

Attorney Raggs indicated that he reviewed the easements, stating that they are in proper legal order.

The chair entertained a motion.

***Motion by Commissioner Hulse and seconded by Commissioner Tillman approving temporary and permanent easements for NIPSCO as outlined in the contracts for Redevelopment-owned property on U.S. Highway 12 in front of the cooling tower (property for the future home of the You Are Beautiful sign). The roll was called and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Tillman, Wilson – 4; (Nays) None – 0. With 4 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.***

### **11<sup>TH</sup> STREET STATION GARAGE AND RESIDENTIAL TOWER**

Mr. York reported that they are on track to start the process of getting renters in March with move-in for the south tower in August. He said it is exciting to see that there will be 300+ new people living in one location by the end of the year. They already have 114 reservations/interest turned into them with about 40% being Michigan City inquiries. The developers have said this is their most popular location for all the things they have built around this area, being the one that has been asked about the most to move into.

Regarding the public inquiry into the exterior, Mr. York stated that it is a panelized system, with the bottom part being concrete. He noted that they got Historic Preservation Commission approval, so there will be some different textures and colors to break up the façade.

### **REPORT BY LEGAL COUNSEL**

No report.

### **REPORT BY DIRECTOR**

Mayor Angie Nelson Deutch addressed the Commission regarding a BUILD Grant (former RAISE Grant) and engaging the services of Lochmueller Group to prepare the grant for the City. The mayor explained that the City's last Comprehensive Plan was

prepared in 2016, but it did not include Michigan Boulevard. With expansion of the airport and Michigan Boulevard being a part of a TIF, she said we want to see growth, housing, etc. This is a planning grant. They are currently working on the Motts Parkway expansion off of Michigan Boulevard. The mayor asked that the Redevelopment Commission pay for this contract with Lochmueller Group since this is related to economic development and growth in that area. This could be paid for by TIF. The grant application is due at the end of February.

Mr. York added that with this grant there is access for up to \$25 million. This contract with Lochmueller is for an amount not-to-exceed \$30,500. Because of the time constraint, Mr. York suggested approving it pending legal review by the Commission's counsel.

Commissioner Hulse asked if the three TIFs could be used to match the funding.

Mr. York replied affirmatively, explaining that Lochmueller will put the grant together and there will be a match for it. They are currently exploring that match because Michigan City is below the population threshold because of disproportional census tracts and things of that nature. So, there may be a lower match or there may be no match.

Because of the timing, Mr. York said he would like to get Lochmueller going on with this. After the grant is submitted, he said they could come back and get those things approved when they know exactly what the ask is. This is the first step.

The chair entertained a motion.

***Motion by Commissioner Tillman and seconded by Commissioner Hulse approving an Agreement with Lochmueller Group to prepare a FY 2026 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant application for a BUILD-eligible planning activity along Michigan Boulevard from I-94 to US 12, in an amount not-to-exceed \$30,500. The roll was called and the vote taken: (Ayes) Commissioners Hulse, Latchford, Tillman, Wilson – 4; (Nays) None – 0. With 4 in favor and 0 opposed, the MOTION CARRIED.***

The mayor commented that the prior submissions (RAISE Grant) were not for the entire span of Michigan Boulevard. She said because it is not included in the Comprehensive Plan, we really need a full corridor plan from I-94 to US 12, which is what this is.

Mr. York added that it ties a lot of different things together including the airport, opportunities for redevelopment, infrastructure, etc. It starts bringing it all together and it is a lot more comprehensive of the Boulevard than what was originally done with small sections of it. He said he thinks that is what they are looking for.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Tillman welcomed Attorney Raggs and said she is looking forward to a productive and prosperous 2026 with the RDC and Council.

Commissioner Hulse welcomed Attorney Raggs as well, stating that he has worked with him in the past. He announced that the City of Michigan City got a new grant from the EPA for \$500,000 to be used for a Phase 1 and Phase 2 assessment. Anyone trying to buy properties for redevelopment can do Phase 1 and Phase 2 free of cost.

Commissioner Hulse announced the annual Power Breakfast on March 25<sup>th</sup> at Blue Chip Casino. Over 100 tickets have been sold with 200 more available. The two speakers on the panel are Mayor Tom McDermott from the City of Hammond and Mayor Angie Nelson Deutch to talk about the benefits of TOD and how it promotes development in our downtown. Sherry Ziller, CEO of the RDA, will be the panel moderator.

Commissioner Hulse stated that the EDC is looking to publish the 2025 annual report. He said it was a great year with \$1.3 billion in capital investment. This year there will be two more apartment complexes coming out of the ground. They are working with a new industrial park in the southeast part of the city, over a million square feet with 8 different 200,000 and 300,000 square foot industrial buildings. He is working on two new restaurants downtown and two restaurants on the south side of Franklin Street. He is trying to recruit a new hotel to be downtown near the train station. He said Michigan City is getting a lot of positive comments and a lot of positive looks from investors which is a great thing for our community.

Commissioner Wilson commented that people living here do not see how beautiful and wonderful our city is. She said she works west of here and hears a lot of buzz about how they just love coming this way and talking about what a wonderful city it is. She commented that it is very encouraging, especially with what is coming forth to us.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

Vice-President Wilson announced that the next regular meeting date is March 9, 2026 with the exception of a special meeting if needed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The chair entertained a motion to adjourn.

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Latchford – seconded by Commissioner Tillman.

With all matters of business addressed, the chair declared the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:50 p.m.



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Phil Latchford, Secretary