

TOWN OF GRIFFITH
REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
APRIL 1ST, 2015

Commission President Rich Leber called the April 1st, 2015 meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at Griffith Franklin Center, 201 N. Broad St., Griffith, Indiana.

ROLL CALL

Robert Kurtz, present
Rich Leber, present
Rich Miller, present
Susan Schaub, present
Don Wiltfong, present

ALSO ATTENDING

Dave Austgen, Austgen Kuiper Jasaitis
Jeff Bridges, Economic Development Commission
George Jerome, Clerk Treasurer
Gus Parianos, Economic Development Commission
Rick Ryfa, Town Council Member
Rex Sherrard, Austgen Kuiper Jasaitis
Tom Wichlinski, Economic Development Commission

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commission President Rich Leber motioned to approve the minutes from March 4th, 2015, seconded by Don Wiltfong. All in favor, motion carried.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

Commission President motioned to approve on claim payable to Barnes & Thornburg in the amount of \$754.00, seconded by Bob Kurtz. All in favor, motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Rich Leber informed the commission that Pokro's Brewery has been reimbursed \$10,000.00 for the interior work.

Rich Leber submitted a letter stating that Wildrose Brewery is officially open, therefore, he is asking the Redevelopment Commission to approve the additional \$15,000.00 reimbursement. Susan Schaub motioned to approve the remaining \$15,000.00 reimbursement, seconded by Don Wiltfong. All in favor, motion carried.

Manny Papadakis, of 101 N. Griffith Blvd., submitted all necessary paperwork in order to receive reimbursement for the Commercial Revitalization Program. Bob Kurtz motioned to approve \$20,000.00 payable to Manny Papadakis, seconded by Don Wiltfong. All in favor, motion carried.

Rich Leber questioned the status of Fagen Miller progress. Rich Miller stated he has seen contractors at Fagen Miller. The last item to be completed is the landscaping and the project will be finalized

Rich Leber questioned the status of Moses Eyecare. Susan Schaub has no update.

Susan Schaub presented pictures of the proposed mural for G & G Hobby. The price quoted is \$7,500.00, which includes an underlayment and a final cover coat. The contractor would like to paint both murals at the same time. Councilman Rick Ryfa asked Susan Schaub if she has contracts with the property owners agreeing they will not paint over the murals. At this time, Mrs. Schaub hasn't spoken with the owner of G & G Hobby. Mr. Ryfa feels it would be in the best interest of the town to have a contract with both property owners regarding painting over the mural and a contract with E-Lion stipulating a deadline. Mr. Austgen will draft contracts for both properties as well as for the contractor. Don Wiltfong motioned to approve the estimate for G & G Hobby, contingent upon E-Lion being able to complete the work in 2015 and G & G Hobby allowing the painting to be done. The motion was seconded by Bob Kurtz. All in favor, motion carried.

Mr. Austgen informed the Redevelopment Commission that the property located at 926 N. Broad Street and the property on the SE corner of Broad Street and Lake Street are both located in the Economic Revitalization Area, therefore, they can utilize tax abatement, but they are not in a TIF Area. In order to capture TIF increment, an Economic Development Area must be developed, established and approved. Mr. Austgen explained that there is an Economic Development Area north of town, but there is no connectivity from the north to the south end of town. The Redevelopment Commission will need to decide if they would like to amend the current Economic Development Area in order to include 926 N. Broad and the SE corner of Broad and Lake Streets, or identify a commercial corridor and create the proper legal description, showing area to be included and make a linear Economic Development Area. Therefore, if there is commercial improvement or development and assessed valuation is increased, it would be captured immediately over the term of the Economic Development Area. Mr. Austgen stated that residential homes and the school system are not affected by the Economic Development Area. Susan Schaub questioned if the assessed valuations decrease is the Redevelopment Commission responsible to pay the difference. Mr. Austgen explained that if the assessed value decreases the collection is reduced. The amount of collections should be checked and monitored annually. Rick Ryfa asked if once the downtown area is in a TIF district and the assessed value increases within the next five years, could that money be captured. Mr. Austgen explained that the process in getting the base assessed valuation set is as follows: Declaratory Resolution, approval of the Plan Commission, approval of the Town Council, Confirmatory Resolution by the Redevelopment Commission, followed by a Public Hearing. Once that is all complete and it goes to the county, the base assessed valuation is set. Anything above the base assessed valuation is captured as TIF. The Economic Development Plan can always be amended by adding or deleting properties. Mr. Ryfa explained that he is also interested in having both east and west Main Street in a TIF area. Susan Schaub questioned Ridge Road, and Mr. Austgen informed her that most of

Ridge Road is already in a TIF area, including Kmart Plaza and travels east to Luke Oil. Susan Schaub questioned Mr. Austgen on the costs that will be incurred in order to amend the plan. Mr. Austgen explained that he has done this type of work before and already has some of the resolutions in place. Mrs. Schaub is concerned mainly because of previous financial commitments the Redevelopment Commission is under, as well as the 2015 Commercial Revitalization Program. George Jerome would like to concentrate on prior commitments and reorganize the whole process. Mr. Austgen asked the Redevelopment Commission to be somewhat conservative for the 2015 Commercial Revitalization Program. Mr. Austgen said the Redevelopment Commission needs to make a decision on which direction to go, however, he stressed that a decision does not need to be made immediately. Rick Ryfa will look at the Town Council's budget to see if there would be funds available for a viable Commercial Revitalization Program. Rick Ryfa questioned the timeline to amend the existing Economic Development Area. Mr. Austgen said it would take approximately sixty (60) days. Mr. Austgen will give the Redevelopment Commission a calendar to follow. George Jerome told Mr. Austgen that he would like a comprehensive plan that would make sense and get the Redevelopment Commission on the right tract. Rich Leber asked for a motion authorizing Mr. Austgen to begin the legal description. Don Wiltfong motioned to authorize Mr. Austgen to proceed with the Economic Development Area, seconded by Robert Kurtz. All in favor, motion carried.

Dave Austgen presented draft lease agreements for the Park Department, Griffith Girls Softball and Griffith Soccer. The lease states that if noncompliance occurs, the Redevelopment Commission can take back properties. Rick Ryfa asked that Mr. Austgen work with Brent Torrenga to customize the leases. Don Wiltfong motioned to conditionally approve the drafts, seconded by Robert Kurtz. All in favor, motion carried.

Rich Leber and Don Wiltfong attended the LC Economic Alliance presentation at the Lake County Welcome Center. Mr. Leber stated that there was a lot of talk about the Griffith Golf Course property. Rick Ryfa said that it is a Town Council decision to agree on an annual commitment for the LC Economic Alliance.

Rich Leber questioned the deficiencies in the new asphalt completed last summer. Rick Ryfa informed him that the engineers and Walsh & Kelly are looking into the matter. He also said that a new company will be paving Ridge Road from Cline to Colfax this year.

Rich Leber received an email on the decision from the Court of Appeals regarding the Town of Munster's Redevelopment Commission that made improvements to park land and then gave the property back to the town, and continued with the maintenance fees. Mr. Leber asked in regards to the new dialysis center, when does a property come out of the TIF District. Mr. Austgen explained that the language in the appeal does not relate to the dialysis center. Once a TIF District is established, it does not go away except by statutory time period, which is 25 years. A TIF District has nothing to do with collecting back money. Mr. Ryfa explained that the Town of Munster misspent the TIF money because they used it for maintenance. Mr. Austgen said the opinion gives an idea how TIF works. The Court of Appeals did a nice job of walking through it and it's very instructive.

Rich Leber asked about the status of the levy at Griffith Golf Course property. Mr. Ryfa said that there is a meeting tomorrow with Christopher Burke Engineering. It will take approximately 2 years to have the

levy moved. Rick Ryfa informed Mr. Austgen that the Redevelopment Commission authorized the Town Council to act on their behalf regarding the levy project at the Griffith Golf Course.

NEW BUSINESS

Rick Ryfa asked for Redevelopment or Economic Commission to participate in the purchase of overhanging signs for each of the new breweries. They will be similar to the street signs, but will have their name and logo on them.

Jeff Bridge questioned the size of the waterline to Wildrose Brewery. He said the waterline is not large enough to handle their needs. Rick Ryfa said Mr. Konopasek has been in contact with the property owner.

Jeff Bridges voiced his concern on the condition of Andy's Body Shop. He said it creates a serious health issue. George Jerome has documents on the property. Mr. Jerome asked Mr. Austgen to look into the matter.

Rick Ryfa said he is interested in re-igniting the Welcome Wagon Program. He would like the Town and Chamber of Commerce to get involved and put something together for all new residents. The package could be distributed to new residents when they register at the Town Hall. George Jerome will contact the Chamber of Commerce.

FOLLOW UP

Mr. Austgen will proceed with the Economic Development Area

Susan Schaub will contact G & G Hobby regarding the mural

Mr. Austgen will draft contracts for property owners regarding the murals, as well as a contract with E-Lion stipulating a time frame

Mr. Austgen will contact Brent Torrenga to customize the leases with the Park Department, Girls Softball and Griffith Soccer

Mr. Austgen will investigate options for Andy's Body Shop

George Jerome will contact the Chamber of Commerce in regards to the Welcome Wagon Program

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Rich Leber, President

Don Wiltfong, Secretary

Tricia Kistler, Recording Secretary