

**VALPARAISO REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**March 11, 2021**

The regular meeting of the Valparaiso Redevelopment Commission was called to order at 4:33 p.m. on Thursday, March 11, 2021. President Rob Thorgren presided.

Members present were: Rob Thorgren, Evan Costas, George Douglas, Trish Sarkisian, Tim Bucher and Ethan Lowe. Also present were City Attorney Patrick Lyp, Redevelopment Director, Brandon Dickinson and Community Engagement Director, Maggie Clifton. Members of the public watched remotely.

**ITEM #1-MINUTES:**

Mr. Lowe reported copies of the February 11, 2021 regular meeting minutes were distributed to members for their review prior to the meeting. After reviewing the minutes, all seemed in order. Mr. Lowe recommended their approval.

Motion: Mr. Lowe motioned to approve the February 11, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Douglas seconded. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

**ITEM #2 -CLAIMS REGISTER AND FINANCIAL REPORT:**

Mr. Dickinson reported that the Commission was sent the March 11, 2021 Claims Register and February 2021 Financial Report prior to the meeting. Mr. Dickinson recommended approval.

Motion: Mr. Douglas motioned to approve the March Claims Register and the February Financial Report. Ms. Sarkisian seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

**ITEM #3-BUDGETING FOR CHALLENGE GRANTS:**

Mr. Dickinson stated that every year the Redevelopment Commission provides \$600,000.00 annually to both East Porter and Valparaiso School Districts. Figures were compiled based on enrollment; it is a per student formula that is applied to the enrollment numbers for the schools. East Porter will be awarded and granted a maximum of \$168,468.30 and Valparaiso Community schools will be awarded and granted a maximum of \$431,531.10. The figures and applications have been sent out to the schools and the deadline is April. Last year, we moved the deadline around because of Covid and would like to return to the previous deadlines. Both superintendents responded very appreciative of this and are currently working to provide these for the June meeting for approval and to start disbursements.

Motion: Mr. Douglas motioned to approve the budget for the Challenge Grants. Ms. Sarkisian seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

**ITEM #4-NEIGHBORHOOD GRANTS:**

Ms. Clifton stated that over the last three years relationships have been built between the neighborhoods and the City and physical improvement projects have been done around town. Last year the program continued to rise, even thru Covid.

Guidelines this year will be the same as last year, although the application time will have a slightly shorter window with the deadline being July 31<sup>st</sup>. Last year due to Covid it was extended until August.

Something new for approval would be block party mini grants. This would be for reimbursing or funding up to \$500.00 for the expenses that would be involved in having a block party. Ms. Clifton would speak with every neighborhood that wanted to apply for the grant. The \$500.00 could be used for catering, doing something like outdoor movie rental, etc.

Long term for the program, ideally in 2022 applications can be due in February and get them done in the same year. Ms. Clifton will speak to the neighborhood groups during their webinar at the end of March to inform them of the upcoming programs.

Motion: Mr. Douglas motioned to approve the Neighborhood Grants. Ms. Sarkisian seconded. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

**ITEM #5-LEVY EXTENSION:**

Mr. Dickinson stated that due to Levy having relocation problems in Portage, they needed to stay longer. Last month, Levy asked for an extension through the end of March. This is a ratification to allow Mr. Thorgren to sign on behalf of the Redevelopment Commission to extend their lease into March.

Motion: Mr. Douglas motioned to approve the Levy Extension. Ms. Sarkisian seconded. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

**ITEM #6-K&D LAWN AND LANDSCAPE GROUP LAWN MAINTENANCE PROPOSAL 2021:**

K&D has previously done the landscaping for the ANCO building. A proposal was given for this year just in case we do not have the ANCO property closed with Journeyman, since we will have to maintain the property. The rates are consistent with last year. The work will cover weekly mowing of Dash and ANCO.

Motion: Mr. Douglas motioned to approve the K&D Lawn and Landscape Group Lawn Maintenance Proposal for 2021. Ms. Sarkisian seconded. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

**ITEM #7-APPROVAL OF CALKINS HILL DRAW:**

Mr. Dickinson stated the way the TIF disbursement works, is that it is a developer backed bond. They must purchase their own bonds. Invoices, liens, partial lien releases and continuation sheets will be provided to track spending, invoices, and completion for the project, etc. The first draw

was done at the closing for \$100,000.00. That went to cost of issuance, attorneys, etc. This draw is for work done totaling \$311,000 for site engineering, earth and site work, storm and sewer detention work and sanitary sewer work. Mr. Dickinson reviewed the invoices, liens and releases from the vendors. They are all in order and for work that was agreed to be reimbursable per the reimbursement agreement that the Redevelopment Commission signed with the developer. Mr. Dickinson stated the Board of Public Works will also need to review and approve. Upon their approval, the trustee will be contacted and have the developer either credited or reimbursed for the expenses. Mr. Dickinson respectfully requests the approval for draw number two in the total amount of \$311,640.42.

Motion: Mr. Douglas motioned to approve Calkins Hill Draw. Ms. Sarkisian seconded. A voice vote was unanimously carried.

**ITEM #8-PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None.

**ITEM #9-ADJOURNMENT:**

Staff said they had no further items for the Commission's consideration. Mr. Douglas motioned to adjourn the meeting with Ms. Sarkisian seconding. A voice vote was unanimously carried. The March 11, 2021 Redevelopment Commission meeting adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

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Ethan Lowe, Secretary