

**MINUTES OF
RENSSELAER REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION RC 2023-06
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2023 AT 5:00 PM CST**

The Rensselaer Redevelopment Commission held a meeting on Tuesday, September 5, 2023. Commission President Haines brought the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. Clerk-Treasurer Keys performed the swearing in of Commission Secretary, Jeff Webb. President Haines requested Building Commissioner Davis to perform a roll call.

I. Roll Call

Present: President - Stan Haines, Vice President - Estel George, Secretary - Jeff Webb, Bob Brenneman, Janice Deno, Kevin Smith, and Treasurer - Shelby Keys.

Absent: City Attorney - Jacob Ahler

Guests: Mayor Wood, Building Commissioner - Joshua Davis, Project Coordinator - Jerry Lockridge, JCEDO - Christy Fleming & Sara DeYoung, Robert Schenk and Attorney Thomas Pitman

II. Claims

Claims for the Welding Rig and equipment were in the amount of \$2308.81. Webb made a motion to approve, seconded by Brenneman.

Motion Passed.

III. Previous Minutes

President Haines asked for a motion to approve the minutes presented from meeting RC2023-05, held on Tuesday, August 1, 2023. George made a motion, seconded by Webb.

Motion Passed.

IV. Old Business

A. Brickstreet Update: There have been two rebids done; one from Milestone for \$2,673,627 and another from Grimmer for \$2,411,420. These rebids are anywhere from \$100k to \$150k higher than the original bids placed. Lockridge stated they're currently waiting on approval, targeted to be on September 11 at the City Council meeting, as long as the paperwork and approval are returned in time from the EDA.

B. Spending Plan: Building Commissioner Davis presented the outstanding balances that will affect the 2024 Spending Plan for the Redevelopment Commission. Currently waiting on claims from the Electric Department for the Brick Streets street lights and a \$10,700 invoice for the Brickstreet re-bidding process.

The Park Board requested to be considered for the available education funds that may be available next year. They currently estimate they will need \$25k in 2024. The summer educational programs hosts 20 plus events with at least 1100 children who attend. The Park Board has previously funded these programs; however, with hopes to expand, the Park Board/Park Department will be coming before the Redevelopment Commission to formally request funds.

Building Commissioner Davis also added that the Parks Department is in need of a headquarters/office. With a quote from Titan Construction that was around \$42k, this may be another future request of funds.

The EDA Grant Loan for the Brickstreet Project will affect the balance of the TIF Fund for 2024. If they do approve the Sewer Works loan their budget will also be affected since the timeline of repayment is unknown.

- C. Environmental Study Grant:** Before anything can be done with the old R & M Grocery, an environmental study will need to be completed. Building Commissioner Davis said we could wait for KIRBC to reapply for an environmental grant that would cover the study, or pay the fee out of TIF funds. The Building Department will be getting quotes and an estimated time frame for the completion of the study to present at the next scheduled meeting.
- D. Specialized TIF Attorney Retainer:** Building Commissioner Davis spoke with Dennis Otten about performing these attorney duties for the city. He can either charge \$600 per hour, or \$5k for each retainer block. Thomas Pitman, who has previously worked with the city on several TIF projects stated his prices are based on what is involved in each project. If questions are asked that he already knows the answer to, there will be no charge for answering those questions. On average, a project such as amending a TIF District will cost \$7k to \$9k. President Haines asked if other local municipalities hire a specialized attorney for TIF areas, or if they hire local attorneys. Pitman responded yes, that in small cities, it is hard to find a local attorney who specializes in TIF areas.

V. New Business

- A. Sewage Works Fund Request:** Lockridge explained that under the agreed order with Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) the city is required to have a new building constructed to remove the phosphorus during the sewage treatment process. The new structure should be completed by the end of 2023, which will be located behind Saint Joe near the Sewage Treatment Plant. By the end of 2024, the next phase of this structure should be in progress.

Lockridge is requesting a commitment from the Rensselaer Redevelopment Commission in the amount of \$468,200, with an additional TIF loan of \$675,000. Baker Tilly suggested a five (5) year repayment plan, with no interest. The city's plan for repayment is to pursue financing once interest rates decrease, then borrow enough to repay the Redevelopment Commission back in one lump sum.

There was discussion on future projects that would require funds such as White Castle as well as another Water Treatment project. Discussion also included previously committed monies that have yet been paid out. It was decided that the TIF funds would not be jeopardized by this request, and agreed to the request with no interest and the five (5) year repayment that was suggested.

President Haines entertained a motion for approval of the request of funds and for Resolution RC03-2023. Motion made by Webb, seconded by George. Building Commissioner Davis conducted a roll call vote:

President Haines - Yes
Webb - Yes

George - Yes
Brenneman - Yes

Smith - No

C. JCEDO Request of Funds; Facade Grant Program: Christy Fleming of Jasper Co. Economic Development came before the Board to answer questions that were asked at the previous meeting. Fleming stated that marketing would be performed in a collaboration effort with JCEDO, City of Rensselaer Building Department and the Chamber of Commerce. It is projected to have applications submitted to JCEDO before the end of 2023, and to start awarding grants to business owners, property owners, or tenants at the beginning of 2024. President Haines agreed that this project was a great opportunity for our community, especially our downtown. Originally, JCEDO was requesting \$100k for the entire year of 2024 in one lump sum. It was suggested by Clerk-Treasurer Keys that the Redevelopment Commission earmark the \$100k for this program, and request quarterly approvals. Building Commissioner Davis offered to present a formal resolution for the Facade Grant Program at the next scheduled meeting.

President Haines entertained a motion of approval. Motion was made by Webb, seconded by Smith.

D. Responsibilities of the Redevelopment Commission; Thomas Pitman: Thomas Pitman presented an update of the legislative changes regarding TIF. Pitman emphasized on the updated residential TIF updates.

VI. Adjournment: President Haines adjourned the meeting with a motion by Brenneman, seconded by Webb.

Motion Carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm CST.

Next Meeting: October 2, 2023 at 5:00 pm CST.

Minutes Prepared by: Advisory Plan Commission Secretary, Jessica Call