

MINUTES
WHITLEY COUNTY REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Tuesday, November 10, 2020

WHITLEY COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
1st FLOOR-COMMISSIONERS/COUNCIL MEETING ROOM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jim Argerbright (by phone)
Frank Kessler
Michael Schrader
George Schrumpf
Kim Wheeler
Jill Western

MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF

Nathan Bilger
Dale Buuck
Mark Cullnane
Tiffany Forrester
Cami Hippenhammer
Jana Schinbeckler
Scott Wagner

GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE

GUESTS ON-LINE/PHONE

Lana Beregszazi

LEGAL COUNSEL

Andy Boxberger

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Schrumpf called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Argerbright read roll call. All members present and absent are listed above.

LARWILL SEWER PROJECT

Ms. Beregszazi presented updates on the status of the Larwill sewer extension. The project was progressing, but some complications arose due to possible conflicts with the residential grinder pump locations and existing wells. Additionally, the anticipated site of the Red Star pump would need to be moved due to conflict with the parking lot. It might be possible to shift the site to an adjacent property, necessitating additional easements, but slightly shortening the line length. She stated that once the pump sites were determined, the plans were complete enough to submit to IDEM for permitting.

She stated that if the pump sites could be determined within the week, IDEM permit submission would be the next week. Easement documents would be prepared and plans finalized, with a possible completion around the end of the month. Since this would not need bid out due to the cost, contractor selection would not take long. The expected construction period would then be about 30 days. This should still result in completion well in advance of Red Star's expectation of April. Mr. Argerbright inquired about the number of firms expected to be contacted for the project; the response was 3 or 4, with one being an earlier recommendation from Mr. Wheeler.

Ms. Beregszazi asked if there was more discussion with the Town on waiving the service availability fee. Mr. Buuck responded that he did speak with the Town and their legal counsel, and they are not willing to waive the fee of \$1,000 per residence. The Town would entertain a payment plan for the fee. Mr. Buuck expressed concern about the loss of good will toward the project, which could make the process more complicated. Ms. Beregszazi agreed that this cost could jeopardize the project if the property owners refuse to grant easements due to the additional cost.

Mr. Schrumpf asked if that would be something that the Commission would be willing to take on to keep the project moving. Mr. Schrader agreed that good will is important, so something should be

done. Mr. Wheeler expressed concern about the precedent being set. Mr. Schrader commented that he did not want to see getting into a similar position as with Columbia City where there is little or no buy-in from the municipality. Mr. Boxberger stated that a letter of agreement should be written to determine the transfer when the sewer is completed and suggested that a cooperation clause might be added.

The Commission had further discussion of the \$3,000 in availability fees. Mr. Boxberger suggested that the sewer could be sold to Larwill for \$3,000. Mr. Argerbright stated that was a reasonable idea, and he added that it would be fair to other residents of Larwill. After further discussion on the Commission's payment of the fees, Mr. Boxberger stated that he would revise the easement documents to reflect the Commission paying \$1,000 availability fee per residence as consideration for grant of the easement.

Ms. Western inquired about the source of funds. Mr. Schrupf stated that they would be from CEDIT, like the rest of the project. Mr. Boxberger stated that the Commissioners should approve the expenditure at their next meeting. Ms. Beregszazi stated that they would proceed with contacting the property owners with this information later in the week and continue with the project.

RC 1 BUILDING INCENTIVES

Mr. Buuck stated that ChromaSource was still looking to expand operations to the RC 1 building in Rail Connect. The expansion could add 30 new jobs to their existing 190. He had discussed the possibility of a tax abatement with the Council, but the building has four years of an existing abatement remaining. The transfer of that abatement would not amount to much incentive, so he asked if there were other options through the Commission.

Mr. Boxberger clarified that the existing abatement could be expired early and a new one approved, but even at a 100% abatement the amount would not be much of an incentive. The existing abatement terms could not be modified, only transferred or terminated. He summarized the main options as transferring the abatement, offer training grants, or come up with some public improvement that would meet the required criteria. He also suggested that the Commission might offer to apply any excess value from the lease terms with Whitley RC Investments toward the purchase price, or to lease the building for a period. Mr. Buuck would be in contact with ChromaSource to discuss their needs further.

MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

Mr. Buuck had several items. He let the Commission know about a program that the EDC had participated in with IMPA that reviewed the 26-acre parcel on 100 South through a mock site selection process. He and Mr. Bilger had met with the site selector Ginovus the previous week, and they provided a lot of good feedback. The benefit was not only for that site in particular, but also to make Ginovus aware of the opportunities in Whitley County.

He commented that the AGA site work was completed, and an invoice for the Commission's share was among the claims. The work redirected a lot of the drainage that had been affecting the property, and AGA seemed satisfied.

Sailrite's expansion plans were progressing, and they were seeking a contractor for the project. He mentioned that the state had offered some incentives for the expansion as well.

Finally, he stated that the Indiana Materials Processing building addition was moving forward.

Mr. Schrumpf asked about what the Commission should do with the acreage in Rail Connect that had been recently deeded back from Whitley RC II. Despite its limitations, it still could be a big asset. Mr. Argerbright mentioned that the site should at least be better graded and seeded for ease of maintenance; Mr. Buuck would look into having that done. Mr. Kessler stated that the Association would not want to take it because of the liability and maintenance costs, so the Commission should find a long-term use.

Mr. Schrumpf also mentioned that there was interest in constructing another spec building from the same developer as the previous ones. Potential locations might be considered.

Mr. Bilger reminded the Commission of the pending Comprehensive Plan update process and the upcoming public input sessions.

Mr. Wagner stated that the grinder pump/well separation distance was being researched as an outcome of the Larwill project. The ordinance could be updated in the near future. Mr. Boxberger would share some research he had already done as well.

Mr. Buuck concluded by stating that the Humane Society's annual auction was going on, and drinks with the EDC President was an item up for bid.

CLAIMS

Claims were reviewed and consisted of: Carson LLP, \$2,637; Pulver Asphalt Paving, \$12,800; Union Township Trustee, \$50,000; Northeastern REMC, \$129.78; BCS Management, \$10,317.68; Weigand Properties, \$45,000.

Mr. Buuck said he was still looking into the transfer of the REMC street lights to another party.

Mr. Wheeler made a motion to approve the claims as presented; Mr. Schrader seconded. Motion passed 5-0 by roll call vote.

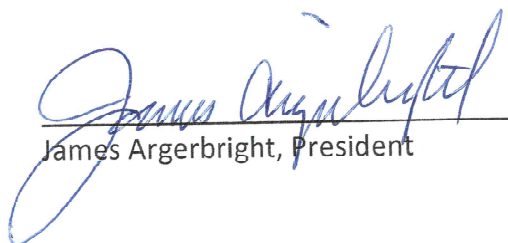
IN THE MATTER OF MINUTES

Minutes for the October 27th meeting were presented for review. Mr. Schrader noted a correction that the adjournment was by Mr. Argerbright, not Schrumpf. Mr. Kessler made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected, and Mr. Wheeler seconded. Motion passed, 4-0-1 by roll call vote, with Mr. Schrumpf abstaining.

Being no further business, Mr. Schrumpf declared the meeting adjourned at 8:47 a.m.

WHITLEY COUNTY REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

ATTEST:


James Argerbright, President


Michael Schrader, Secretary