

- I. **Call to Order:** The RDA Board meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. CST on Tuesday, November 20, 2012, with Chairman Leigh Morris presiding.
- II. **Roll Call:** Present: Chairman Leigh Morris, Harley Snyder, Lou Martinez, Bill Joiner, Ed Glover, and Peter Novak. Six members were present constituting a quorum.
- III. **General Public Comment:** J. Nowacki voiced his concerns regarding the intermodal lawsuit being proposed in the Buffington Harbor area stating that it doesn't make any sense. The proposal to turn the Buffington Harbor into an intermodal facility is beyond ridiculous.

L. Morris stated, in regards to Nowacki's comment, that intermodal is not an RDA initiative nor is it an RDA project; it is not an issue the RDA is involved in.
- IV. **Consent Agenda:** E. Glover moved for approval of the consent agenda with a second by B. Joiner. All were in favor and the consent agenda was approved.
  - a. **Minutes of the Board Meeting of October 16, 2012:** **Approved**
  - b. **Consultant Services' Report:** **Approved**
- V. **Utilization Update:** D. Rosetti reported to the Board a special summary report on all RDA projects. In terms of contracts awarded, Gary, East Chicago, Hammond, Whiting and Porter County 77% are northwest Indiana businesses. Regarding the Gary project, 60% of workforce is Lake and Porter County residents. 50% of the workforce in East Chicago are Lake and Porter County residents. 34% of workforce in Hammond and Whiting are Lake and Porter County residents. 56% of workforce for Porter jobs is Lake and Porter County residents.

L. Morris stated that the RDA Board is dedicated to encouraging as much employment of people from northwest Indiana. The most significant number that we should all remember is that 77% of those businesses are northwest Indiana businesses.

B.Hanna stated that this is only a starting point. The RDA expects the proportion of Lake and Porter County residents employed on its projects to increase in the upcoming construction season. The report found 161 of 214 companies employed on the projects are based in northwest Indiana.

B.Joiner motioned for the acceptance of the report with a second by E. Glover. All were in favor and the motion was approved.
- VI. **Action on Recommendations from Working Groups:**
  - a. **RDA Regional Challenge Grant Policy:** B. Hanna reported that the purpose of the RDA Regional Challenge Fund is to provide strategic direction for the RDA in exercising its power to qualify projects in the RDA's Regional Challenge Fund Program. The policy states that the RDA will allocate up to \$1 million in one year with each applicant having a maximum of a \$200,000 grant that will assist units of local government in Lake and Porter County in leveraging funding from the private sector and/or public entities for public initiatives or projects of regional significance. Access to these funds will be competitive, and awards will be made by the RDA Board. The fund shall be implemented in accordance with the RDA's Conflict of Interest Policy, and the grantee(s) shall provide status updates every six months.

L. Morris stated that this is potentially a very positive and significant step for the RDA and the Region to be able to accommodate unique opportunities for transformational development to occur.

B.Joiner motioned to approve the Regional Challenge policy embodying the minor changes discussed and approved in fiscal task force with a second by P. Novak. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- b. Town of Pines, Application for Funding:** B. Hanna reported the Town of Pines has needs for infrastructure improvements, utility enhancements, and tourism opportunities for economic developments. This proposal would be a great fit for the Regional Challenge Grant Policy. B. Hanna offered a recommendation to the Board for a grant in the amount of \$160,000 for the Town of Pines. The grant would create a local match by the Porter County Commissioners in the amount of \$40,000.

H. Snyder motioned for the approval of the recommendation with a second by B.Joiner. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

- c. Administrative Budget:** B.Hanna reported that the budget is identical to last years with only minor changes. The goal that the RDA has implemented was to put every dollar possible into the projects themselves, however there are administrative costs. We pride ourselves in being one of the lowest administrative overheads in the State, not only in government agencies but also non-profits. The RDA is a capital investment organization and our goal is to keep costs below 4%. The administrative budget that the RDA is proposing is 3.1% which is nearly half of what the States recommended threshold is, and we are also operating at half of what the administrative costs would normally be. There is a slight increase in this year's budget to accommodate for staff changes and due to an increased work flow. We want to make sure that we are staffed at a responsible level and can provide appropriate oversight.

B.Joiner motioned for the approval of the 2013 administrative budget with a second by P. Novak. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

**VII. Working Group/Project Status Review:**

- a. Public Comment:** J. Nowacki voiced his concerns regarding the intermodal lawsuit stating that it complies with the mandate of the RDA and that is the reason why the public is concerned with the Gary project. Nowacki felt that money and time is being wasted at the Airport and at the Marquette Park.

**b. Surface Transportation:**

- i. Update:** L. Martinez reported that the Working Group has been meeting with NICTD. The RDA is currently waiting on the development of the strategic business plan to enhance and expand the commuter rail service to Chicago. We are looking to expand connectivity to the Gary Airport, as well as visitation to the Indiana Dunes and Marquette Park. It will look to have greater connectivity with an intergraded bus system. With that said, L. Martinez stated that there is a draft before the NICTD Board and we are awaiting their response.

**c. Shoreline Redevelopment:**

- i. City of Hammond Presentation:** Milan, from the City of Hammond, made a presentation on the following project updates:

**Completed Projects:**

- Road and Trail Project
- Wolf Lake Pavilion
- George Lake Pedestrian Bridge (*opened May 30, 2011*)
- Aquatic Play Center (*opened July 1, 2011*)
- Lakefront Trail (*opened November 3, 2010*)
- 129<sup>th</sup> Street Project (*opened July 18, 2012*)
- South Trail & Demo Project (*opened November 30, 2012*)

**Upcoming Projects:**

- Conservatory & Formal Gardens (*Anticipated Construction Start Date: November 2012*)
- Forsythe Park Overlook (*Anticipated Construction Start Date: November 2012*)
- Sheffield Park Entrance Road (*Anticipated Construction Start Date: March 2013*)
- Wolf Lake West Trail & Bridge (*Anticipated Construction Start Date: March 2013*)

**Current Economic Development:**

- Forsythe Park Additional Improvements- \$1,400,000
- Wolf Lake Memorial Park- \$ 340,000
- Additional City Investment- \$190,000
- 125<sup>th</sup> Street Trail Construction- \$900,000

**Future Economic Development:**

- Marina District Development US41 (Indy Blvd)- State Line to 5 Points (Calumet Avenue)
- Approximate City Investment- \$3.5M
- Approximate Developer/Owner Investment- \$20M
- South Shores-
  - Indy Blvd at George Lake Pedestrian Bridge
  - Senior Housing Project

**d. Expansion of the Gary Chicago Airport:**

- i. **Update:** D. Wellman gave a slideshow presentation on the progress being done at the Airport, courtesy of NIPSCO. A copy of the presentation can be found on, [rdatransformation.com](http://rdatransformation.com).

L. Morris commented, stating that what was once a dump/waste land has been transformed into a productive use and that's exactly the kind of transformational development that we hope to see continue.

Rev. Gardener voiced his concern regarding the expansion of the Gary Airport stating that he has no doubt that work is proceeding, but we wind up having the question of who's doing the work and who is being left out. We are continuing to monitor the wrong thing. We need to report on the number of man hours that are being paid to those who live in the most disparaged zip codes in northwest Indiana.

Rev. Rivera voiced her concern stating that she has gathered some documents relevant to those who are living in Lake and Porter Counties who are interested in RDA funded jobs. This is

a process that the Federation has been working on for over a year and stated that she meet with the Congressman and a couple of members of the Board on October 22 and the Congressman had asked the Federation to put together a list of 25 individuals who were looking for a job. Rev. Rivera reported that they compiled 151 people with resumes, of those who are seeking a job, 35 of them had various types of certifications. The Federation continues to pursue the Regional Communities Benefit Agreement.

T. Austin asked that if the RDA has the authority to circumvent ordinances, does it not have the authority to impose hiring rules on projects the RDA funds.

R. McKinney asked of the 2,000 jobs the RDA has created how many workers are from Lake and Porter County.

Velasquez asked where the RDA gets the power to impose the authority over the municipal government.

J. Nowacki voiced his concerns regarding the aerial photographs of the Gary Airport and stated that the main problem we have at the Airport is there are not very many planes. Another problem that the Airport has is regarding the TIF district that occupies 20% of Gary and none of that money goes to support libraries or infrastructure.

A. Harrison stated that she is a life-long resident of Gary and in all of her life she has never had a full-time permanent job in NWI and stated that she is very qualified and she has worked on phase 1, 2, and 4 of the redevelopment project in Marquette Park, but none of those jobs had given her full-time employment.

**e. Economic Development:**

i. **Update:** *None*

**f. RDA Administrative:**

i. **Update:** B. Hanna was proud to announce that Sherri Ziller has filled the position of Chief Operating Officer for the RDA.

**VIII. Unfinished Business:**

i. **Public Comment:** J. Nowacki voiced his concerns regarding Marquette Park stating that maintenance should be included in the plans and that it's an extreme problem. He found in Gary that the park budget is being cut and the plan now is for the city to continue maintenance while financing it through parking revenue.

R. Leonard commented on Marquette Park in regards to an island that was installed at Holk Street in front of the Marquette Park entrance. The community is unhappy about it; it's going to create problems. There is no means for removing the sand that always washes into the road and its very convenient now because the equipment is there but as soon as the equipment is gone that roadway is going to block the road and people will not be able to get through. Another concern he voiced was the pedestrian walkway that was attached to the road going through Marquette Park. It is seriously dangerous because there is nothing separating the lane of traffic from the area that pedestrians are expected to walk on.

- ii. **Update:** B. Sheldrake reported on the recent ROI (return on investment) analysis stating that the RDA's primary goal is to attract and leverage capital from other sources that would be otherwise inaccessible. The RDA's spending leverages investment dollars from four general sources including, federal, state, local and private sectors. B. Sheldrake stated that for the \$211 million that RDA has committed to projects, it has attracted \$540 million in direct investments. The RDA will have a total cumulative economic impact of \$1.1 billion by 2015, representing a return on investment of \$5.11 for every \$1 in RDA spending. The RDA's investments have produced both jobs and economic activity during a time when many regions in the state and nation were witnessing severe contractions in public sector construction projects. The RDA has invested funds in projects that not only have short-term benefits of engineering and construction jobs, but accrue long-term returns.

The RDA's incentivized economic activity has already produced sales and income tax receipts for the State of Indiana and counties with local option taxes, and will continue to do so into the future. Based on the economic modeling done for this report, the total State sales and income taxes generated by the RDA's investments will total \$8.3 million annually by CY 2015, and \$23.8 million by CY 2025. Although the fiscal impacts for local units of government increased property tax and excise tax revenue are beyond the scope of this analysis, the RDA is certainly having an impact on the revenue streams of the local governments throughout the region.

L. Morris stated that this is a significant report and it codifies the information that is necessary to evaluate the true impact of the RDA on this Region.

B. Joiner motioned to approve the ROI report and amended the motion to include commendation for Policy Analytics and staff for all of their hard work with a second by E. Glover. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

IX. **New Business:**

- i. **Public Comment:** R. Leonard voiced his concern on the Challenge grant suggesting that maybe someone could contact representatives in Gary or the National Park. There was supposed to be a bridge that went over Lake Street that was to connect to Green Link Path and was wondering if there was any possibility that can be used to install the bridge.

A. Harrison noted that the public requires access to the Marquette Park and she emphasized that we need to put safety before anything else. A. Harrison asked the Board if the City could install sidewalks and curbs on Lake Street.

B. Hanna added that the RDA is working on ramping up our communications in an effort to keep the public better informed and he asked that if anyone would like to provide their email addresses to D. Wellman he would add all individuals to the distribution list.

Rev. Gardner and Rev. Rivera delivered to the Board the names of 151 people including resumes, qualifications and certifications of those who want to work on RDA funded projects .

- ii. **Update:** *None*

- X. **2013 Future Meeting Planning:** The quarterly Board structure and the monthly Working Groups are reflected in the planning calendar.

a. **2013 Meeting Calendar**

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

Respectfully submitted by Amy Jakubin