



- I. **Call to Order:** The RDA Board of Director’s meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. CDT on Thursday, September 14, 2023 with Chairman Donald P. Fesko presiding.
- II. **Roll Call:** Present: Chairman Donald P. Fesko, Chris Campbell, Phil Taillon, Alesia Pritchett, Patrick Lyp, Milton Reed, and Jason Gilliana. Seven members were present constituting a quorum.
- III. **General Public Comment:** None
- IV. **Installation of New Board Member:** Dave Hollenbeck formally sworn in Gary Appointment, Alesia Pritchett
- V. **Consent Agenda:** Milton Reed motioned to approve the consent agenda with a second by Chris Campbell. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

1. ***Minutes:*** Board Meeting of June 8th, 2023 *Approved*
2. ***Reports:*** MWBE Quarterly Expenditure Compliance (2nd QTR 2023) *Approved*
3. ***Reports:*** Buy Indiana Quarterly Report (2nd QTR 2023) *Approved*
4. ***Reports:*** Zip Code Quarterly Report (2nd QTR 2023) *Approved*
5. ***Reports:*** County Quarterly Report (2nd QTR 2023) *Approved*
6. ***Reports:*** Contractor Utilization Report (2nd QTR 2023) *Approved*

VI. **Action Items:**

- a. **Proposal for New Comprehensive Strategic Plan (NCSP):** Sherri Ziller reported that the RDA is planning to conduct a New Comprehensive Strategic Planning process, for the next 20 years. The approval being requested of the Board is for RDA management to begin the organizing and planning for the project this fall, so that the Planning Project can begin in earnest in January of 2024. The full scope of the project, its cost, and the firms to be chosen to conduct the project are all unknown or at least not finalized at this time. The approval sought today is for the RDA management, with the help of its consultants, to begin the planning, finalize the scope, issue RFQs, and flesh out the project budget. When the budget for 2024 is presented to the RDA Board in December of this year, the cost of the project will be presented as part of the normal RDA Budget preparation and approval process. The idea of undertaking this NCSP has been discussed with key leaders in Indianapolis and stakeholders in Northwest Indiana and there was uniform enthusiasm and approval.

Sherri reported that it is anticipated that the project will focus on the primary areas covered in the RDA’s initial legislation from 2005 – Shoreline development, commuter rail, surface transportation generally, airport development and other



major infrastructure projects. Firms with the necessary qualifications to analyze the infrastructure needs of the region will be identified. The RDA will go through an RFQ process, ensuring that its procurement is inclusive and meets its minority business goals. It is likely that several engineering firms, land use planning firms and communications firms will be contracted to undertake the project.

Sherri also reported that this planning process will be scheduled to take place through CY 2024 with final reports to the RDA Board and the IN General Assembly available in early 2025. RDA Management will lead the project, supported by its current consulting teams for the overall organization, structuring and reporting.

Sherri Ziller asked the Board to approve the New Comprehensive Strategic Planning Process Proposal, as presented.

Patrick Lyp motioned to approve the New Comprehensive Strategic Planning Process Proposal with a second by Chris Campbell. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

VII. Project Status Review

a. Surface Transportation and Development:

Update: Sherri Ziller updated the Board on both rail projects.

West Lake: Sherri reported that as of August, design work is 89% complete; designs of train operating systems, retaining walls and major bridges remains in progress. Construction is 46% complete. Additionally;

- Most of construction activities have been site work including earthwork for railroad track bed, utility relocations, storm water drainage systems and retaining walls.
- All commercial and industrial demolitions have been completed.
- Construction Substantial Completion is projected on May 28, 2026; and Revenue Service is projected to start on May 20, 2026.

Double Track: Sherri reported that two of the 6 main contracts – those for the parking lots in Portage/Ogden Dunes and Dune Park – have been completed. Additionally;

- In Gary Miller, the East parking lot is complete, and construction of station house roof trusses, decking, masonry, and exterior walls are underway.

- At 11th Street in Michigan City, repair of the terra cotta façade continues.
- The design of garage is nearly complete, and the developer has gone out for procurement of garage components.
- Regarding the main rail project, the relocation of the track from 11th Street in Michigan City and paving of the street is largely complete.
- Rail work will resume when the construction season starts in March with work continuing west of Dune Park.
- Bus operations continue between Carroll Ave Station and Gary Metro Station.
- Completion is still projected on January 17, 2024; and Revenue Service Date is projected to start Fall of 2024.

b. Transit Development Districts:

Update: Sherri Ziller reported that the RDA held public engagement session for the Dune Park (August 31st), Gary Metro (September 7th) and Hammond South (September 13th) Transit Development Districts. These sessions were well attended by both members of the community and local leadership. Sessions were extremely productive in terms of feedback and have resulted in further refinements to the boundaries of each district. The RDA anticipates that all changes will be complete before they are presented to the board on October 12th. Additionally, the RDA continues to work with the Town of Beverly Shores and the City of South Bend to complete the final two rail oriented TDDs remaining on our schedule.

Sherri also noted that earlier this year the legislature approved a separate TDD in the City of Valparaiso around the city's new transit center at the Journeyman Distillery. RDA subsequently met with Valparaiso officials and begun the process of understanding their goals so we can create as effective a district as possible. This is expected to be completed and presented to the board for approval in 2024. Sherri also reported that MKSK has completed TOD planning guides for each community with an approved TDD. These plans included reviews of past planning and confirmation of development goals; evaluating land use and zoning; assessing utility infrastructure, roadways and transportation networks, and environmental conditions; feasibility testing of development concepts; and planning for capital improvements. RDA received feedback from most of our communities and will release these documents as soon as the remaining communities have submitted their comments.



Lastly, Sherri reported that MKSK has concluded a draft of the Gary Blight Elimination Strategy in collaboration with Shrewsberry and Associates.

President's Report: Sherri Ziller reported that the RDA is mandated to update the Feasibility Study on a Convention Center in NWI. To that end, the RDA has engaged with Barnes and Thornburg to support the RDA during the procurement process. The RDA has officially issued the RFP as of September 12. Proposals are due September 29. It is the RDA's goal to have the results of the updated Feasibility Study wrapped up before May 2024 to align with the Statute of the LC Commissioners being able to solicit for CC proposals through May 31, 2024. The RFP can be found on the RDA's website.

Additionally, Sherri reported that she has several speaking engagements coming up. She just participated in a panel discussion in the State of IL APA State Conference yesterday in the session of Changing Perceptions of NWI through Transit Oriented Economic Development and she is also a speaker and panel participant in this year's MPact (formally Rail-Volution) National Conference in November this year in Phoenix on the topic of Joint Development.

Lastly, Sherri reported that she has several local speaking opportunities – City of Hammond's Annual Realtor's Breakfast later this month, NWI Business Roundtable and Construction Advancement Foundation's Business and Economic Outlook Conference in early November. She will also be a speaker for the HBA – Economic Development Breakfast in mid-October.

Unfinished Business: None

VIII. **Unfinished Business:** None

IX. **New Business:**

i. **Update:** None

X. **2023 Board Planning Calendar:** The quarterly Board meeting structure is reflected in the planning calendar.

XI. **General Public Comment:** None

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

Respectfully submitted by Amy Jakubin



Northwest Indiana Regional
Development Authority
Meeting Minutes of September 14, 2023
Purdue Technology Center
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