

Pulaski County Economic Development
(Pulaski County Community Development Commission)

Tuesday, 4 November 2014

Winamac Municipal Utilities Complex
Winamac, Indiana

Executive Board Executive Session

Executive Board members present: President Bill Champion, Vice-President Lawrence Loehmer (Monterey), Secretary Dave Zeltwanger, executive-board member Andrew Fritz. Executive Director Nathan P. Origer.

Executive Board members absent: None.

The Executive Board met in private from 6:00 until 6:30, at which time Director Origer was called into the session. Discussion ensued regarding the assessment of his performance, where improvement needs to happen, and where he is excelling. Also considered was the possibility of updating the annual performance-review rubric to include measuring accomplishment. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 *p.m.*

Regular Meeting Minutes

Members present: As noted above; County Commissioner Larry Brady, County Councilor Doug Roth, Jamie Bales (Francesville). Assistant Krysten Hinkle.

Members absent: Amy Jo Cantu (Chamber) [work-related], Medaryville Council President Derrick Stalbaum [family issue], Winamac Council President John E. Plowman [scheduling conflict]; Gregg Malott [medical]; Becky Anspach, Greg Comoglio.

Call to Order

President Champion called the meeting to order at 7:00 *p.m.*

Consent Agenda

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

Community Reports

- Secretary Zeltwanger: DK and Sons has had a busy fall, with the freezing forecast being a concern. They are currently finishing up ongoing projects and are working on snow contracts, with plans to expand that aspect of business. Secretary Zeltwanger also mentioned that his son has cattle ready for butcher; anybody interested should let him know.
- Vice-President Loehmer: Business at the hardware store is busy, although it is slowing slightly. Two dilapidated houses in Monterey had been removed, one with County funds, and the other by a new owner.
- Councilor Roth: Business at Winamac Coil Spring is slow at the moment, with an increase in production expected after the first of the year. He indicated that he is focusing on the County Home, about which a joint session would be held on Thursday, 6 November.
- Commissioner Brady: He reiterated Councilor Roth's focus on the County Home issue and explained that the Indiana Department of Natural Resources would be in attendance to answer questions regarding the National Register status and its irrelevance to the defunding of the Home. The County would be hiring part-time, temporary deputies to address a lack of Sheriff's Department personnel. The Highway Department would have two new trucks on the road in time for snow removal. EMS has received a new ambulance and is currently preparing it for use.
- Mr. Bales: Francesville is currently lacking in good news, with AdaptaSoft relocating and rumors of other troubled businesses. Alliance Bank continues to thrive and is well ahead of pace for its budget. Interest rates remain low, which is good for borrowers.
- Mr. Fritz: The Pulaski Health Foundation received five-star ratings at both the Winamac and Francesville facilities, a rating that is only given to a small percentage of facilities. Weather has been rather unpredictable and continues to put the harvest behind, with only 50 percent of the crop collected, far behind the typical timeline for the last decade. Yields, however, are the best they have been in that time, which has pushed prices down significantly. Mr. Fritz will be spending the winter learning about the new farm bill.

- **President Champion:** Business is very busy at Fratco. There is a new project with a commercial account, in which a brand new process for securing pipes together was introduced. This new process will likely give an edge to their already growing commercial market.

Old Business

PC-CARE engineering study: PC-CARE discussion was tabled until new information becomes available. Director Origer, Secretary Zeltwanger, and Mr. Fritz would continue to meet as a committee to explore next steps.

Pulaski County Young Professionals Network: Discussion of the project was tabled until more progress had been made. The director and Mrs. Hinkle would be focusing on it more heavily after the Hometown Collaboration Initiative application had been completed. Secretary Zeltwanger reiterated his offer to serve brick-oven-baked pizza at the yet-to-be determined call-out date.

2014 Summit: The Non-Profit Summit, scheduled for mid-October, had to be postponed indefinitely due to low attendance. Director Origer would be meeting with Lorri Feldt, who had facilitated the Community Entrepreneurship Assessment, to strategize an entrepreneurial plan based on the outcome of that assessment. Secretary Zeltwanger added that he felt a recent entrepreneurial information session, while helpful, was more focused on the negative aspects of starting a business and requested future programs be more balanced. Director Origer mentioned that the next session, focused on marketing, would be, by nature, much more positive.

Hometown Collaboration Initiative: Director Origer and Mrs. Hinkle are currently working on the application. Director Origer clarified that the building block does not have to be decided prior to submitting the application, but after further discussion and contemplation, it is advisable to focus on placemaking, should Pulaski County be selected. Director Origer explained that PCED has several entrepreneurial projects ongoing, and while the leadership component is a worthy endeavor, the trend in Pulaski County's demographic indicates that attracting and retaining young talent through placemaking should be a top priority.

Community Readiness Initiative: The director opined that this program would not be necessary. In the event that OCRA suggest additional foundational building, then PCED would obviously reconsider.

Pulaski Online: Although it has taken longer than anticipated, the local content should be completed no later than end-of-day of the following Monday, and the Website should be live shortly thereafter. Director Origer pointed out that while it would have been possible to have it up by now, it is better to have it completed before rollout. He also stated that Commissioner Terry Young had had little luck in soliciting departmental content from respective department heads, but current Website content, and PCED and Chamber content are all either transferred over or created. Secretary Zeltwanger enquired as to who would be main Website contributor, to which Director Origer replied that, although there would be a select few with access, he would be the gatekeeper of all updates.

CAGIT-rate issue: Having received approval from the County Commissioners, Director Origer would be requesting County Council support for this on the following Monday. He had received positive feedback from the five councilors with whom he had spoken about the issue.

2015 Summit: Director Origer pointed out that the previously mentioned topic of agriculture, while important to the local economy, comprises a small part of Pulaski County's labor force and typically offers PCED little opportunity for engagement. He added that perhaps it would be beneficial to tailor the event toward an agriculture topic that ties directly back to tangible economic development and the organization's mission. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Brady recommended a speaker from Purdue University. Director Origer would follow up on this. The secretary enquired as to the date of the Summit, which would likely be Tuesday, 3 March.

Establishment of a Redevelopment Commission: Director Origer had presented to the County Commissioners, who offered positive feedback, although no decision had been requested or made. Director Origer had also met with Winamac Clerk-Treasurer Melanie Berger, who had expressed interest in TIF financing and proved to be supportive of these efforts. During that discussion, Director Origer stated that it would be hard to justify the use of TIF funds for downtown-revitalization projects, due to the size of Winamac and not being able to differentiate if property values increased because of the revitalization or due to generic increases in property values. One person had already shown interest in serving on the RDC would it be established.

Career and Technical Education curriculum grant: Director Origer had met with Linda Woloshansky, of the Center of Workforce Innovations, who is also involved with the Regional Works

Council. She stated that she expects four or five applications from the region, and that unless one is glaringly weak, the Council would likely approve them all for State review. Mrs. Woloshansky expressed particular interest in the idea of an industrial-maintenance course. The director had also met with Ryan Myers, industrial-technology teacher at West Central, who offered insights into what courses could be supported locally. That conversation had also touched on the importance of exposure to the actual job, instead of a classroom-only experience. Discussion ensued. Director Origer would be working toward the creation of a proposal.

New Business

Vote on executive director's reappointment: President Champion stated that the Executive Board had met prior to the beginning of the regular meeting to rate and to discuss Director Origer's performance over the last year. Reporting that the Board had rated him at 3.71 out of 4 possible points, the president recommended his reappointment for 2015.

Motion: Secretary Zeltwanger; Second: Commissioner Brady; no discussion; approval: all.

New members and current-member second term: Director Origer questioned whether the members wanted to fill two at-large vacancies or to reduce the size of the Commission. Discussion ensued, with Mr. Fritz suggesting that candidates at least be considered before any decision be made. President Champion, whose term would be ending in February, committed to a second term. Secretary Zeltwanger, also nearing his term's end, expressed his desire not to serve as an officer again. Councilor Roth agreed to begin a new, full term, as his interim term would also be expiring.

New Membership Officer: With Mrs. Hinkle's resignation from PCED, a position had opened on the Executive Board as Membership Officer. Councilor Roth volunteered to fill the role.

Motion: Mr. Bales; Second: Commissioner Brady; no discussion; approval: all.

2015 meeting schedule: Due to the 2015 Economic Summit's being held in Francesville, Director Origer questioned a second meeting should occur in Francesville, or if the Summit should serve as the designated Francesville meeting. The 2015 schedule was approved as presented, with only the Summit to take place in Francesville.

Motion: Secretary Zeltwanger; Second: Councilor Roth; no discussion; approval: all.

RLF financial administration: In light of complications with a recent Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) project, Director Origer suggested requesting from the Regional Development Company (RDC; with whom he would be meeting on the next day) a proposal to write the financial guidelines for RLF applications and to conduct financial vetting for applications on a contractual basis. The director explained that the RDC is an SBA 504 Community Development Corporation, whose sole purpose is to make SBA-backed loans. Director Origer went on to explain that having a third-party review not only increases professionalism, but also adds a layer of protection to the risks involved in allocating loans. Commissioner Brady expressed support, stating that it would be a positive move for such a small community by removing any personal bias in the application process. Mr. Loehmer pointed out that while some RLF loans have failed, the situation has ultimately proven positive for the County, using the Chesapeake Recycling/Winamac Coil Spring building as an example. He also stated that expecting 100-percent successful loans is not feasible, and that potential talent might be missed by striving for only ultra-low-risk applicants. Director Origer pointed out that the RLF committee would still have the final say. Mr. Bales expressed some skepticism in that the contractual fee charged by RDC might not be worth it for applications for very low amounts. Discussion ensued. Numerous members expressed support for such exploration. Director Origer would report his findings at the next meeting.

Other Pertinent Business

None.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

Motion: Commissioner Brady; second: Mr. Bales; no discussion; approval: all. 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dave Zeltwanger, Secretary