CITY OF CRAWFORDSVILLE
REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
February 21, 2023 – 8:30 a.m.

The Crawfordsville Redevelopment Commission met on Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at 8:30 a.m. in regular session. Members present were: Virginia Servies, Dan Rogers, Conrad Harvey and Thomas Neal. Also in in attendance was ex-officio member Steve McLaughlin. Member Jack Whitecotton was not in attendance. Others in attendance were: Brandy Allen, Director of Operations & Community Development; Megan Huckstep, Director of Planning & Building Services; Tyler Nichols, City Attorney of Taylor, Minnette, Schneider and Clutter; and Cheryl Morphew, Economic Development Consultant.

Virginia Servies called the meeting to order and the roll was called.

Meeting minutes from December 16, 2022 were presented to the Commission for consideration. Dan Rogers moved to approve the minutes as presented. Conrad Harvey seconded. Motion approved 4-0.

Election of Officers were requested for the 2023 calendar year. Dan Rogers nominated Virginia Servies as President. Thomas Neal seconded. Nominations were closed. Virginia Servies was elected President 4-0. Dan Rogers then nominated Thomas Neal as Vice Chair. Conrad Harvey seconded. With no additional nominations, they were closed. Thomas Neal was elected Vice Chair 4-0. Next, Dan Rogers moved to nominate Conrad Harvey as Secretary. Virginia Servies seconded. Nominations were closed. Conrad Harvey was elected Secretary 4-0.

The Commission received and considered the following claims:

1.	HWC Engineering	$ 4,890.00
2.	BNY Mellon	$175,000.00
3.	RJL Solutions, LLC	$ 3,800.00
4.	Retail Strategies, LLC	$ 45,000.00
5.	BNY Mellon	$318,687.50
6.	BNY Mellon	$ 50,000.00
7.	Baker Tilly	$ 5,756.29
8.	HWC Engineering	$ 5,400.00

Dan Rogers moved to approve the claims as submitted. Thomas Neal seconded. Motion approved 4-0. Virginia Servies requested details on the claim for the Market Street Overpass. Operations and Community Development Director Brandy Allen explained that the city had contracted with a company who would be working on a grant application to address the situation where the train blocks the Market Street intersection. She explained that CSX had provided information in the past, but the consultants would review video data to confirm accurate data on rail blockages. It was noted that if an overpass was approved, CSX may be required to help fund the project.

Updated financial reports were submitted to the Commission from City Clerk-Treasurer Terri Gadd. It was noted that Ms. Gadd was not in attendance but that the reports had been updated for their review. Dan Rogers acknowledged receipt of the financial reports. Conrad Harvey seconded. Motion approved 4-0.

Operations and Community Development Director Brandy Allen provided an update for Mayor Todd Barton who was not in attendance. Mrs. Allen explained that that bids had been requested for the Alley Activation Project, which would consist of a more formal closure with seating in the mural alley next to Milligan's Flowers and Gifts. Mrs. Allen indicated that construction would begin later this summer. Mrs. Allen explained that the City had contracted with Retail Strategies who would be dedicated to marketing to companies that the city wants to attract. She reported it would be beneficial to have someone dedicated to recruiting and indicated that grocery was one of the top needs in our community. In response to childcare in the community, Mrs. Allen reported that the Montgomery County Early Childcare Coalition, a part of the Montgomery County Community Foundation, had met their fundraising goal for construction of a childcare facility. She indicated that they were moving forward with proposal requests for providers. It was the intent to begin construction later this year with a planned opening the following year in 2024. Mrs. Allen reported that there would be an update to the Marie Canine Plaza fountain. She noted that fundraising was underway for the project but there was still a funding gap; therefore the construction timeline may be pushed back from this year. Mrs. Allen reiterated the recent announcement of the grant to fund the first phase of acquiring properties on Wayne Avenue due to the natural erosion along Sugar Creek. Mrs. Allen explained that a study was done several years ago that identified the affected areas and what needed to be addressed. She indicated that home owners do not have to participate but there would be grant funds available to purchase the homes in the affected area in order to tear them down and allow nature to run its course. She explained that there were properties in Sugar Cliff Subdivision that would also be affected but were not part of phase one. It was noted that the intent was to provide the home owner with a fair price for their homes and allow them the opportunity to move on. In other projects, Mrs. Allen reported that construction would begin in early to mid-March on the Francis Wooden Park, formerly known as Northside Park, located on North Grant Avenue. The estimated completion date was August 2023. The park was would acknowledge the history of the area. In addition, Mrs. Allen reported that there would be upgrades to Lincoln Park on Wabash Avenue. She reported that the City was working to formalize what would be known as Brickyard Nature Park on the Brickyard property of the Commerce Park. She explained that voluntary trails had been made by the public for trail walking and biking. She stated that the intent would be to formalize it as a trail park for public use moving forward. Also, Mrs. Allen provided an update on the extension of Purple Heart Parkway, which would extend from US Highway 231 South to Ladoga Road. She noted it was not INDOT funded; therefore construction was planned for 2024. Mrs. Allen informed the Commission that traffic studies were being completed on Traction Road and County Road 150 South. She explained that both roads would need improvements due to recent or proposed development.

Mrs. Allen also informed the Commission about some additional projects around the City which include, a pedestrian crossing on Elmore Street between the Acuity facilities and also one on Wabash Avenue for the college campus. She explained that the crossings would improve safety for the public. Mrs. Allen provided an update on the Schenck Road extension project which would connect it to State Road 32. It was noted that the project was funded by INDOT, but they were wrapping up design and would begin acquisition. Within the same area, Mrs. Allen reported that there would be a culvert replacement project at Big Four and Schenck Road that would be done in conjunction with the sewer extension project. Mrs. Allen reported that the water and sewer would be extended on the South end of town for the new CSI location. She explained that TIF funds would be used to assist in adding the infrastructure to these areas where additional assessed valuation would be added. In other news, Mrs. Allen reported that officials had met with the developer for the Ben Hur Building who was waiting on the IEDC concerning additional funding due to a gap due to costs increasing over time. She reported that construction would move forward if that was approved, however they would keep the Commission updated on any updates.

Cheryl Morphew, Economic Development Consultant, came forward to provide an update to the Commission. She reported that she was combining lead activity for January and February which included a total ten (10) leads which were all for manufacturing. Mrs. Morphew indicated that many leads were international. However, Mrs. Morphew reported the job creation numbers were very large, therefore officials had to be selective when considering projects. She explained that they were making sure that the numbers were manageable for our community. In addition, Mrs. Morphew reported that another hurdle facing the city was the request for existing buildings or large tracts of land that the city simply did not have available. She indicated that officials were being strategic and mindful moving forward to make sure we can be supportive. She stressed the importance of companies being successful. Discussion arose regarding the need for housing. Operations and Community Development Director Brandy Allen reported that they were making great progress with a couple of potential housing projects that she expected to be released in the coming months. After further discussion of the potential housing projects, Mrs. Morphew discussed their business attraction and retention plans for the upcoming year. She invited members to Workforce Development meetings and reported that it was National CTE Month; therefore local CTE high school students would be highlighted for the month of February. Mrs. Morphew proceeded to discuss the lack of ESL training and education in the workplace. She reported that Ivy Tech was no longer offering classes and they were looking for additional resources. Mrs. Morphew agreed to reach out to Commissioner and Wabash College Spanish Professor Dan Rogers to discuss and explore options and potential internship opportunities. Other items discussed were the virtual reality program at Fusion 54. Mrs. Morphew also highlighted the importance of our local community having a Childcare Director on staff who was able oversee not only the quantity of childcare in the community but the quality of care. She also reported that the summer camp was expanding. Mrs. Morphew stressed the benefits of a public and private collaboration for a successful outcome that would benefit the community as a whole.

There were no items of old business; therefore the Commission proceeded with new business. City Attorney Tyler Nichols presented a draft copy of the bid notice, and agreement with specifications for the mowing and landscaping of the Crawfordsville Commerce Park. Attorney Nichols explained that the Commission needed to act on the bid notice so it could be published. He also recommended that the Commission review the specifications for the scope of work and make any necessary changes. Brandy Allen provided background history of the work done at the Park. She indicated that there was concern addressed last year that the quality of work had been decreasing. She believed that the quality of work was sacrificed due to the contract being under bid. Mrs. Allen reported that landscape architect Catherine Puckett of HWC Engineering had provided some recommendations for revisiting the Park's maintenance and landscaping specifications as well as possibly separating the mowing and landscaping contracts. It was decided that the current specifications were satisfactory for now but that they may need to look at plant and mulch replacement separately. Discussion arose regarding how and when weeds are removed. The consensus was that the appearance of the Park needed to be improved and the Commission needed to decide how to move forward. Commission members agreed to move forward with the current mowing and landscaping maintenance request for bids according to the current specifications and then discuss looking at additional projects separately. Mrs. Allen suggested looking at shorter term such as a one year contract rather than a two year contract. With no further discussion, Dan Rogers moved to approve the bid, contract agreement and specifications for Commerce Park Mowing and Landscaping with the modification that the term be revised from a two year contract to a one year term. Conrad Harvey seconded. Motion approved with the modification of a one year term. It was noted that the Commission would also need to consider the quality of the bids and not just consider the best price or look at a separate bid for an additional project.

After further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

Minutes Approved: 03.21.2023

Virginia Servies
President

John Whitecotton
Member

Member

Member

Conrad B Harvey
Member