



CITY OF PORTAGE
**REDEVELOPMENT
 COMMISSION**



REGULAR MEETING
 February 22, 2024

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Mayor Bonta

Commissioners Present: Mayor Bonta, Lach, Ambler, Jozwiak, Mundt, Vazquez

Commissioners Absent:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Jozwiak made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2023, and January 9, 2024, meetings. Commissioner Mundt seconded the motion.

5 yes 0 nays

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS:

Commissioner Mundt made a motion to approve the claims presented to the RDC on February 22, 2024. Commissioner Lach seconded the motion.

5 yes 0 nays

STAFF REPORTS:

Dan Botich, Director of the RDC stated that he and Attorney Graham had received a letter from the attorney's representing the purchasers of the property at 6051-6071 Central Avenue to exercise its second Extension Option for the Due Diligence Period for an additional 90 days taking them to Tuesday, May 14, 2024.

He further stated that he had submitted his contract to the Commission, and it is currently under legal review. Attorney Bartnicki stated that he sees no legal objectives at this time, but there were a couple of terms that need to be straightened out with other service contracts to make sure there are no overlapping services.

Director Botich stated that the Raise Grant is due the 28th of February, which Bailey McGrath is working on. He further stated that there is an opportunity for the Lily Grant they are considering. He also stated that the Read Grant through the Northwest Indiana Forum, IEDC and the State of Indiana was submitted on the 18th of January. He thanked Bailey and Sandy for all their work.

He also informed the Commission that over the past month they have meet with Sherry Ziller and her staff with the Regional Development Authority (RDA) discussing the TDD's and how this impacts the allocation areas of the City on the

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Northside and to discuss how to allocate the real property and personal property increment once it is generated. He stated that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would need to be generated. He stated that since we have a TIF area allocated, there could be an opportunity to capture sales tax and employee tax increments through an MOU.

He stated that they spoke with MKSK regarding the City's TDD that was established by State Legislation setting boundaries.

He also stated that they had a strategy meeting regarding Downtown Development.

He notified the Commission that they spoke with the YMCA of Portage regarding a potential grant/assistance on the construction of a new swimming pool.

He informed the Commission that they met with Dayton Street Partners regarding re-initiating their project.

He concluded by stating that he is working on the Budget for the Redevelopment Commission and hopes to have it before them shortly.

Sandra McDaniel, Assistant Director of Planning & Community Development spoke on behalf of the Department of Planning & Community Development and referenced their staff report provided to the Commission (see attached). Mayor Bonta asked about the Raise Grant and not being part of the larger application. Bailey McGrath spoke in regard to this, and informed the Commission that the Department had received a phone call from NIRPC informing us that we were not going to be able to submit to be a part the larger application as it would require a \$6 Million match from the City, this included the flyover, US 12 and, the train tracks. She stated they then pivoted and are submitting the Burns Parkway Extension to the Raise Program for a lot of the same applications as Readi to get us funded by the time we are ready to start construction.

Dan Bartnicki, Legal Counsel for the Commission stated that they have been working with the leases of 6100 Southport Road. He stated that of the three leases that were outstanding two of them have been signed, NIRPC signed their lease. He also stated that the Commission will need to determine who the point of contact will be who will work with Holladay Properties (the property managers), on the few items the Commission have agreed to have upgraded and fixed and to keep an eye on. He further stated that the Forum has submitted their addendum to the lease to extend to five years. He stated it is currently under legal review.

He also stated that he recommends Greg Lach to sign the minutes of the December 14, 2023, meeting as he was there and was the Secretary at the time of the meeting.

He also stated that Clerk-Treasurer Modesto has submitted a services contract that he is reviewing at this time.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Approval: Irving Street Trail – Additional Task - Abonmarche

Asst. Director, McDaniel stated that they had a progress meeting with Abonmarche regarding the Irving Street Trail and found the plans are 95% complete and discussion was held on a

terminus for this trail. She stated that the current design has the trail coming off Central Avenue onto the east side of Irving and continuing to Mulberry Avenue where it ends. She stated that this scope change would add the section between Mulberry Avenue and Willowcreek Road to connect into the sidewalk that goes through Frank Gilbert Park. She stated that land acquisition will be needed, but wanted to get this under design so that there would be a terminus to this trail when they do build it. Discussion was held.

Commissioner Lach made a motion approving the additional task/scope change for Irving Street Trail. Commission Ambler seconded the motion.
5 yes 0 nays

Open: Phragmites Control at 6100 Southport Road

Asst. Director, McDaniel opened the bids for the Phragmites Control at 6100 Southport Road as follows:

<u>Company</u>	<u>Bid Amount</u>
Lakeshore Landscaping Inc.	\$4,100.00
Allen's Lawncare Inc.	\$4,200.00

Asst. Director, McDaniel stated that it is the staff's recommendation to take the bids under advisement.

Commissioner Lach made a motion to take the bids under advisement. Commissioner Jozwiak seconded the motion.
5 yes – 0 nays

Open: Landscape Maintenance - Burns Parkway

Asst. Director, McDaniel opened the bids for the Landscape Maintenance of Burns Parkway as follows:

<u>Company</u>	<u>Bid Amount</u>
Lakeshore Landscaping Inc.	\$17,574.56
Allen's Lawncare Inc.	\$24,500.00

Asst. Director, McDaniel stated that it is the staff's recommendation to take the bids under advisement.

Commissioner Lach made a motion to take the bids under advisement. Commissioner Mundt seconded the motion.
5 yes – 0 nays

Open: Landscape Maintenance - City Hall

Asst. Director, McDaniel opened the bids for the Landscape Maintenance of City Hall as follows:

<u>Company</u>	<u>Bid Amount</u>
Lakeshore Landscaping Inc.	\$4,227.38
Allen's Lawncare Inc.	\$5,600.00

Asst. Director, McDaniel stated that it is the staff's recommendation to take the bids under advisement.

Commissioner Lach made a motion to take the bids under advisement. Commissioner Mundt seconded the motion.

5 yes – 0 nays

Open: Landscape Maintenance - Downtown Community Park

Asst. Director, McDaniel opened the bids for the Landscape Maintenance of Downtown Community Park as follows:

<u>Company</u>	<u>Bid Amount</u>
Lakeshore Landscaping Inc.	\$39,084.16
Allen's Lawncare Inc.	\$66,500.00

Asst. Director, McDaniel stated that it is the staff's recommendation to take the bids under advisement.

Commissioner Lach made a motion to take the bids under advisement. Commissioner Mundt seconded the motion.

5 yes – 0 nays

Open: Landscape Maintenance - Founders Square

Asst. Director, McDaniel opened the bids for the Landscape Maintenance of Founders Square as follows:

<u>Company</u>	<u>Bid Amount</u>
Lakeshore Landscaping Inc.	\$55,979.54
Allen's Lawncare Inc.	\$70,200.00

Asst. Director, McDaniel stated that it is the staff's recommendation to take the bids under advisement.

Commissioner Lach made a motion to take the bids under advisement. Commissioner Mundt seconded the motion.

5 yes – 0 nays

Open: Landscape Maintenance – Garyton Center

Asst. Director, McDaniel opened the bids for the Landscape Maintenance of Garyton Center as follows:

<u>Company</u>	<u>Bid Amount</u>
Lakeshore Landscaping Inc.	\$7,726.22
Allen's Lawncare Inc.	\$10,070.00

Asst. Director, McDaniel stated that it is the staff's recommendation to take the bids under advisement.

Commissioner Lach made a motion to take the bids under advisement. Commissioner Mundt seconded the motion.

5 yes - 0 nays

Request: Permission to seek quotes for Northside Trail Maintenance

Asst. Director, McDaniel informed the Commission that this is an aggregate trail that runs north of 6100 Southport Road. It is concrete in front of the building and then asphalt around the westside of the building, but on the east side and north it turns into aggregate to the stop at Waypoint Drive and Burns Parkway, where it crosses Burns Parkway and continues with asphalt to Rt. 249. She stated the Department has been keeping an eye on the trail over the past couple of years and has noticed it becoming overgrown with weeds. She stated it was lined with tree limbs to help define the limits but they have deteriorated and left metal stakes exposed. She is hoping to solicit quotes to clean this up and put a new layer of aggregate on top. She then recommended a maintenance contract to have it maintained monthly. She informed the Commission that the trail is used often. Mayor Bonta stated that with all that is going to be done on the Northside this trail will be more visible.

Discussion was held on landscaping quotes and why only a couple of quotes are received, when six are sent out. Discussion was also held on whether it would be better to use a Professional Services Contract where we could put all the work in one bid, versus seeking individual quotes in the future, to allow for the possibility of more competitive bids. The Commission agreed that it was too late to look into a Professional Services Contract for this year but will work towards that for next year.

Commissioner Lach made a motion to approve the request to seek quotes for the Northside Trail Maintenance. Commissioner Mundt seconded the motion.
5 yes – 0 nays

Open: RFQ for Ecological Maintenance – Restoration

Asst. Director, McDaniel opened the RFQ for Ecological Maintenance - Restoration as follows:

<u>Company</u>	<u>Bid Amount</u>
Davey Resource Group, South Bend, IN	\$32,400.00
Stantec, Walkerton, IN	\$38,460.00

Asst. Director, McDaniel stated that it is the staff's recommendation to take the bids under advisement.

Commissioner Lach made a motion to take the bids under advisement. Commissioner Mundt seconded the motion.
5 yes - 0 nays

Approval: Right-of-Way Dedication – Robbins Road

Asst. Director, McDaniel stated that a few years ago the Commission constructed Robbins Road west of Willowcreek Road, and south of the YMCA. She stated the Department has received interest from a developer in installing a gas station at the southwest corner of the intersection. She stated we now need to dedicate Robbins Road and its Right- of-Way to the City, so that developers know where the setbacks are and can follow the guidelines for development.

Commissioner Lach made a motion to approve the Right-of-Way dedication of Robbins Road. Commissioner Jozwiak seconded the motion.
5 yes – 0 nays

Approval: Scope Change on Burns Parkway Extension – SEH

Bailey McGrath stated that as mentioned in the staff report that the City is applying for the Raise Funds and in doing so it requires a Scope Change to the Burns Parkway Extension Agreement with SEH, Inc. Mr. Glen Peterson with SEH stated that as part of the Raise Grant a Benefit Cost Analysis is required, and the analysis is very detailed and requires additional focus on the safety of this corridor. Discussion was held on the Raise Grant and Readi Grant.

Director Dan Botich stated that he recommends approving this scope change as the Benefit Cost Analysis is very detailed and can be challenging.

Commissioner Lach made a motion to approve the Scope Change on the Burns Parkway Extension with SEH. Commissioner Ambler seconded the motion.

5 yes – 0 nays

Approval: Change of date for March RDC Meeting

Mayor Bonta stated that he is seeking to change the date of the next meeting due to a conflict on this schedule.

Commissioner Mundt made a motion to change next month's meeting to Thursday, March 21, 2024, at 4:30pm. Commissioner Lach seconded the motion.

5 yes – 0 nays

Other Business

Request : Seek permission to prepare an Easement for the Portage Mall

Asst. Director, Sandy McDaniel stated that the Department met with a group who are interested in purchasing a property within the Portage Mall. However, the bank is having difficulties providing them with a loan because the property does not have direct access to public right-of-way. She stated that upon research they found that at the October 26, 2107, Redevelopment Commission meeting the Commission approved some sort of easement, but any documentation regarding it can't be found. Ms. McDaniel stated she is here to seek permission to prepare an easement and get the documents recorded so that all these property owners have the ability to transfer property if they so wish and no longer have this issue. She referred to the drawing she had submitted to them (see attached) for the location of the easement. She stated that the easement would be created to allow for all business owners in the Portage Mall to have access.

Commissioner Lach made a motion to approve the request to prepare the access easement. Commissioner Mundt seconded the motion.

5 yes 0 nays

Ms. McDaniel also stated that within the mall there is a concrete median, and a question was raised as to if a need arose would they be allowed to cut into the median to allow access to the public access easement. Discussion was held.

Commissioner Jozwiak made a motion to allow the property owners in the Portage Mall to request permission to cut the concrete median by applying to the Department of Planning and Community Development to provide direct access to the new public access easement.

Commissioner Lach seconded the motion.

5 yes 0 nays

Request: For a Sub Committee to be formed to review the PSA for Northside Properties

Mr. Rathjen stated that the Commission is aware the City has a current Purchase Sales Agreement for Northside Properties. He would like to recommend the Commission form a two-person subcommittee to review the purchase agreement along with Dan Bartnicki, Dan Botich, and himself to finalize the responses to the Purchase Agreement. Subsequent to their review, to allow the Mayor as the President of the Redevelopment Commission, to sign the agreement.

Commissioner Mundt made a motion to allow the formation of the subcommittee and to allow the Mayor to sign as the President of the Redevelopment Commission. Commissioner Ambler seconded the motion.

5 yes 0 nays

The sub committee consists of Mayor Bonta, Greg Lach, Dan Botich, Attorney Daniel Bartnicki and Bill Rathjen, with McColly Real Estate.

Request for reallocation of Funds

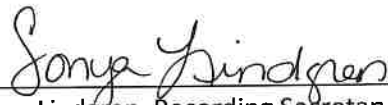
Clerk-Treasurer Modesto stated that they are looking to redirect funds that were allocated for the Sports Director of \$55,000 to be put towards the Assistant Park Director. She further stated that they are requesting \$35,000 for the Human Resources position for the City as well. Mayor Bonta also stated that they have hired a consultant to review the Planning Department and its policies and procedures at the cost of \$10,000.00. Discussion was held. It was decided to bring these requests back to the Commission during the budget approval process.

With no further business to become before the Commission, Commissioner Lach moved to adjourn. Commissioner Ambler seconded the motion.

5 yes 0 nays



Austin Bonta, Mayor



Sonya Lindgren, Recording Secretary