

COLUMBIA CITY REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES

September 9, 2025

Members present: President Commissioner Carl Siler
Vice President Commissioner Scott Gates
Commissioner Tad Varga
Commissioner Samara Thompson
Secretary Commissioner Angela Cotter
Commissioner David Smith (Ex-Officio)

Members absent: ---

Also in attendance: Community Development Director Chip Hill
CCRDC Attorney Greg Hockemeyer
Mayor Ryan Daniel
Whitley County EDC President Dale Buuck

President Siler called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to approve the August minutes. Commissioner Varga made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Thompson. A vote was taken; all voted aye.

Old Business-

LML Property – President Siler said the wells will have to be closed, a soil management plan will need to be created, environmental restrictive covenants will need to be enacted on a portion of the property, an IDEM meeting needs to be scheduled, and they need to complete a survey of the restrictive line. It will cost approximately \$16,500 to complete all these tasks. There is currently \$197,000 in the fund.

Jackson-Line Street Site – Mr. Busche signed off and the property now belongs to the RDC again. Chip will discuss exchanging this property for the County's property on the corner of Washington & Van Buren streets.

Former Jail Property – Mayor Daniel reached out to the county to find out if they had interest in receiving back the property, and they refused. Mayor would like the RDC to create a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the property. One option to consider is if the City could lease a portion of the building for the police department if a developer acquires the property. Currently, the County is paying the utility bills since the Probation Department is using the building, but they will no longer pay those bills when they vacate the building. Mayor Daniel requested that the RDC create a subcommittee to review RFPs for the property. Vice President Gates made a motion to move forward with the RFP process, seconded by Commissioner Varga. A vote was taken; all voted aye. The subcommittee members were chosen and are Commissioner Varga, Chip Hill, Commissioner Smith, and President Siler. Attorney

Hockemeyer asked the subcommittee to create a list of potential appraisers when they meet.

Façade Grant: Reeg Family – The Reeg Family requested payment for their façade work. Vice President Gates made a motion to approve a \$3000 payment, seconded by Commissioner Thompson. A vote was taken; all voted aye.

New Business-

CTE Presentation – Lori Heuer and Jennifer Reiff, both from Columbia City High School, presented on the CTE program at the high school. They have presented at conferences across the country to teach about their CTE program. They discussed the newly acquired CTE building, which was formerly the Braden Building. They also discussed their partnerships with neighboring school districts, CDL programs, internships, the welding program, the career fair, the golden shovel award, and the fire program.

Façade Grant for Grant Building – Commissioner Thompson made a motion to approve the façade grant application for the Grant Building, seconded by Vice President Gates. A vote was taken; all voted aye.

Other Business-

The meeting was adjourned at 1:06pm.

Submitted by Ashley Buckles, Executive Assistant to the Mayor