Northwest Indiana RDA
RDA
Regional Development Authority

Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority
Meeting Minutes of February 7, 2006
East Chicago, Indiana
City Council Chambers

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman John Clark called the meeting to order.

2. **Roll Call:** It was noted that all members were present constituting a quorum. Mr. Clark thanked all who attended a workshop held prior to this meeting.

   Approval of Minutes: On a motion by Bill Joiner and a second by Harley Snyder the minutes of the December 6, 2005 and January 4, 2006 were approved.

3. **Chairman's Report:** Mr. Clark reported on that status of the Major Moves legislation.

4. **Treasurer's Report:** Howard Cohen provided an overview of the treasurer's report.

5. **Reports from Ethics Commission:** A discussion on ethics followed. Ed Charbonneau, member of the state Ethics Commission, commended the members of the RDA for the way in which they are operating. He has discussed the RDA's situation with Mary Lee Comer, chair of the state Ethics Commission. Once the issue of jurisdiction is resolved, she will determine whether the RDA must operate under state ethics or can use its own.

6. **Discussion of Request from RBA:** Tim Sanders presented the RBA's request for funding. After some discussion, Howard Cohen moved to table any vote on the RBA's application until the March meeting. The motion was seconded by Harley Snyder for discussion purposes. Mr. Sanders said that the board needs to set a policy to not act upon any application at the meeting at which it is submitted. Ned Ruff said this is the first funding request being considered by the RDA and will set the policy as to how future requests will be handled. He suggested that a working group be appointed (or volunteered) to review the application and report back to the board. He recommended this as an ongoing policy. Gus Olympidis said he would second a motion for a 30-day review. John Clark suggested that Howard Cohen expand his motion. He and Harley Snyder agreed to amend their motion and second. The motion, as amended, is to adopt a policy and apply it to this and subsequent applications and that action on all applications received not be acted upon for a minimum of 30 days and that the application be reviewed by a working group appointed by the Chairman. The motion passed. The policy will apply to all future and current requests for funding. Lou Martinez and Howard Cohen were named to the working group.

7. **Executive Director's Report:** Tim Sanders asked Attorney David Hollenbeck to explain statute requirements which the RDA must address. Mr. Hollenbeck said that it is necessary for the board to prepare and submit their strategic plan for approval. Mr. Hollenbeck said it is o.k. to

fund planning before the strategic plan is approved but funding a project is not. John Clark expressed his opinion and asked for further clarification. Mr. Ruff said this is a significant issue.

Mr. Clark thinks the board should continue with its current steps while also focusing on planning activities.

Mr. Clark urged that the board work to identify consultants. Ned Ruff, Howard Cohen, and Gus Olympidis comprise the consultant committee. Mr. Olympidis wants to put out an RFQ and RFP at the same time. Mr. Clark agreed that this is a good idea.

The second working group, accounting services, is made up of Bill Joiner, Lou Martinez, and Harley Snyder.

Tim Sanders reported that the RDA's website is now in operation. He thanked the Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce for staff assistance in this matter.

Tim Sanders is trying to schedule tours for the board members along the shoreline, etc.

Bill Joiner said his working group will be looking at a draft investment policy.

8. **Public Comment:**

George Janik suggested that the members view the shoreline on a boat tour.

Ned McKnight asked the board to think about ways to combine freight sources with extensions of the railroad.

Ron Johnson, WJOB and Calumet Press, asked the board to consider providing a press kit for reporters.

John Clark thanked those in attendance.

Without further business, the meeting was adjourned.