



- I. **Call to Order:** The RDA Board of Director’s meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. CST on Thursday, June 18, 2015 with Chairman Donald P. Fesko presiding.
- II. **Roll Call:** Present: Chairman Donald P. Fesko, Harley Snyder, Bill Joiner, Chris Campbell, Ed Glover and Tom Dabertin. Six members were present constituting a quorum.
- III. **General Public Comment:** *None*
- IV. **Special Recognition: Jeff Good’s Service on the RDA Board:** D. Fesko thanked J. Good for his three year service on the RDA Board of Director’s.

J. Good extended his appreciation and thanked the RDA board, (past and present). J. Good stated that he looks forward to working with the RDA in the future, while also trying to help Porter County leverage the dollars that are needed to move the region and the County forward. J. Good is excited to have Chris Campbell as his replacement and wishes him the best going forward.

- V. **Consent Agenda:** D. Fesko made a recommendation to remove the President and CEO’s employee contract from the consent agenda.

T. Dabertin motioned to approve the recommendation with a second by B. Joiner. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- a. **Minutes: Board Meeting of May 21, 2015:** *Approved*
- b. **Compliance Exemption Request: Hammond Lakes Area Shoreline Restoration Grant** *Approved*
- c. **Contracts: President and CEO’s Employment Contract** *Removed*
- d. **Contracts: EPA 2014 Assessment Grant, Professional Service Agreements** *Approved*
- e. **Grant Agreements: City of East Chicago; Amendment to Distribution Schedule** *Approved*

VI. **Actions on Recommendations from Fiscal Task Force:**

a. **Recommendations:**

- i. **Applications: Buffington Harbor Access Road (Gary, RDA, IEDC):** B. Hanna reported that this funding application was accepted for review at the RDA’s Board of Director’s meeting on May 21, 2015. This project attempts to improve the economic condition for Gary and the surrounding regional area (Airport, Lakefront). Carmeuse facility is expanding and other developments are underway in the Airport’s footprint. A significant obstacle to securing investments is the ability to access these entities and other developable areas and the connectivity between those areas with existing industrial uses. Current road conditions are in poor condition for heavy truck traffic to support Carmeuse’s expansion. This project will expand the newly constructed Gary Marina Access Road (aka Buffington Harbor Drive) to include an additional travel lane that provides directs access to Carmeuse and the lakefront from Cline Avenue. This will allow industrial traffic to be separated from Majestic Star Casino traffic, providing connectivity to the lakefront. Fixing this connectivity should greatly improve regional transportation efficient making the area much more attractive to economic development investments.

The three entities from which funds for this project are sought are as follows: (1) the State of Indiana acting through the IEDC, (2) the Northwest Indiana RDA, and (3) the City of Gary.

B. Hanna deferred to S. Ziller to provide a breakdown of the financial partnerships.

S. Ziller reported that the financial partnership of funding through this application would be for the RDA to fund \$7,456,000.00 in conjunction with IEDC with \$2,300,000.00 and the City of Gary through their Lakefront TIF at \$3,500,000.00

S. Ziller stated that the recommendation from Fiscal task is to approve the funding proposal for the City of Gary in the amount of \$7,456,000.00; contingent upon IEDC and the City of Gary's official funding commitments.

B. Joiner motioned to approve the funding, contingent upon IEDC and the City of Gary's funding commitments, with a second by E. Glover. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- ii. **Funding: Use of No Interest Securitizing Forgivable Loan:** B. Hanna reported that with the recent law going into effect on July 1, 2015, that would eliminate the No Interest Securitizing Forgivable Loan program going forward, the RDA would be considering funding two projects: Project Cosmopolitan and Project Julius. Both projects would be contingent upon the Communities providing the official requirements for the incentive program and with the deal coming to fruition. B. Hanna stated that if either of the two deals does not materialize, the money dedicated for the use would revert back to the General fund of the RDA and will be used under the new statute.

J. Station gave a brief summary of both projects that were under consideration.

- a. The first project up for consideration is, **Project Cosmopolitan**. Project Cosmopolitan, is a Fortune 50 company and has selected the City of Hobart for consideration as a finalist as a site location. The City of Hobart is partnering with the IDEC to provide an incentive package suitable for the company to consider. Off-site infrastructure must be upgraded or installed due to the company's location at the proposed site and the resulting impacts to roads. One road project in particular is necessary given the existing condition of 69th Avenue and its inability to handle truck traffic of any kind.

Mayor Snedecor, of Hobart, reported that there are some transportation needs. Therefore, this project will improve 69th Avenue and will also serve other currently undeveloped parcels located between Mississippi Street and Colorado Street. If combined with the adjoining parcels to the west, it is highly likely that this site could also attract another distribution center looking for close proximity to I-65. This 69th Avenue improvement is a jump start to this area's potential change from agricultural use to one that is a job generator for northwest Indiana.

B. Hanna stated that the company will create approximately 600 jobs (full time and temporary).

S. Ziller offered a recommendation to approve funding for Project Cosmopolitan in the amount of \$2.5 M; contingent upon the City of Hobart and IEDC's funding commitments.

B. Joiner motioned to approve the recommendation, contingent upon the City of Hobart and IEDC’s funding commitments, with a second by C. Campbell. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

H. Snyder asked what the significance of 69th Avenue is.

The City of Hobart responded stating that, they foresee Colorado Street being improved all the way up to US 30 in the near future. With that being said, the truck traffic, following Colorado Street to 69<sup>th</sup> Avenue, will help improve the intersections.

- b. The second project up for consideration is **Project Julius**. Project Julius, manufactures heavy-duty liftrucks. The City of East Chicago is using a combination of tax increment financing for this project and is drafting a proposal that will include a 3-5 year 100% personal property tax abatement and up to 75% of real property TIF to assist the company with eligible project expenditures. IEDC has committed incentives well above the statewide average for projects including a \$5,000,000 EDGE payroll tax credit and a training grant of \$200,000.

The potential relocation from Illinois will bring 250 high skill/high wage jobs to northwest Indiana and, over the next three years, add 100 additional employees. The company is also working with the City of East Chicago to set goals for the City’s local employment initiative.

S. Ziller offered a recommendation to approve the funding proposal for Project Julius in the amount of \$3.5 M; contingent upon the City of East Chicago’s and IEDC’s official funding commitment.

B. Joiner motioned to approve the recommendation, contingent upon the City of East Chicago’s and IEDC’s funding commitments, with a second by E. Glover. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- iii. **Funding (RDA): NOAA Regional Coastal Resilience Grant Match:** S. Ziller reported that NOAA has issued a call for proposals under the first federal funding opportunity for the new Regional Coastal Resilience Grants Program. The coastal resilience grants program will support regional approaches to activities that will build resilience of coastal regions, communities, and economic sectors to the negative impacts from extreme weather events, climate hazards, changing lakefront conditions, and the vulnerability/climate protection of the South Shore train and Gary Airport. Each proposal may request between \$500,000 to \$1M in federal funds, and requires a 2:1 federal to non-federal funding cost share in either cash or in-kind matches.

The grant will incorporate project funding for Lake, Porter and La Porte County. The project breakdown would be as follows:

\$500k	NOAA
\$150k	RDA (cash; Lake and Porter match)
\$50k	Purdue (in-kind; La Porte match)
\$50k	NIRPC (in-kind; La Porte match)

S. Ziller offered a recommendation to approve the funding allocation for the NOAA grant match, in the amount of \$150,000; contingent upon official grant match dollars from other entities in the amount of \$100,000.

B. Joiner motioned to approve the recommendation, contingent upon the other partners, with a second by E. Glover. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- iv. **Funding (Federal): NWIBC Revolving Loan Fund Application, City of Gary, Ambassador Apt. Asbestos Abatement:** S. Ziller reported to the Board that the Revolving Loan Fund application for the City of Gary is for \$400k for asbestos abatement at what is currently the Ambassador Apt located at 574 Monroe Street. This project will transform a dangerous, abandoned apartment building in the Horace Mann neighborhood into a vibrant green space with mixed-use development potential. The projects planned completion date is February 2016. The current loan fund is managed by the Northwest Indiana Brownfield Coalition. The Coalition and Loan Committee include the City's of East Chicago, Hammond, Gary, and also NIRPC, IDEM, EPA, and RDA. The NWIBC Loan Committee, on June 12, voted to approve the City of Gary Ambassador Apt. Revolving Loan Fund Application.

S. Ziller asked for a recommendation to approve the funding application for the City of Gary in the amount of \$400,000. S. Ziller also noted that this does not have a fiscal impact on the RDA's budget (the RDA is the fiscal agent for managing these funds).

E. Glover motioned to approve the recommendation with a second by B. Joiner. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- v. **Proposal: Update, Comprehensive Strategic Plan Update:** B. Hanna reported that there are several requirements established in statute, IC 36-7.5-3-5, that must be met before the RDA may apply for the \$6M appropriation per year grant. Because of this need to closely integrate the planning of TOD side by side with the planning of the West Lake rail construction and financing, the RDA's update to its Comprehensive Strategic Development Plan, must include both the West Lake extension and TOD planning elements.

B. Hanna stated that in order to make the timeframe for this next session, the RDA will utilize Policy Analytics to conduct as the general contractor of this study and using the subcontractors that may be required to produce the comprehensive package for the RDA.

B. Hanna offered a recommendation to approve the proposal for an update to the RDA's Comprehensive Strategic Plan in the amount, not to exceed, \$450,000.

B. Joiner motioned to approve the recommendation for the proposal and for it not to exceed \$450,000, with a second by C. Campbell. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

## VII. **Project Status Review:**

### a. **Surface Transportation:**

- i. **Update:** H. Snyder stated that the first step towards the construction process of the expansion of the NICTD rail environmental impact study is underway and will be completed in the first quarter of 2016. In addition, the RDA's President and CEO, along with Congressman Peter Visclosky, have been working with the communities and seeking the financial support to establish the match that is

necessary to ensure the federal funds that must come in support of the State over a 30 year time period.

**b. Shoreline Redevelopment:**

- i. **Update:** K. Luther gave a brief update on the Lake Michigan Costal program and the Marquette Plan update. K. Luther stated that over the last two years NIRPC and Indiana Landmarks have been under contract with the RDA to update the Marquette plan. The goal of the update was not to change the goals or principles of the Marquette Plan, but to showcase how it celebrates the success, many of which have been funded by the RDA and to also identify obstacles.

**c. Expansion of the Gary Airport:**

- i. **Update:** H. Snyder reported that the opening of the runway expansion is July 10, 2015 and stated that the region will begin to see the benefits of this expansion for many years to come.

**d. Economic Development:**

- i. **Update:** *None*

**e. RDA Operations:**

- i. **Update:** *None*

**VIII. Unfinished Business:**

- i. **Update:** *None*

**IX. New Business:**

- i. **Update:** T. Dabertin addressed the ongoing issue regarding the placement of the American flag, stating that according to the flag code, the American flag is to be placed at the right of the audience and to the left of the speaker.

T. Dabertin also stated that although the RDA has had a phenomenal impact on northwest Indiana, he feels that the rest of region is not made aware of what is going on, addressing that the RDA staff needs to revisit and develop a communications plan.

- X. 2015 Future Meeting Planning:** The quarterly Board structure and the monthly Working Groups are reflected in the planning calendar.

- XI. General Public Comment:** J. Nowacki addressed his concerns regarding the new legislation relating to the RDA.

- XII. Adjournment:** Without further business the meeting was adjourned.

*Respectfully submitted by Amy Jakubin*