

## *Pulaski County Economic Development*

Winamac Municipal Utilities Building, Conference Room  
Winamac, Indiana 46996  
7 February 2012

### **Guest Presentation**

Mrs. Rebecca Anspach, the finance/operations manager for Bonnell Grain Handling, Inc., of Star City, appeared before the board at 6:30 *p.m.* with an electronic presentation about the company. She spoke of the Bonnell family's history in agriculture; the founding of the company; and the company's growth; the challenges and opportunities faced by the company; and how PCED can assist the company, and vice versa. A round of questions and answers with the members of PCED ensued. All board members were greatly appreciative of Mrs. Anspach's time and insights.

### **Public Meeting Minutes**

PCED members present: President David Broad, Vice-President Rod Button, Secretary MacKenzie Ledley, Past President Courtney Poor, Membership Officer Carolyn Hildebrandt; County Commissioner Ken Boswell, County Councilor Alexandra Haschel, Jamie Bales (Francesville), Cheryl Stone (Medaryville), Monterey Board-of-Trustees President Jim Fleury, Andrew Fritz, Christy Perdue; Executive Director Nathan P. Origer

Guests: Mary Perren, Pulaski County *Journal*; Becky Anspach, Bonnell Grain Handling, Inc.

### **Call to Order**

President Broad called the meeting to order at 7:04 *p.m.*

### **Approval of Minutes**

Upon the president's request, a motion to approve the minutes of the 3 January 2012 meeting was made by Mrs. Hildebrandt. Mrs. Stone seconded the motion, and all members approved.

### **Executive Director's Report**

*Strategic Relationships:* Director Origer reported on activities of the previous month. The MidWest Indiana regional economic-development group had met twice since the last PCED meeting; the director happily noted that, having previously had doubts about the group, he was now starting to feel as if the group is becoming more cohesive and starting to discern a coherent path forward. Mr. Jim Walton, of Brand Acceleration, who has previously done work with PCED, has been contracted to develop a marketing program from the regional group. Director Origer also attended town-board meetings in Francesville, Medaryville, and Monterey: All three communities have new board members, so he presented a short "PCED 101" lesson, spoke of forthcoming opportunities, and discussed issues related to the Pulaski County Advisory Plan Commission and how the County's land-use ordinances will affect these towns.

At the January Kankakee-Iroquois Regional Planning Commission meeting, Director Origer was voted into the board-secretary position. In late January, he made numerous business visits, distributing copies of the PCED Business Survey, as well as checking in on businesses and introducing himself to business owners and managers whom he had not yet met. He met

with John Bawcum, from the Braun Corporation and the Friends of the Panhandle Pathway, regarding myriad items of interest to Winamac or the company, and later met with Mr. Bawcum, Dave Bennett, and Don and Bonnie Cripe, who own land on the northwest side of Winamac where access will be needed for the extension of the Panhandle Pathway; the Cripes expressed willingness to work with the Friends to grant access. Finally, Director Origer noted attending the January meeting of the Advisory Plan Commission, stating that he is assisting them in the search for a new member and Board-of-Zoning-Appeals members.

*Infrastructure:* Director Origer discussed the most recent doings of the Winamac Safe Routes to School taskforce, noting that routes have been agreed upon, as well as phasing for implementation, and that various safety-related equipment has been ordered. The director attended both a meeting at the Plymouth Tube Hot Mill and an executive session of the Winamac Town Board regarding the proposed substation for the Hot Mill. He informed the board that the Town would be voting to make a formal proposal to Plymouth Tube regarding cost-sharing and ownership of the completed substation. Also, the director had made numerous updates to *Pulaski Online*.

*Business Retention/Expansion and Entrepreneurial Development:* Director Origer had visited Apple Blossom Honey Farm, in Star City, twice to discuss projects that Doug Hoffman is considering; he provided some employment-related information, based on input from other local businesses, as Mr. Hoffman prepared to expand his workforce. The director also “attended” an online seminar, co-hosted by the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) and the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC), about the upcoming Indiana Young Entrepreneurs Program.

*Marketing:* Director Origer attended the January meeting of the Rural and Rustic tourism group. The group is finalizing the advertisements that will be included in the outdoor-recreation brochure.

*Other:* The director made a second Junior-Achievement appearance in Mike Harter’s Economics class at West Central High School. He found it again to be a worthwhile, insightful opportunity. He informed the students of the proposed PCED student board, hoping that it may inspire one or two of them to follow up with him regarding membership.

*Workforce Development:* The reported unemployment rate for Pulaski County for December 2011 was 7.6 percent, up from 7.0 percent in November, below the rates for Indiana and the nation, and fourth-best in 15-county region for which statistics were offered. The director explained his rough-estimate calculation for the real unemployment rate for the county (including the underemployed and those no longer actively seeking employment) was 10.1 percent, based on past years’ labor-force numbers.

*Financial Report:* Through the first month of the year, about \$6,200 had been expended, leaving about \$108,000 in the PCED budget. Director Origer noted that the CEDIT Fund had a balance of about \$2 million, three-fourths of which remained un-appropriated. Other than Chesapeake Recycling, which has long since defaulted on its loan, all Revolving-Loan-Fund (RLF) borrowers are repaying their loans appropriately, and the director had visited each of those businesses within the previous two weeks. Discussion ensued regarding standard operating procedure when a payment is missed, and Commissioner Boswell expressed that written guidelines need to be developed for the administration of the RLF to ensure accountability in the future and to prevent disasters such as the Chesapeake incident from occurring again.

*Priority List and Monthly Calendar:* Events for the month of February were reviewed. Of particular note were the first 2012 meetings of the Winamac Industrial Park Advisory Board, the Ivy Tech - Logansport “For the Love of Education” scholarship-fundraising ball, Economic

Development 101 in Delphi, and the Communities for a Lifetime planning-grant-award announcement.

Commissioner Boswell moved to accept the Executive Director's Report, including Financial Report, as presented; after a second from Ms. Perdue, the Report was unanimously approved.

### **Old Business**

*Strategic Plan – Economic Summit:* Director Origer reported having spoken with an economic-development consultant, who suggested that the open-house format that the director had previously proposed for the 2012 Economic Summit would not likely be well attended; a more effective program would be one in which individual sessions were held (featuring, *e.g.*, Mr. Paul Wyatt, from the Small Business Administration, or Director Origer speaking at the Pulaski County Public Library about the RLF program), culminating in the 2012 Summit, with at State of the County Economy address, a meal, and a guest speaker – specifically, a successful entrepreneur. PCED members concurred with this notion. Discussion ensued regarding potential speakers, with strong consideration given to having a panel of three entrepreneurs, perhaps representing different business sectors, rather than one speaker. The director would follow up on the discussion with communication with potential guest presenters and Summit-panel members.

*Tourism – Brochure/Committee:* The director reported, first, that he had installed a brochure rack in the lobby of the courthouse, focusing on tourism, small-business development, and education opportunities; John Bawcum had told him that it should be possible to make tourism brochures available to users of the Panhandle Pathway. Councilor Haschel, who previously served as the Chamber/Tourism coordinator, agreed to Director Origer's request to serve on the Tourism Committee. The director would follow up by scheduling a committee meeting. A rehashing of previous discussion regarding brochure-distribution strategy ensued.

*Tourism – Chamber of Commerce:* Director Origer instructed members to view the draft of the PCED/Chamber tourism agreement found in the board packet; he had provided it to Chamber Executive Director Angie Anspach, who seemed to agree with the requirements in the agreement. The director requested approval from the board to offer a final draft to Mrs. Anspach for Chamber-board approval. Discussion ensued regarding language in the draft, keeping the Chamber accountable, and how much money to expend on this agreement. On a motion from Mr. Poor and a second from Secretary Ledley, the board unanimously agreed to enter into the agreement (with changes presented) with the Chamber, with an initial payment of \$2,000 to be made upon entrance, and a second \$2,000 payment to be made in mid-2012, assuming Chamber compliance with the stipulations of the agreement.

*Business Survey:* Director Origer reiterated that he had spent the previous weeks distributing surveys, but that the efforts had not yet proven to be fruitful.

*Youth Retention:* Director Origer had not had any interest shown by Pulaski County-resident sophomores at North Judson-San Pierre High School; he would follow up with the guidance department with an invitation letter expanding student-board membership to any grade level, and would re-commence communications with the other high schools.

### **New Business**

*Membership – New-member slate/nominations:* Seven people had expressed some degree of interest in membership; Director Origer presented a list of those people and the positive and negative attributes to be used in considering whom to welcome. Review of the information provided, discussion thereof, and consideration of the recommendations of the executive

director and Mrs. Hildebrandt ensued. At this point, Mr. Poor announced that he would be resigning after the April meeting, his duties as president of the hospital board demanding too much of his time. Vice-President Button moved to welcome Mrs. Rebecca Anspach, Mr. Bill Champion, and Mr. Dave Zeltwanger to the board; Ms. Perdue seconded the motion, and the vote to approve was unanimous.

*OCRA/IEDC Young Entrepreneurs Program* – Director Origer explained the pilot program, geared toward pairing college students and recent graduates, with a degree or certificate in entrepreneurship and a business plan, with communities interested in attracting entrepreneurs. He had presented information to the trustees of Francesville, Medaryville, and Winamac, and agreed to attend the March meeting of the Monterey town board to explain the program to them. He would keep members apprised of the project, and anyone wishing to attend the Preview Event, at Purdue University, with him would be welcome to do so. Members responded favorably to news of this innovative program.

*Ivy Tech "For the Love of Education" Ball* – The director reminded members that PCED would be a corporate sponsor for this 11-February event, and that seats remained available at the organization's table. President Broad and his wife would be accompanying Director Origer and his wife; Secretary Ledley expressed interest in representing Pulaski County, too.

*OCRA DR2 Demolition/Clearance Round*: At the January KIRPC-board meeting, Director Origer learned that OCRA is planning to announce a disaster-recovery grant round dedicated to demolition projects for the sake of public safety or economic development. Details had yet to be released, but the director planned to keep an eye on this; he explained how such funding, if secured, could be used to remove derelict buildings to encourage new growth.

*KIRPC Brownfields Project* – Director Origer reported that KIRPC would, with a consultant's assistance, be re-applying for an Environmental Protection Agency regional-coalition brownfields-assessment grant; the application would be submitted in October. He asked members of the commission to provide a list of any potential sites that he should have included in the KIRPC application.

*By-Laws, in re Membership* – Noting that how PCED membership is handled does not comport precisely with how the by-laws mandate it be done, the director presented to the members the notion of revising the by-laws to reflect the current *de facto* policy, which has worked well. Secretary Ledley asked what the requirements for changing by-laws are, and Director Origer said that he would investigate this. Discussion ensued, and the director said that he would report back to the board with an explanation of the amendment process and a first draft of proposed changes.

*Website Résumé/Job Bank* – Having recently discussed employee-seeking issues with a local businessman, Director Origer wondered if creating a résumé bank, similar to a localized *Monster* or *CareerBuilder*, on *Pulaski Online* would be worthwhile – and if, potentially, a local-job-availability bank would be useful, too. Members felt that a résumé bank would present too many obstacles, but that a job-postings Webpage could be useful and would complement print-media employee searches. The director would solicit input from local businesses.

*IEDA Spring Conference* – The director reported on this, which would take place 1-2 March, and would focus on The New Economy, and especially entrepreneurship in the New Economy; on a motion from Secretary Ledley and a second from Trustee Fleury, the members voted unanimously to permit Director Origer to attend.

*READY - NWI* – President Broad discussed this initiative from the Center of Workforce Innovations, which focuses on linking educators and employers.

## Community Reports

- Director Origer: Thanks to the members for full attendance for on the first or second time during his tenure, a warm welcome to Councilor Haschel, congratulations and welcome to Mrs. Anspach, and heartfelt thanks to Secretary Ledley and Mr. Poor to their dedicated service to the mission of PCED.
- Mrs. Stone: Medaryville has two new town-board members, who are younger and eager to improve the community. The storm-water project is ahead of schedule
- Mrs. Hildebrandt: The enrollment period for 4-H is taking place.
- Mr. Fritz: He's been busy with seed delivery and a vacation to Germany
- Mr. Bales: The wind turbine is up at West Central; they are waiting on NIPSCO. Year-end reviews are keeping people at Alliance Bank busy. They are seeing local businesses do more again; the bank and Timm Services would be hosting an agri-business seminar later that week at the Francesville Fire Station.
- Trustee Fleury: The historic-site application for the bandstand will be on the agenda for the April meeting of the designating body; the Town may acquire the railroad depot. The new-bridge construction on the north side of town is drawing nearer. An auction at the now-closed mini-mart in Monterey would take place on 18 February. The Town has applied for a planning grant for a sewer-system study; planning for Monterey Day 2012 is underway.
- Mr. Poor: A nurse practitioner, who will be working under Dr. Allman's supervision, will be replacing Dr. Johnson in early March, at last until a new physician is hired.
- Vice-President Button: The Winamac girls-basketball team defeated the Lady Jays of North Judson-San Pierre High School.
- Ms. Perdue: Plymouth Tube has been busy with critical improvements, and a few new employees have been hired. She discussed the company's employee-assistance program and the difficulty that they face with finding counseling and other resources for employees.
- Secretary Ledley: PACE grants for continuing education are currently available. Circulation of e-books continues to increase at the library.
- Commissioner Boswell: The land-use-implementation proposal has been approved by the Commissioners; it will now go before the County Council. Building Inspector Dave Dare will serve as the plan administrator.

## Adjournment

With no additional business, President Broad called for a motion to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. Secretary Ledley moved thusly, Commissioner Boswell seconded the motion, and all members approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
MacKenzie Ledley, Secretary