

**MINUTES OF
RENSELAER REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION RC2023-05
TUESDAY AUGUST 1, 2023 AT 1:00PM CST**

The Rensselaer Redevelopment Commission held a meeting on Tuesday August 1, 2023. Commission Chairman Stan Haines brought the meeting to order at 1:05 pm. Chairman Haines requested Building Commissioner Joshua Davis to perform a roll call.

I. Roll Call:

Present: Chairman - Stan Haines, Vice Chairman - Estel George, Bob Brenneman, Janice Deno, Kevin Smith, Jeff Webb and Building Commissioner - Joshua Davis

Absent:

Guests: City Attorney - Jacob Ahler, Mayor Wood, Shelby Keys, Jessica Call, Kenny Haun, Jerry Lockridge, Zyan Miller, Christy Fleming, Bob Schenk and Greg Whaley

II. Previous Minutes:

Chairman Haines asked for a motion to approve the minutes presented from meeting RC2023-04, held on Thursday May 25, 2023. George made a motion to approve, seconded by Brenneman.

Motion Passed.

III. Old Business:

Commissioner Davis gave an update that Edwin Buswell from K-IRPC was going to verify the availability of Environmental Study Grants to assist with future plans of R & M Wholesale.

IV. New Business:

A. Appointment of Redevelopment Commission Secretary

Jeff Webb volunteered to take on the role as Secretary of the Rensselaer Redevelopment Commission. Chairman Haines thanked Webb and entertained a motion for approval. George made the motion, seconded by Smith. **Motion Passed.**

B. Amendment 4 - Contract Agreement Update; Rebid of the Brickstreets Project

Jerry Lockridge informed members that the rebid amount for the Brickstreets Project is \$10,700. This will cover the cost for document preparation and for Kimly Horn to participate in meetings with the EDA. It was decided not to issue an addendum, because it was believed to be covered in the contract. K-IRPC notified the city that an addendum should have been done and this decision resulted in a delay with the project. The Redevelopment Commission previously agreed to allocate \$265k for the Brickstreets Project, from TIF funds. Mayor Wood stated that \$530k was utilized from ARP Funds (American Rescue Plan) to provide the city's match for the grant awarded for the project. Phase 1 of the Downtown Revitalization is the Brickstreets Project, which includes updated streets, new sidewalk, and street lights. Phase 2, the Washington St Project, includes new sidewalks and new street lights. This request of additional funds is for Phase 1. Chairman Haines entertained a motion for approval for the rebid amount of \$10,700. George made the motion, seconded by Brenneman. **Motion Passed.**

C. Rensselaer Redevelopment Commission Spending Plan 2024

Keys shared Barnes & Thornburg LLP 2023 Legislative Changes Affecting Indiana Redevelopment Commissions. The new annual spending plan is due before December 1, 2023. At this time, not much is known about this new change, Keys stated that assuming going forward, more information will be shared. Attorney Ahler informed that he had a contact at Barnes & Thornburg - he will request a sample plan. It was discussed that this plan is now being incorporated to prevent large amounts of money being held with no future plans. Keys also presented the proposed general fund budget with line items for the Commission, in addition to TIF Funds. The line items included legal services, bonds, etc. This was brought up to inform members of these funds, since it appears they have not been utilized prior.

D. Discussion on Contracting an Attorney/Consultant to Research TIF Map Areas

Commissioner Davis stated that the Jasper County Fair Association built an additional horse barn this year. This structure was placed over a parcel line. There are discrepancies with TIF parcels not being accurate. The city map and the county map are showing different TIF areas. It is proposed that the Redevelopment Commission hire an attorney or consultant who specializes with these types of

issues. Members inquired about having Attorney Ahler look into the discrepancies. Attorney Ahler shared that although he is educated in TIF areas, there are individuals who specialize in TIF work. It is common for municipalities to hire someone for this type of work. In the additional general fund for the legal services, there is \$20k available. Haun stated that Tom Pitman has previously worked with the city, and set up most of the maps being questioned. Haun informed that he has offered to come and discuss maps and services, etc. Attorney Ahler said Mr. Pitman was one of the head leaders with TIF areas in the state of Indiana. Members requested that Commissioner Davis obtain quotes from different attorneys to help in the decision making of who they would like to retain as their counsel.

E. Update on Rensselaer Facade Grant Program

Since January 2023, the City of Rensselaer Building Department, Clerk-Treasurer Keys and Jasper Co. Economic Development has been working on implementing a facade grant program. This program would help revitalize our downtown, which coincides with the 2023 Rensselaer Comprehensive Plan. Christy Fleming stated that our downtown area brands our community and is also the county seat. This program would give business owners/tenants an opportunity to contribute to the beautification of our community. The goal is to provide a 50/50 reimbursement grant of no less than \$5k and no more than \$25k. Chairman Haines agrees that this would be a great opportunity for our city. Haun suggested confirmation that this type of program is included in the Economic Development Plan for the TIF area. With various questions from members, this topic will be tabled until answers can be provided.

F. Determination of Regular Meeting Schedule

After discussion amongst the members, a regular meeting date and time was decided. The Rensselaer Redevelopment Commission will meet on the first Monday of each month at 5:00pm CST.

G. Claims

Claims in the amount of \$32,475.73 were approved with a motion by Brenneman, seconded by Smith. **Motion Passed.**

VI. Adjournment:

Chairman Haines adjourned the meeting with a motion by George, seconded by Smith.

Motion Carried. Meeting adjourned at 2:18 pm CST.

Next Meeting: TBD

Minutes Prepared by: Plan Commission Secretary, Jessica Call