

Pulaski County Economic Development
(Pulaski County Community Development Commission)
Francesville – Salem Township Fire Station
Francesville, Indiana
1 October 2013

Guest Presentation

Members present: President Bill Champion, Vice-President David Broad, Secretary David Zeltwanger; Amy Jo Cantu (Chamber); Greg Comoglio, Andrew Fritz, Cheryl Stone; Executive Director Nathan P. Origer. Membership Officer Jamie Bales (Francesville) arrived at 6:50 *p.m.*

Guests present: Tim Troxel, Adaptasoft, Inc.

Director Origer introduced Mr. Troxel to the members at 6:32 *p.m.* Mr. Troxel provided a history of his company, starting with its 1996 founding by Bob Huber. At age 18, in 1997, Mr. Troxel became the company's first employee, and in that year the firm debuted its payroll service bureau software, *CyberPay*. In 2000, Mr. Troxel was involved in acquiring the business from Mr. Huber.

Mr. Troxel provided a very informative and interesting overview of his industry and the broader payroll industry, discussing where companies such as Adaptasoft fit in, changes and trends in how companies tend to payroll and related issues, and how legislations and regulation (including the Affordable Care and Patient Protection Act) are affecting and will affect the industry.

Mr. Troxel explained that he was fortunate to have a very good mentor early on, one who challenged him on his assumption of the inevitability of relocating out of Francesville; today, he is grateful still to be operating on Montgomery Street and thankful for and to be part of the Francesville community. The company has been supportive of the community, and this support has been returned, including in the form of two Pulaski County Revolving Loan Fund loans, for which Mr. Troxel express gratefulness; these have helped the company to enjoy a healthy process of organic growth. He did admit that running this business in a rural community has posed challenges, but that none have been insurmountable.

During a question-and-answer period, Secretary Zeltwanger enquired about company culture and various sub-cultures, how employees in vastly different departments interact, and how this influences office layout. Mr. Troxel provided an interesting, amusing response about personality types in the business and noted that where certain individuals are stationed does indeed relate to these types and sub-cultures. Vice-President Broad enquired about future growth and required skillsets; Mr. Troxel noted that issues of concern are attracting computer-science students back to a rural community, getting employees to understand the particularities of the payroll business and working with a diverse set of clients from across the country, and understanding how the company works. Discussion ensued about efforts to make the community more attractive for relocation.

Responding to a query from Mr. Bales, Mr. Troxel explained that although some employee-turnover concerns exist, many employees have tenures of more than a decade, and some employees have left for very good reasons, such as staying at home with newborn children or entrepreneurial ventures. Sales generally sees more turnover than other areas, and keeping Generation-Y employees tethered to one position or location with any duration is a particular challenge. Adaptasoft does conduct an extensive, multi-tiered interview process to try to ensure that the company and the prospective employee are right for each other.

Vice-President Broad asked Mr. Troxel what PCED can do for his company; the guest replied that Director Origer has done a good job of being engaged and communicative and displayed availability whenever his help has been requested. Mr. Troxel would recommend PCED and the Revolving Loan Fund program to anyone for whom such assistance could be useful.

At 7:05, Director Origer thanked Mr. Troxel, who then departed.

Regular Meeting Minutes

Members present: As noted above; Lawrence Loehmer (Monterey).

Members absent: Past President Rod Button; County Commissioner Larry Brady [family medical], County Councilor Alex Haschel, Medaryville Councilor Derrick Stalbaum; Rebecca Anspach, Krysten Hinkle [family].

Call to Order

President Champion called the meeting to order at 7:07 *p.m.*

Consent Agenda

With no requests for extraction having been made, the Consent Agenda was adopted.

Old Business

Associated Images' Savor Indiana / ExtraordINary Indiana project: Director Origer reported that he had begun to receive scripts for *Savor Indiana*, and that both Dan Dolezal and Karen Fritz had reviewed them and offered some comments; filming would be taking place early in the following week. The director briefly discussed the featured locations and some details of the scripts. Secretary Zeltwanger emphasized the importance of this project for marketing the community. Scout dates for *ExtraordINary Indiana* had not yet been set; thanks to the Regional Development Company, an additional \$1,000 had been received to help to fund production of this second program.

PC-CARE engineering-study proposal: Although he had yet to receive any status updates, the director had instructed Territorial Engineering to begin work on the two properties access to which had been identified; he would continue to investigate possibilities for a third study location. Director Origer had received a phone call from the owner whose Illinois-based business has been considering relocating to the Francesville area; the cost to deliver three-phase electricity to the property under consideration is quite significant, and the businessman had enquired about the possibility of assistance with this project. The director noted that the property is across the railroad tracks from one of the two locations being studied by Territorial Engineering. Significant discussion ensued regarding the situation and what sort of expectations would have to be met in exchange for assistance. No conclusions were reached. Brief conversation about electricity, alternative-energy sources, and the West Central wind turbine arose.

In response to an inquiry from Mr. Loehmer, Director Origer explained that the 2014 budget includes funds earmarked solely for options on land for the PC-CARE, but not enough for outright acquisition, and that depending on progress, either the funds be left unused or that he could have to request sufficient funds from the Council to purchase land.

CAGIT-rate issue: No further progress had been made on this issue; however, the director did report that the Jasper County Council had recently voted to lower that County's local income-tax rate, which the director suggested further shows the needs in some way to address this issue for the sake of competitiveness. The Council has discussed ways to address this, and Director Origer hoped to speak with members regarding his desire to see special-legislation CAGIT funds go toward paying off the jail lease.

Pulaski County Young Professionals Network: On a request from the director, President Champion appointed Mr. Stalbaum and Mrs. Hinkle to serve on this committee, instructing Director Origer to inform them and to confirm their willingness. Mr. Loehmer volunteered to serve as well.

Pulaski Online: Director Origer presented proposals from five firms: Brand Acceleration, Clarisoft, BrowCo, Crane + Grey, and New View Solutions; he asked that Clarisoft and BrowCo be removed from consideration, the former's proposal presenting too many red flags and the latter's offering far too little for the estimated cost. This was agreed upon by the members. In a comprehensive comparison of the proposals, the director offered a number of ranking criteria; the various categories combined led to an un-weighted ranking as follows: 1. Crane + Grey; 1.-tie/2. Brand Acceleration; 3. New View Solutions (NVS). The director urged the members to consider how each of them would weigh the various criteria, including company location, proposal quality, portfolio strength, and cost. President Champion expressed concern that PCED could be setting a poor precedent by passing over NVS, which is based in Winamac. Mrs. Stone emphasized the need for building the Website for the future, not simply the present; the secretary noted the need for doing the best job of marketing Pulaski County. Mr. Fritz made comments about providing particular instruction to NVS; Mr. Comoglio remarked that for a project with as substantial a price tag as this,

“We shouldn’t have to tell them [how to do it].” Mrs. Cantu, representing the Chamber of Commerce, urged hiring the local firm (as had Chamber Director Angie Anspach), but did question NVS’s enthusiasm for the project. After significant conversation, President Champion, following a motion to do so, appointed himself, Mr. Bales, Mrs. Cantu, and Mr. Comoglio to serve on a committee to interview Crane + Grey and NVS and to report back to the full Commission in November.

Motion: Mr. Comoglio; second: Mr. Fritz; no discussion; approval: all

Director Origer would notify the five firms of the pertinent decisions.

New Business

2014 meeting schedule: Director Origer presented two proposals for the 2014 meeting schedule, one identical to the 2013 schedule and another moving the Annual Economic Development Summit to the date of the March meeting and adjusting the year’s schedule accordingly. Secretary Zeltwanger suggested that holding even a short business meeting, for officer election, and the Summit on the same evening may be too challenging. The president instructed the director to poll all members electronically for further discussion at the November meeting. The secretary also suggested rotating the months in which Francesville, Medaryville, and Monterey are visited.

Annual Chamber funds-distribution proposal, second disbursement: Having presented an updated budget and report from the Chamber, with some explanation thereof, he enquired as to the Commission’s pleasure regarding the second \$2,000 contribution to the Chamber. The members approved the payment.

Motion: Secretary Zeltwanger; second: Vice-President Broad; no discussion; approval: all.

Other Pertinent Business

Hotel-feasibility study: Director Origer reported having received the final, corrected feasibility study from the project consultant; he would soon be meeting with a representative of the hotel company. A number of local individuals had already expressed interest in potentially investing in the project. A very brief summary of the key findings, in the affirmative, of the study was offered.

Part-time assistant/secretary position: The director reported having hired a replacement for Carol Fernandez; starting in the following week would be Terry L. Howard II, a native of the county and recent graduate of the University of Notre Dame with an interest in business consulting.

Community Reports

- Mrs. Cantu: The Chamber is excited about the new Website. Projects underway are a new-member campaign, new Chamber decals, new-member welcome packets, and planning for Winter Wonderland, which this year will feature judged holiday-decorated homes. During the federal-government shutdown, the Internal Revenue Service is still collecting taxes, but not making any payments.
- Secretary Zeltwanger: He was approached by a gentleman from Goodland looking for someone to acquire and to save an older commercial building there; the secretary deemed the property to be unsalvageable. He did discuss economic-development issues with the gentleman; he urged against short-sightedness, which seems to him to afflict Goodland and its environs.
- Mr. Loehmer: The hardware store has been busy. The bridge project is going smoothly. The harvest is in full swing, especially for soybeans.
- Mrs. Stone: The Medaryville Town Council approved vacation of an alley as necessary for the construction of the Dollar General store; closing on the property should occur in November. The Town has assured the Medaryville Decorating Committee of at least eight poles for lights, which have been ordered; the Town may be able to help to expand this project.
- Mr. Bales: He expressed gratitude for the business clients that Alliance Bank serves, specifically highlighting farmers at this time and speaking to the uncertainties faced in agriculture. The Francesville Fall Festival was a success, with local vendors having reported pleasure with it.
- Mr. Comoglio: He was happy about “the national holiday”, the opening of archery season. Things at Plymouth Tube – Cold Draw remain slow, but steady; overall, things have been fairly good across the Winamac campus. An upswing for Cold Draw is expected by late 2014

or early 2015. (The director enquired as to whether Plymouth Tube competes with Tejas Tubular Products, which is opening a plant in New Carlisle; Mr. Comoglio was not certain.)

- Vice-President Broad: On the workforce-development side, Ivy Tech has begun offering its Certified Production Technician course in northwestern Indiana. A “companion course” in healthcare, for post-release patient care, is in the works, too. For Your Better Health has moved to a storefront on U.S.-35 in downtown Winamac; the Chamber would be holding a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Although business has been slower than desirable, they have been doing some quoting.
- Mr. Fritz: In the Eastern Corn Belt, good ground has been yielding below average, and poor ground has been yielding above average, based on observations; the Fritzes’ harvest has been hit-and-miss so far, with high-moisture areas to be dodged. One month into the Pulaski Health Foundation’s ownership of Parkview Haven, both facilities are at or near capacity; the Foundation may hire an administrator to oversee business functions of both units, and new board members are being sought. The Pulaski Health Care Center was named a five-star facility.
- President Champion: Keeping exceedingly busy, Fratco has been running three shifts, seven days per week — except over the weekend of Fall Festival, riding in the parade of which employees joined. The Iowa plant would be adding a third shift shortly, but the Illinois plant is stuck at one shift because of employee-retention issues.
- Director Origer: At the Summit on Regional Competitiveness in Chicago, the director elicited an impressive non-answer from Illinois Governor Pat Quinn in response to a question about the inclusion of a “Chicago-bypass” railroad along with the proposed Illiana Expressway.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

Motion: Secretary Zeltwanger; second: Mr. Fritz; no discussion; approval: all.

8:24 *p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,
David Zeltwanger, Secretary