



- I. **Call to Order:** The RDA Board of Director's meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. CDT on Thursday, December 12, 2024 with Chairman Donald P. Fesko presiding.
- II. **Roll Call:** Present: Donald P. Fesko, Chris Campbell, Alesia Pritchett, Anne Taylor, Todd Elloitt, John Carr, and Dewey Pearman. Seven members were present constituting a quorum.
- III. **General Public Comment:** *None*
- IV. **Consent Agenda:** Chris Campbell motioned to approve the consent agenda with a second by Alesia Pritchett. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.
- V.
1. **Minutes:** Board Meeting of September 12, 2024
  2. **Reports:** MWBE Quarterly Expenditure Compliance (3<sup>rd</sup> QRT 2024)
  3. **Reports:** Buy Indiana Quarterly Report (3<sup>rd</sup> QRT 2024)
  4. **Reports:** Employment Quarterly Report By *County* (3<sup>rd</sup> QRT 2024)
  5. **Reports:** Employment Quarterly Report By *Zip Code* (3<sup>rd</sup> QRT 2024)
  6. **Reports:** Contractor Utilization Report (3<sup>rd</sup> QRT 2024)
- VI. **Action Item:**
1. **Budget: Proposed 2025 Administrative Budget:** Bill Sheldrake from Policy Analytics presented the RDA's 2025 Administrative budget.  
  
Chris Campbell motioned to approve the 2025 Administrative budget, as presented, with a second by Anne Taylor. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.  
  
*The 2025 RDA Administrative budget will be posted on the RDA website at [in.gov/rda](http://in.gov/rda) following the meeting.*
  2. **Budget: Proposed 2025 Project Planning and Due Diligence Budget:**  
  
Chris Campbell motioned to approve the 2025 Project Planning and Due Diligence budget, as presented, with a second by Anne Taylor. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.  
  
*The 2025 RDA Project Planning and Due Diligence budget will be posted on the RDA website at [in.gov/rda](http://in.gov/rda) following the meeting.*
- VII. **Project Status Review**
- a. **Surface Transportation and Development:**  
  
**Update:** Sherri Ziller updated the Board on both rail projects.

### **West Lake:**

- Design is 96% complete; train signals and operating systems remain in progress.
- With the exception of BR101 and the Main Street underpass at Munster Dyer station, civil works are largely done.
- NICTD executed a construction agreement with CSX on November 13, and construction has started in the CSX right-of-way for BR101.
- Trackwork along the full length of the project is complete. Work remains focused on installing poles for the catenary system and system (e.g. communications and power) installation.
- Initial paving for the west parking lot at Munster/Dyer station is complete. Final paving will occur in the spring. Work on the station and preparations for installation of the bridge over Main Street continue.
- The new Hammond Gateway station has been operational for rail service as of October 18, 2024.
- Construction is 88% complete.
- An extended period of testing and commissioning is required between construction completion and Revenue Service.
- The NICTD team is focused on when the trains will be running. Revenue Service Date of May 1, 2025, is NICTD's current target.

### **Double Track:**

- 25-mile project area includes 16 miles of new second track, the closing of 20 grade-level crossings in Michigan City, and the elimination of "street running" in Michigan City.
- Overall Construction is largely complete, what's left is attributable to the parking garage in MC.
- DT1 (*Main Rail Project*): Contract is substantially complete and very small number of punch list items remain.
- DT2 (*MC 11th Street Station*): Much of the parking garage structure has been erected, and completion of the garage is scheduled for February 2025. Installation of the terra cotta façade is to begin this week.
- Revenue Service began on May 14, 2024
- NICTD has been working on its scheduling and coordinating with Metra to improve operations.

### **b. Transit Development Districts:**

**Update:** Sherri Ziller reported that the RDA's work continues to inform communities with TDD boundaries on how to utilize the TDD resources as increment begins flowing in 2025. Since the last board meeting, the RDA team has provided technical resources to communities to support Transit-Oriented Development potential within established TDDs, including further meetings on the RDA's Program Guide and draft MOAs.

Communications Director Dave Wellman and MKSK Consultant Aaron Kowalski presented a TDD 501 session to the American Planning Association joint conference for the Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio region in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The RDA continues to see significant local and regional/national developer interest in the TDDs. Since the last board meeting, the RDA has continued meeting with local units and connecting with interested developers.

The RDA team is working with communities to explore three new potential TDD boundaries and to expand one additional. This includes new boundaries in Beverly Shores/Pines, Valparaiso, and South Bend Airport and possibly expanding Gary Metro further south on Broadway. Progress is anticipated in 2025.

### **President's Report:**

**Update:** Sherri Ziller reported on the following:

1. **NCSP** – Sherri reported that the RDA's Management and consulting team including MKSK, WSP, Avenew, and JQOL have been working throughout 2024 on a NCSP, looking out over the next 2 decades. The plan's analysis focuses on impediments to economic growth, community development, and quality of life across the Region; and investments to address these. The Team is in the last steps of putting together the conclusions, the reporting documents and the final briefing materials. It is expected that the RDA Management will schedule briefing meetings with the members of the Board, regional stakeholders, legislators and key officials beginning immediately after the holidays.
2. **Gary Blight Elimination Program** – Sherri reported the RDA issued a RFQ for an Owner's Rep for the Gary Blight Elimination program and BLN was selected. They will provide the procurement of demolition services, contract administration, property management, demolition oversight, environmental oversight, and site inspection.

The City of Gary has provided their \$3M match contribution from the HRNI Casino. The RDA also provided their required \$3M contribution. As the Blight Elimination program begins (estimated start date in January 2025) there is a total of \$6M to demolish the phase 1 buildings. In 2025, it is anticipated that another \$6M of funding will be available (\$3M from Gary and \$3M from the RDA). As a reminder, the RDA's contributions will be reimbursed by the State after July 1, 2025.

3. **Gary Metro Station Revitalization** – Sherri reported that work continues on the planning and eventual construction of the Gary



Metro station and platform. Currently, the establishment of the Gary Metro Center Station Revitalization Project Board (the Board) is underway.

4. **Lake County Convention Center** – Sherri Ziller reported that following the RDA's completion of its statutorily required feasibility study, the Lake County Board of Commissioners released an RFP for the possible development and construction of a convention center in Lake County. The Commissioners received 2 proposals, one from the Town of Hobart and one from Gary. These proposals are being evaluated, and the Commissioners have until June 2025 to make a decision.
5. **New Staff Members:** Sherri Ziller reported that the RDA hired two new staff members:
  - **AJ Bytnar** – Dir Eco/Dev. AJ will be responsible for guiding the TDD's to create vibrant, connected communities that attract investment and improve quality of life for Northwest Indiana residents.
  - **Courtney Kvachkoff** – Controller. Courtney will be responsible for overseeing RDA finances, including the financial and accounting details for the TDD.

**Unfinished Business:** None

**New Business:** None

**2024 Board Planning Calendar:** The quarterly Board meeting structure is reflected in the planning calendar.

**2025 Future Meeting Dates:** Future meeting dates are reflected in the board packet and can be found on the RDA website at [in.gov/rda](http://in.gov/rda).

**General Public Comment:** None

*Respectfully submitted by Amy Jakubin*