

- I. **Call to Order:** The RDA meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. with **John Clark** convening.
- II. **Roll Call:** Present: Bill Joiner, Gus Olympidis, John Clark, Harley Snyder and Howard Cohen. Five members were present constituting a quorum.
- III. **Approval of Minutes:** **John Clark** requested approval of minutes from the December 12, 2006 meeting. **B. Joiner** moved to accept the minutes with a second by **H. Cohen**. All were in favor and the December 12 meeting minutes were approved.
- IV. **Report of Chair:** Chairman John Clark indicated this to be the first meeting in Indianapolis. This may be an annual session since such important stakeholders of the RDA reside and/or work here. It's very important to keep our constituency in the Statehouse and around the state apprised of what the RDA is doing. Many of the founders of the RDA and other legislatures were present including Sen. Rogers, Rep. Dobis., Sen. Tallian, Rep. Cheney, Attorney General Steve Carter, Rep. Mara Candelaria Reardon, Rep. Soliday, Rep. Stevenson, and Rep. Harris.

The single most important agenda item at tonight's meeting is to further discuss the Strategic Plan. This plan was formally transferred to the RDA Board and unveiled to the public on Jan. 9th. The Board has informally accepted the plan. It is the intent of the RDA to make the plan available for public comment. The Board has been reviewing this plan in stages throughout December. Several minor changes have been made since the initial document was seen. Some public comment has been received and will be added to the report as an addendum. This plan was required in our organic statute and has been completed and submitted to the State Budget Committee and its Director almost one year in front of our deadline.

Bill Sheldrake, President of PolicyAnalytics, LLC, discussed the plan in short detail. Edited copies of the plan were passed out to Board members with some additional copies to be distributed at the end of the meeting. The foreword was read thanking Gov. Daniels, Congressman Pete Visclosky, Rep. Chet Dobis, Sen. Earline Rogers, and the entire northwest Indiana legislative delegation for their leadership in creating and passing the legislation in which created the RDA. Northwest Indiana is moving at a pace not seen in a number of years. PolicyAnalytics looked for models that would help forecast what the target investments could become. The Manchester/Boston Airport is an example of one of the models used. If the Gary/Chicago International Airport follows the growth pattern of the Manchester/Boston Airport, the Gary Airport will become the 3rd Chicago airport. If so, this could relieve the congestion from O'Hare and Midway.

If we put all of these investments into the economy, the plan explains the likely result which was forecasted using the Regional Economic Models, Inc (REMI) to estimate the impact on the economy. In 2040, the results of these four investments add 50% to the job growth of the entire region. The plan extends to year 2040 because these investments take a long time. We would have about 158,000 jobs added to the economy.

A Phase II report should be completed in early to mid February. It will explain the methods of achieving this vision.

The Chairman encouraged the legislatures to comment on this plan.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:

Rep. C. Dobis asked about the prospects for federal matching. J. Clark said NICTD's West Lake Corridor extension is the biggest challenge with a price tag of \$900 million in total cost for expansion. The local match that will have to be put up front is 50%. Communities all over the country are vying for federal dollars from the Federal Department of Transportation. Our challenge is that we do not yet have the population density. B. Sheldrake said the Gary Airport has opportunities for a very significant federal match on a number of their projects.

Rep. C. Dobis would like to know a ballpark figure of the local match to see if there can be a legislative solution.

Rep. C. Dobis does not reside or represent Porter County but they do put in an equal share of funds and are coming to expect some type of return. If the railroad extension obstacle keeps it from coming to fruition, some Porter Co. residents may feel cheated. G. Olympidis said that \$100 million of the \$900 million is for unforeseen issues. The federal match could rise to 80%.

Rep. Harris asked about how extensively the RDA looked at the shoreline development. B. Sheldrake extended an offer to come speak with Rep. Harris and anyone else interested in the RDA's plan details. He urged anyone interested to call him.

H. Snyder commented on the continued support of the legislatures and pointed out that we are involved in a partnership. Their input will continue to be important to the RDA. The RDA will attempt to solve the problems that we can but are still in need of the opportunity to receive input and counsel from the legislatures. He thanked them on behalf of the RDA.

Ross Admundson asked about the Mitchell Plant. B. Sheldrake had discussions with NIPSCO about this and the assumption was that the plant was not an impediment to the expansion of the Airport.

Sen. Earline Rogers urged us to keep in mind that the projects of the RDA are a regional approach, not a Lake or Porter County approach. The whole idea of the RDA is to start looking at ourselves as a region. Even though the Airport sits in Lake County, its impact is regional.

B. Joiner moved to approve the Comprehensive Economic Strategic Plan with a second by H. Cohen, all were in favor and the plan was approved.

- V. **Treasurer's Report:** The only dollars that the RDA is looking to collect is the money from the state. All other units are up to date. The RDA currently has \$39,851,010 deposited among three financial institutions in interest-bearing accounts. In December 2006, the RDA paid \$153,350 to the Portage Northshore Park. The RDA Financial Commitments sheet was introduced. This breaks down all financial project commitments by quarter. On a motion by H. Snyder and a second by G. Olympidis, all were in favor and the Treasurer's Report was approved.

VI. **Project Planning Report:**

a. **Regional Bus Authority:**

The December 2006 RDA newsletter was included in the meeting packet. The RBA has completed their study and are talking with various groups about different mechanisms to operate a regional bus system in northwest Indiana. They are considering several funding methods none of which have been finalized. When the RBA's report is finalized, the office of the RDA will receive a copy. Another payment of \$37,500 for administrative costs is due at the end of January 2007.

b. **South Shore:**

A grant agreement was crafted by the lawyers for the RDA and NICTD and was presented at tonight's meeting. Chuck Lucman, NICTD attorney, explained the grant agreement. It is divided into three parts: grant funding agreement, grant application, and additional compliance requirements. Everything in the grant agreement has been agreed to by NICTD and is ready for signature. This agreement is based on the model of the Gary/Chicago Airport grant agreement. B. Joiner moved to approve the document as submitted for signature with a second by H. Cohen. All were in favor and the document was accepted.

c. **Gary/Chicago Airport:**

The language regarding the sale of bonds was looked over by Ryan Kitchell, Director of the Office of Management and Budget. R. Kitchell believes the language does not adversely affect bond financing. The Airport had some suggestions for the grant agreement most of which were fine except one suggestion which is italicized in paragraph 14. The RDA Board received copies from the Patrick Lyp, Airport attorney of an explanation as to why the current grant agreement was unacceptable.

G. Olympidis believes a great deal of progress has been made and that both parties should keep negotiating until an agreement is made.

Chris Curry, Director of the Gary/Chicago International Airport, would like to see this come to a close today. A lot of work has been put in from both sides and believes that this ordeal has gone on too long. There was never a problem with the RDA's ethic's policy nor was the disagreement between the Airport

and RDA. The contract language needed to be suitable for bonding. The only issue at this point is one phrase in paragraph 14. C. Curry asked if this minor detail of the grant agreement needs to go back in session thus prolonging this process further. He wants the document to be finalized today. He thanked everyone for the hard work.

H. Snyder suggested that the Airport drop the phrase in paragraph 14.

B. Joiner moved that the RDA approve the Airport agreement that has been presented today with the deletion of the italicized phrase in paragraph 14 with a second by H. Snyder.

G. Olympidis mentioned a technical issue. The RDA Board is approving something that has already been approved.

B. Joiner believes that his motion would bring finality at this point whether it's running the risk of being redundant to some extent. The Board has the most recent grant agreement and about 99.1% of it is in agreement, R. Kitchell believes it won't impact bond financing which was a major concern. With that said, B. Joiner's motion still stands. H. Snyder believes B. Joiner's motion is in order.

H. Cohen asked if some other clause came into question, would B. Joiner's motion have the effect of the RDA not having agreed to it. It was his concern that the Airport may have missed something.

G. White confirmed that the only item in question is in paragraph 14 so B. Joiner's motion included a visitation back to the grant agreement if something else were to be questioned in it. The grant agreement can be tweaked if need be.

All were in favor of adopting B. Joiner's motion with the italicized phrase in paragraph 14 to be removed.

Motion 02-07 – H. Cohen offered a motion for the RDA to issue an RFQ seeking a consultant for funding future Airport expenditures. G. Olympidis seconded the motion. B. Joiner abstained from voting on this motion. His concern is about managing the RDA dollars and is not sure this expenditure is needed at this point. The Board and T. Sanders can look at the submitted invoices with regards to the land acquisition and make responsible decisions. If this gets significantly complex down the road, a consultant might be useful at that point.

H. Cohen believes this idea needs more discussion perhaps in a working group and withdrew his motion.

Motion 03-07 – On behalf of Carmen Fernandez, H. Cohen offered a motion that it will be the policy of the Board to disburse funds for approved projects only upon receipt of a signed grant agreement. G. Olympidis seconded the motion. B. Joiner will abstain from voting because this will remove the RDA's flexibility and that flexibility needs to be retained and not abused. H. Snyder agrees with B. Joiner and thinks this should be discussed further in a working group and asked for the motion to be withdrawn. Since this was C. Fernandez's motion, H. Cohen could not withdraw the motion but did offer to table the motion with a second by B. Joiner. All were in favor.

d. Marquette Plan:

▪ **South Shore Lakefront Redevelopment Plan – Gary/East Chicago Joint Application**

A letter was written to the consultants of this project outlining questions asked at a previous working group meeting. The consultants responded to the letter on January 10 attempting to answer the RDA's questions. The letter was explained in more detail at a working group meeting chaired by B. Joiner on January 12, 2007. At that meeting, both Gary and East Chicago representatives were present along with RDA Board members G. Olympidis and B. Joiner. An overview about the development of this project was presented. The overall figure for infrastructure and due diligence is about \$24 million with \$4.1 million for all stages of due diligence. East Chicago will ask the RDA for funding the demolition of the functioning water filtration plant and the abandoned water filtration plant. The abandoned facility can be removed immediately for about \$500,000. The working group requested both consultants refine to numbers without the demolition of the inactive water filtration plant. The working group would like a more reasonable figure than \$4.1 million for Phase I. After the numbers are refined, the consultants will return back to the working group with what they are proposing for the initial dollar request.

Kay Nelson, Director of Environmental Affairs, NWI Forum, was present at the working group meeting. She explained that a city should never surrender any water outtake allocation from the Great Lakes.

The consultants have agreed to meet with the office of Congressman Pete Visclosky at the request of the RDA in hopes of gaining help about the amount of \$4.1 million. Also, the RDA may need external help with certain aspects of this project. B. Joiner would like to meet with the consultants one or two more times. H. Cohen asked how quickly the pressure for decisions will be rolling down on the RDA. If time is of the essence, it makes sense to have at least a list of possible consultants. G. Olympidis would like someone to begin the process of finding someone who can tell the RDA how much it costs to tear down the water treatment plant or any other big ticket items in question for any project. T. Sanders consulted Attorney Hollenbeck about the legality of issuing an RFQ seeking consultants that could help the RDA in a variety of ways for different needs. Atty. Hollenbeck is investigating the legality of this.

Motion 01-07 – H. Snyder moved to put out an RFP seeking proposals from consultants who can advise us in various issues of all of the RDA projects with a second by B. Joiner, all were in favor and Motion 01-07 was accepted. T. Sanders will start this process.

e. NIRPC Application

NIRPC prepared a project information sheet for the Board that describes the project description and benefits the Household Travel and Activity Inventory survey will have on northwest Indiana. The RDA will be issuing a check to NIRPC in the amount of \$100,000 sometime this month. B. Joiner would like a report that shows a break down the various developments, the local, regional, and federal amounts invested.

IX. Executive Director's Report:

a. Ethics Policy

Issue No. 51 of the Ethics News newsletter was provided to the Board. At some point, S. Shabaz will e-mail the Board with information on taking an updated ethics policy test which is required by law.

b. Media

A series of newspaper articles about the RDA were provided at the meeting. These articles are for the Board's perusal.

c. Other Business

T. Sanders attended former RDA Board member Ned Ruff's funeral. T. Sanders was asked to speak at the service on behalf of the RDA. It was a very nice service and mentioned Mr. Ruff's numerous accomplishments. Chairman J. Clark was pleased that T. Sanders was able to attend and speak at Mr. Ruff's service.

Carmen Fernandez was unable to attend tonight's meeting because she was in court. Lou Martinez was also unable to attend tonight's meeting because he was not able to find a flight back to Indiana.

X. Public Comment: There were a couple audience members with comments for the RDA Board. Topics included water permits, possible future presentations to the Board about transportation and technology in northwest Indiana.

XI. Adjournment: Without further business, B. Joiner moved for adjournment with a second by H. Cohen, all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

The next RDA Board meeting is scheduled for February 20, 2007 at the Purdue Technology Center. Time TBD.

Respectfully submitted by Sherri Shabaz.
January 22, 2007.