Town of Merrillville
Redevelopment Commission Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2026, 6:00 pm
Merrillville Municipal Complex

Call to Order
Mr. Pettit called the meeting to order at 6:12 pm.

Roll Call
Ms. Chilcott took roll call. The following members were present: Mr. Pettit, Ms. Chandler-Felton, Ms. Uzelac, and Ms. Haynes-Edwards. The following members were absent: Ms. Haynes-Edwards. There were 4 members present; there was a quorum.

Consent Agenda Accts. Payable Register Voucher Approval for March 24th, 2026.
Approval of Meeting Minutes from February 24th, 2026. Ms. Uzelac made a motion to approve, seconded by Ms. Chandler-Felton, there was no discussion. The motion was carried with a voice vote of 4 yes and 0 no.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

Mr. Pettit read aloud the following item:

- Approval of the engagement letter from Cender Dalton Municipal Advisors.

Mr. Pettit noted that Ms. Hudson of Cender Dalton Municipal Advisors was present in the audience. He explained that the Town has engaged services similar to those provided by London Witte, and asked Ms. Chilcott, Economic Development Director, and Ms. Hudson to clarify the distinction between the two firms

Ms. Hudson explained that Cender Dalton Municipal Advisors provides assistance on budget-related and operational matters, such as supporting the budget process during the summer and fall, and assisting the Clerk Treasurer's Office with questions regarding bond payments or related communication. She emphasized that these services do not replace the role of Mr. Swintz of London Witte, who serves as the Town's longstanding Municipal Advisor on bond-related matters. Ms. Hudson added that she and Mr. Swintz communicate as needed.

She further stated that the Redevelopment Commission (RDC) general fund, which has recently been established, would be used to cover these services. The annual cost is minimal, typically a few thousand dollars, and formalizing the arrangement will support proper documentation for audit purposes and improve efficiency.

Mr. Pettit asked if there were any questions for Ms. Hudson. There were none. Ms. Uzelac made a motion to approve the Engagement Letter from Cender Dalton Municipal Advisors, seconded by Ms. Chandler-Felton; there was no discussion. The motion was carried with a voice vote of 4 yes and 0 no.

General Orders: None.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Redevelopment Commission Annual Report.

Mr. Pettit introduced the town's longtime financial advisor, Mr. Swintz, noting his service of over 30 years. He explained that Mr. Swintz had prepared the annual Redevelopment Commission report and invited him to present it to the Commission.

Mr. Pettit then asked whether any action was required on the report. Mr. Switz deferred to Mr. Griffin, Town Manager. Mr. Griffin asked the Commission President for permission to proceed, which Mr. Pettit granted. Mr. Griffin then confirmed with Ms. Chilcott, Economic Development Director, that it was acceptable for him to continue; she responded, "Please."

Mr. Griffin explained that while the statute does not require formal approval of the report, it does require that the report be transmitted to the Town Council and acknowledged as received. He stated that an acknowledgement of receipt is necessary in order to meet the statutory filing deadline of the 15th. He recommended the Commission acknowledge the report, as it is their responsibility to transmit it to the Town Council in accordance with the statute.

Mr. Swintz stated that the Redevelopment Commission is currently in the TIF reporting season. He explained that this report represents a presentation of the prior year's activities. He noted that the format is designed to include all information required to be reported to the Town Council and Department of Local Government Finance (DGLF) by April 15th, and to facilitate entry into Gateway.

Mr. Swintz stated the report could be reviewed quickly. He explained that the first page lists all accounts or funds held by the Town that have TIF associated with them, including beginning balances, revenues, and expenditures. He noted that he works with Ms. Santos, the Bookkeeper, to obtain the Town's financial reports and with Ms. Hudson to ensure that all balances reconcile with the reported figures. He added that the report reflects all funds with cash balances and includes exhibits detailing 2025 activity. He confirmed that the report will be submitted to the Council and noted that, as decided last year, he will present the report to the Council rather than simply submitting it. He further stated that the report must be uploaded to Gateway prior to April 15th and presented to the Council at a later date.

Mr. Pettit inquired about the Council meeting schedule, asking if the next meeting was on April 11th. Mr. Griffin responded that he believed so; however, Commissioner Ms. Hardaway noted that April 11th falls on a Thursday and is not the next scheduled meeting. Ms. Chandler-Felton confirmed that the next Town Council meeting is scheduled for April 14th. Mr. Griffin stated that the report must be completed prior to filing. Mr. Pettit asked if the presentation could take place at the April 14th meeting. Mr. Griffin responded that the timing is at the Commission's discretion. Mr. Swintz confirmed that the report will be uploaded to Gateway prior to that date, after which the Council will approve it, and the Clerk-Treasurer, Mr. January, will submit it. Mr. Sevtanoff, Town Attorney, noted that a special Town Council meeting could be called if necessary.

Mr. Pettit asked if there were any further questions for Mr. Swintz. There were none. Ms. Uzelac made a motion to approve the Annual Redevelopment Commission Report, seconded by Ms. Chandler-Felton. There was no further discussion. The motion passed by voice vote, 4-0.

Mr. Pettit stated, prior to adjournment, that an additional matter had been raised by Ms. Hudson and Mr. King, Town Engineer, which could not be added to the agenda. He announced that a Plan Commission meeting will be held on April 7th and that a Special Redevelopment Commission meeting will be called at 6:00 p.m. that same day. He explained that the Commission will need to approve claims related to the 69th Avenue and Mississippi Street roundabout project, as well as a property acquisition. He noted that the RDC will be reimbursed at 80%, as these are federal aid projects. He further stated that Butler, Fairman & Seufert requires funds to complete payment for the property located on the Hobart side of Mississippi Street. Mr. Pettit directed Ms. Chilcott and Ms. Guardiola, Administrative Assistant, to prepare the meeting notice.

Adjournment: Ms. Uzelac motions to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Haynes-Chandler-Felton at 6:21 pm.

Adopted on: April 28, 2026