

City of Merrill
Meeting of Redevelopment Authority (RDA)

Wednesday, December 6, 2023 at 8:00 a.m.
City Hall Common Council Chambers

RDA Present: Steve Hass, Mark Bares, Steve Sabatke, Rebecca Rutkowski, Tony Kusserow and Gary Hartwig

RDA Excused: Clyde Nelson

Others: Alderpersons LaDonna Fermanich and Nathan Meyer, City Clerk Lori Anderson-Malm, Finance Director Kathy Unertl, City Attorney Tom Hayden, City Public Works Director/City Engineer Rod Akey. City Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Darin Pagel, Police Chief Corey Bennett, Elsa Duranceau from Lincoln County Economic Development Corp. (LCEDC), Stephanie Springborn from Winds and Paradox, Inc., Kristen Fish-Peterson of Redevelopment Resources, Todd Frederick, and City Social Media Specialist Hallie Savall. Meyer set up the Merrill Productions camera until the meeting adjournment into the Closed Session.

Call to Order: Chair Hass called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Consider approval of RDA meeting minutes from November 1, 2023:

Motion (Bares/Rutkowski) to approve the meeting minutes from November 1. Carried.

Public Comments: None.

Consider resolution authorizing a development agreement by and between the City of Merrill, Wisconsin and Wendorf Construction LLC for residential development (TID No. 7):

Akey reported that City staff had met with Dave Wendorf from Wendorf Construction LLC and some revisions to the agreement were being finalized. Anticipated property acquisition closing is planned for January 2024. Consideration of the revised development agreement will be on a future RDA meeting agenda.

Update on redevelopment plans for Mathias Building and potential requests for City of Merrill assistance (419 W. Main St. – TID No. 8):

Stephanie Springborn of Winds & Paradox Inc. updated status of redevelopment plans for 419 W. Main St. (Mathias Building). The Federal HUD grant application deadline has been extended to December 11, 2023 and Springborn requested City letter of support.

There has been preliminary award of \$200,000 WEDC (Wisconsin Economic Development Corp.) Community Development Investment grant. This is a pass through grant which requires a formal City of Merrill Resolution.

Motion (Kusserow/Hartwig) to recommend resolution authorizing submission of the Community Development Investment grant to WEDC. Carried.

Update on 2023 Tax Increment generation and historical trends:

Unertl reported that the total 2023 Tax Increment is \$2,559,191 to support 2024 TID budgets.

There was spreadsheet graph highlighting tax increment \$ trend from 2007 through 2023. Unertl advised that the 1/1/2016 revaluation process resulted in overstating of TID increment in 2017 which was adjusted in 2018.

Update on 2024 Tax Increment District (TID) budget requests:

Unertl advised the 2024 TID budgets should result in about \$500,000 reduction in the City General Fund Advances.

Next RDA Meeting: Tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, February 7, 2024 at 8:00 a.m.

Closed Session:

Chair Hass read the following: The RDA may convene in closed session per Wis. Stats. Sec. 19.85(1)(e) – deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session to consider:

- a) Negotiation of potential TID development incentives to facilitate future redevelopment (TID No. 8 – Mathias Building)

Motion (Bares/Rutkoski) to move into Closed Session. Motion carried 6 – 0 on roll call vote at 8:47a.m.

Stephanie Springborn, Elsa Duranceau, and Kristen Fish-Peterson responded to RDA Commissioner and City staff questions. They then left the Closed Session.

Items discussed included the potential TID cash development incentive amount and potential City of Merrill letter of support for Federal HUD grant application,

Motion (Bares/Sabatke) to reconvene in Open Session at 9:30 a.m. Carried.

The following actions were taken on Closed Session matter:

Motion (Hass/Rutkowski) to recommend the resolution authorizing a development agreement by and between the City of Merrill, Wisconsin & Winds and Paradox, Inc. with total cash development incentive of \$80,000 (i.e. with \$40,000 after completion of the rehabilitation project and \$40,000 the year following completion). Carried.

Motion (Hass/Bares) to authorize a City of Merrill letter of support for the Federal HUD grant application upon further City staff research. Carried.

Adjournment: (Bares/Rutkowski) to adjourn at 9:35 a.m. Carried.

Minutes prepared by RDA Secretary Kathy Unertl