SUMMARY STATEMENT

ITEM NO.                               SUBJECT: Amendment to Resolution DRPA-04-065 (Funding for the Independence Park Institute)

COMMITTEE:                              Projects

COMMITTEE MEETING DATE:                 September 17, 2008

BOARD ACTION DATE:                     October 15, 2008

PROPOSAL:                               That the Board hereby amends Resolution DRPA-04-065 to allow Eastern National to redirect the $500,000 previously committed by the DRPA to construct the Independence Park Institute at an alternative location than the location identified in 04-065.

PURPOSE:                                To allow Eastern National to use $500,000 previously committed by DRPA to renovate an existing building located at 325 Walnut Street, owned by Independence National Historical Park (INHP), to house the Independence Park Institute. This location represents an alternative to renovating the Declaration House, as originally anticipated under Resolution DRPA-04-065, which proved to be insufficient to accommodate the project program.

BACKGROUND:                            The concept of the Independence Park Institute was developed to accommodate the needs of the Park’s 400,000 annual school age visitors who are in many ways underserved. The Institute will expand the methods, scope, and availability of interpretation of the American Revolution and founding of the American government through culturally diverse exhibits, classes, and conferences.

This effort is driven by INHP in partnership with Eastern National. Eastern National is a nonprofit organization started more than 50 years ago by a group of park rangers to expand on the educational experiences and services to visitors to national parks and other public trusts.

In December 2001 the DRPA Board approved the original economic development grant in an amount not to exceed $500,000 for the construction of the Independence Park Institute facility that was originally to be constructed adjacent to the Independence Visitor Center at 6th and Arch Streets within the footprint of INHP.

When the DRPA was initially approached to consider funding this effort, the INHP and Eastern National were in the midst of a $12 million capital campaign to support construction of the facility. The $500,000 DRPA grant was approved to fulfill the William Penn Foundation’s match contribution requirement that was a condition of its $3.3 million grant toward the construction of the new facility for the Institute. The original grant agreement between DRPA and Eastern National is dated August 30, 2002,
but no funds were disbursed because Eastern National was unable to secure sufficient funding to cover the entire $12 million cost of the project.

In June, 2004 the DRPA Board responded to a request submitted by Eastern National and INHP and approved the use of the $500,000 for a scaled-back Independence Park Institute that would be located in an existing INHP structure, the Declaration House located at 7th and Market Streets. The DRPA Board expressly conditioned its approval on Eastern National also receiving binding commitments from other funding sources to cover the estimated cost of $4.1 million. However, the Declaration House proved insufficient and the project was postponed. Here again, no funding was disbursed under the Resolution approved in 2004.

Eastern National and INHP subsequently identified a third location at 325 Walnut Street for the Independence Park Institute. This 10,900 square foot facility is also owned by the INHP. Design began in May 2006, and construction began in April 2007. Construction is completed with the exception of minor items. The estimated cost of renovating this location was substantially reduced to $1,548,713, and in addition to DRPA’s $500,000, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has maintained its $1 million commitment to the project. The William Penn Foundation is expected to cover any project costs not covered by the Commonwealth and DRPA grants. Thus far, Eastern National has been source of revenue for the Independence Park Institute project costs, and they will seek reimbursement from Commonwealth and DRPA.

SUMMARY:  

| Amount: | Funding previously authorized – no new funding requested |
| Source of Funds: | 1999 PDP Bonds – Series B |
| Capital Project #: | N/A |
| Operating Budget: | N/A |
| Master Plan Status: | 2001 |
| Other Fund Sources: | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, William Penn Foundation |
| Duration of Contract: | One year |
RESOLUTION

RESOLVED: That the Board of Commissioners authorizes DRPA staff to amend Resolution DRPA-04-065 that was approved June 16, 2004 to allow the $500,000 grant committed by the DRPA, to be used for renovation costs at an alternative location, 325 Walnut Street, to house the Independence Park Institute; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Chief Executive Officer must approve and are hereby authorized to approve and execute all necessary agreements, contracts, or other documents on behalf of the DRPA. If such agreements, contracts, or other documents have been approved by the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer and if thereafter either the Chairman or Vice Chairman is absent or unavailable, the remaining Officer may execute the said document(s) on behalf of DRPA along with the Chief Executive Officer. If both the Chairman and Vice Chairman are absent or unavailable, and if it is necessary to execute the said document(s) while they are absent or unavailable, then the Chief Executive Officer shall execute such documents on behalf of DRPA.

SUMMARY: Amount: Funding previously authorized – no new funding is requested
Source of Funds: 1999 PDP Bonds – Series B
Capital Project #: N/A
Operating Budget: N/A
Master Plan Status: 2001
Other Fund Sources: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, William Penn Foundation
Duration of Contract: One year