

**Minutes of the Meeting of the  
Jasper Economic Development Commission**

February 20, 2018

The Jasper Economic Development Commission met on Tuesday, February 20, 2018 in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 610 Main Street. Notice was given in compliance with Indiana's Open Meeting Law.

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Andrew Seger called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

**ROLL CALL**

President Andrew Seger	present
Vice President Robert Whitten	absent
Secretary Mark Schmidt	present
Member Peter Ariens	present
Member Ray Snowden	absent
Renee Kabrick - Commission's Attorney	present
Kathy Pfister – Recording Secretary	absent

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Secretary Mark Schmidt made a motion to approve the Commission's minutes as presented from its January 16, 2018 regular meeting. Pete Ariens seconded it, and the motion carried 3-0.

**PROPOSED UPDATES FOR PROPERTY TAX PHASE-IN PROGRAM**

Mayor Terry Seitz addressed the board to express his view on the success of the tax abatement program. He explained that since its adoption, \$81,753,871 had been invested by businesses expanding or moving to Jasper. This has resulted in 437 new jobs which are estimated to have added approximately 200 jobs to the local economy in the service industries to support those new jobs.

President Andy Seger addressed the board with a detailed summary of new guidelines for the property tax phase-in program. Along with President Seger, Economic Development Commission member Pete Ariens, Council members John Bell and John Schroeder and Mayor Seitz, City Attorney Renee Kabrick and Director of Community Development/Planning Darla Blazey met over the past few months to review the City's tax abatement ordinance and scoring criteria.

The following are the proposed changes:

Recommended "evolving / updating" the program and scoring based on learnings from evaluating applications from 14 businesses since the program was implemented in 2011.

Recommended to use one application / scoring system for both existing and new businesses as opposed to separate criteria / applications, though Commission will still score separately if a company asks for real and personal property tax abatement.

Recommended to keep the maximum abatement timeline at 10 years for real property and shortening the maximum allowable abatement for personal property from 10 years max to 5 years

max, reflecting the fact that most equipment is depreciated over a shorter period anyways for tax purposes.

Recommended the five scoring categories, Real or Personal Property Tax Investment, Jobs, Wage Level, Infrastructure, and Bonus Points, remain the same.

Recommended increasing the points for the amount of an investment from 30 points to 40 points. Also recommended reducing the points for jobs and wage level by 5 points each, from 30 points down to 25 points, to account for this 10-point increase and keep the total at 100 points available for base scoring.

Recommended broadening the scoring range for real property investment to a range beginning at \$500,000 and increasing to over \$10,000,000 to receive maximum points. Also recommended a slight adjustment to personal property investment amounts to a range of \$100,000 to over \$2,000,000.

With respect to the jobs and wage level categories, two changes were suggested. First, recommended to raise the wage thresholds; second, provide companies an option to apply for points based on job retention.

Recommended a number of changes to the bonus points category with a reduction of total bonus points from 20 to 15 and simplifying the bonus scoring to three categories as follows.

- 1) use of local contractors
- 2) Adding an Innovation and Diversification category associated with investment project and direct benefit to our business community
- 3) Retaining up to 5 points for utilizing available/vacant space

After some discussion, Pete Ariens made a motion to recommend the proposed changes to the Common Council for the tax abatement program. Secretary Mark Schmidt seconded it. Motion carried 3-0. President Andy Seger will present the proposed changes to the Council at tomorrow's meeting, February 21<sup>st</sup>.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With no more discussion at hand, a motion was made by Secretary Mark Schmidt and seconded by Pete Ariens to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 3-0, and the meeting adjourned at 8:27 a.m.

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Andrew M. Seger, President

ATTEST:

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Mark R. Schmidt, Secretary