

Joe Plankis  
Doug Holtz  
Jill Doyle  
Bob Beaudry  
Linda Naas  
(Mike Steele-School board/non-voting member)

## **WESTFIELD REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (RDC) MINUTES**

The Westfield Redevelopment Commission held a public meeting on May 15, 2023 at Westfield City Hall. Members in attendance were Joe Plankis, Doug Holtz, Linda Naas, and Bob Beaudry. Jill Doyle, and Mike Steele, the non-voting member representing Westfield-Washington Schools, were absent. Cam Starnes, legal counsel, and John Rogers were also in attendance.

Joe Plankis, President of the RDC, called the meeting to order at 6 PM.

### **Ratification of Grand Park Agreements**

Matt Trnian, Director of Grand Park, presented agenda items virtually and thanked the commission for accommodating his schedule. A motion for approval of the April agreements was made by Doug Holtz which was seconded by Joe Plankis. Vote: Yes-4; No-0. Motion approved.

Joe Plankis motioned to approve the May Grand Park User Agreements and the motion was seconded by Doug Holtz. Vote: Yes-4; No-0. Motion carried.

### **Grand Park 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Report**

The full report, attached to the agenda, indicates significant increases in expenses, however, much of this is due to reinvestment which includes turf replacement, according to Matt Trnian who reported on this part of the presentation. He added that Anna Sperry is now working on performance evaluation measures, also described as tracking analysis, of Grand Park's individual events. Joe Plankis asked that Mr. Trnian share Ms. Sperry's findings in the next couple of months. In closing, Mr. Trnian added that Sean Owens arranged for and led the entire staff in CPR training, and Grand Park would host the Umoja Games in July.

Next, William Knox of Legacy Sports Group (LSG) reported the contracted rental agreements executed in Q1 totaled \$818,111.71. Sponsorship was made more difficult due to the significant impact of incimate weather. Some sponsorship opportunities were not finalized at the time of this meeting.

Lastly, Blake Hibler of BullPen Tournaments indicated all numbers are increasing except the number of room nights from overnight hotel stays. Mr. Hibler enthusiastically reported a 3-year user agreement with WYSI was reached, after their last MOU expired, valued at \$100,000 in usage and field rents, and guaranteed hours. He reported several facility improvements including new batting cages and shade-structure upgrades.

Mr. Trnian reiterated the work on the reinvestment initiatives with Mr. Hibler and Mr. Plankis added a comment about last year's capital plan building in plans for 2024.

Linda Naas pointed out to Mr. Knox that the cost of legal bills against sponsorship agreements needed to be considered. She sent her questions and concerns about gross revenues, the receipt of gift certificates, legal bills, and payments to LSG to Mr. Trnian earlier (on the day of the meeting). Cam Starnes, Legal Counsel for the RDC, commented that Taft tries to be efficient in their billing, but offered that Mrs. Naas had made a fair point. Bob Beaudry was interested in receiving the gross and net numbers on Grand Park sponsorships.

Previously asked about Kokomo hotel revenue from Championship Field, Mr. Hibler remarked that it was between \$180,000 and \$200,000.

#### **Standby Land Transfer Agreement Update**

Birch Dalton was unable to make the meeting to attend to the agenda item titled Stand-by Land Transfer agreement. According to Mr. Plankis, Mr. Dalton gave \$300,000 to an interest fund owed to the RDC in light of closing the NexCore development deal. The \$300,000 was put toward the \$500,000 the RDC will receive after all of the land sales are finalized.

#### **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by Doug Holtz to approve the meeting minutes of the March 20, 2023 RDC meeting; seconded by Linda Naas. Vote: Yes-4; No-0. Motion carried.

#### **Approval of Claims**

Commissioner Linda Naas expressed concerns in an email to Cam Starnes, Legal Counsel, (sent earlier on the day of the meeting) about RDC claims relative to Taft's invoicing for time spent on RFPs. Mr. Starnes responded, reiterating his email response aloud, by noting he simply annotates the TIF he feels creates a connection to the "serves and benefits test" and the work performed on the invoice detail. Specifically, Mrs. Naas pointed out that sponsorship and user agreements have more to do with the Grand Park Sports Campus Operating Fund and less to do with TIFs as they directly impact Grand Park revenues. Mrs. Naas would like the Executive Director, Jeremy Lollar, to have a conversation with the Clerk-Treasurer's office. Mr. Starnes remarked, "Legal doesn't have the authority to tell commissioners whether to pay the claims as listed" and while he "...doesn't find it improper...", he also said, "It is a policy standpoint that is not for him to decide." He further explained that all legal fees are applied to the NTE for legal fees on behalf of the RDC. Mr. Plankis agreed that sponsorships do have more to do with GP operating expenses and suggested a meeting between he, John Rogers, and Jeremy Lollar to set ground rules from where these items should be charged.

Mrs. Naas then questioned whether a second Not-to-Exceed (NTE) agreement or Letter of Engagement was in place for the RFPs from Taft due to bills attributed to the committee reviewing them billing them to the RDC. Mr. Starnes stated he would check on the status of it, but did recall the January discussion. Commissioner Naas mentioned the Review Committee on RFPs does not report to the RDC and suggested it would be difficult to discern their expenses

with no knowledge of their work. Joe Plankis told the Commission that Jeremy Lollar, the Executive Director of the RDC, "...approves them because he knows what's going on...then, that is a legitimate bill." Further, he said Jeremy approves them "based on the activities of that committee." Cam Starnes clarified that he feels Jeremy is simply verifying the work they perform. Almost inaudible by phone, Mr. Lollar confirmed he verifies the hours worked.

Bob Beaudry shared his concerns about the expenses incurred from the RFPs and the Review Committee given the RDC never approved the undertaking. Joe Plankis told him the administration can pursue RFPs and send the bills to the RDC. In response, Commissioner Beaudry asked, "Can Administration designate RDC funds to pay for RFPs prior to presenting them to the Commission?" Cam Starnes said the claims must be presented to the RDC and the commissioners can approve or deny the claims as the "ultimate decision maker." He noted the expenses are an ongoing way to procure a potential project. Linda Naas pointed out the budget for the RFPs was just approved in March (2023) for \$100,000 for RFP legal expenses, yet the RDC has been receiving bills since last year (2022). Mr. Lollar stated the budget approval was for 2023, not the year prior. "The budget was being chewed up pretty quickly," said Mrs. Naas.

Doug Holtz stated he was surprised that a policy or procedure had not been put in place as to the assignment of expenses for the TIF districts because they have existed for over ten years. He noted, for the record, he questions the accuracy of their assignment and thinks the Clerk-Treasurer's office should have been more concerned with their allocation. Jeremy Lollar stated, in the past, all legal expenses of the RDC were paid out of the administration's legal lines and he hopes, going forward, to adjust the different "accounts" that have already spent dollars to the appropriate TIF and line item.

Mr. Starnes closed the discussion by mentioning the reasons why detail is not often included for the public's consumption, but that there are other avenues that can be pursued to ensure the commissioners are comfortable with the claims detail.

Doug Holtz motioned to approve the claims and was seconded by Joe Plankis. Vote: Yes-4; No-0. Motion passed.


#### **Resolution 04-2023: Appropriation/Budget Ratification**

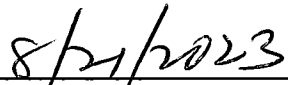
The 2023 RDC Budget was ratified in this local document. Linda Naas asked Cam Starnes about the status of a general fund for the RDC and mentioned funding it with abatement dollars. Cam Starnes could not confirm nor deny whether the abatement tool would be used in the future. Jeremy Lollar committed to speaking with the city council about operating dollars in a general fund for the RDC in the future. Commissioner Naas motioned to approved the resolution with an amendment relative to defining and verifying the correct appropriation lines in TIF Fund 328 (Wheeler Landing). Her motion was seconded by Joe Plankis. Vote: Yes-4; No-0. Motion passed.

#### **Q1 RDC Report**

John Rogers presented the item which he had previously sent to commissioners whose questions he answered by email the week before the meeting. There were no further questions or comments on his report. Joe Plankis did let the commissioners know he and Mr. Rogers had worked together to add the detail on the history of each TIF fund under their headings.

Doug Holtz motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:59 PM and his motion was seconded by Joe Plankis. Motion was approved by acclamation.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Plankis/RDC President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date