

Pulaski County Economic Development

Winamac Municipal Utilities Building, Conference Room
Winamac, Indiana 46996

3 January 2012

Public Meeting Minutes

PCED members present: President Dave Broad, Secretary MacKenzie Ledley, Courtney Poor, Jamie Bales, Monterey Board-of-Trustees President Jim Fleury, Andrew Fritz, Christy Perdue, Cheryl Stone; Executive Director Nathan P. Origer. County Commissioner Ken Boswell arrived at 8:10 p.m.

Guests: Medaryville Town-Board President Gene Payne. Pulaski County *Journal* reporter Mary Perren arrived at 8:00 p.m.

Call to Order

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

Approval of Minutes

Noting the lack of quorum in November, President Broad asked for approval of the minutes of the October 2011 meeting; this occurred unanimously on a motion from Mrs. Stone and a second from Trustee Fleury with no discussion. Thereafter, President Broad asked for approval of the notes from the November meeting; Mr. Poor moved for approval, Mr. Bales seconded, and approval was made unanimously with no discussion.

Executive Director's Report

Strategic Relationships: Director Origer reported that he had again conducted site visits with Ivy Tech – Logansport dean Kevin Bostic, showing him one new site and one previously viewed site in downtown Winamac. The director noted that these two locations are likely the two between which Ivy Tech will choose; Mr. Bostic intends to show both of them to the Kokomo-region chancellor and facilities manager.

Four-term Winamac clerk/treasurer Judy Heater retired at the end of 2011; Director Origer attended her retirement party at the Winamac fire station. He attended the November Chamber-of-Commerce board-of-directors meeting (No meeting was held in December.); he also met with Mr. Paul Wyatt, Small Business Administration, to discuss possible future entrepreneurial-development events in Pulaski County.

Infrastructure: The director met with County-Commission President Mike Tiede, County-Council President Jay Sullivan, Winamac Board-of-Trustees President John Plowman, and Winamac Town Manager Jim Conner to discuss construction of and potential public-financing help for a new substation to service the Plymouth Tube Hot Mill. The project is expected to cost about \$1.2 million dollars; the Town and the company are working to schedule a meeting to discuss the specifics of location and cost sharing; the County Commissioners agreed to contribute up to \$200,000 in CEDIT money for construction, pending a commitment from the company to move forward with its proposed \$44-million expansion in Winamac; the County Council tabled a decision on this issue in light of the generous tax abatement already granted to the company, instruction Director Origer to see what information he can find about competing incentives elsewhere for this project.

The director continues to participate on the Winamac Safe Routes to School taskforce. The taskforce is in the planning stages, working to determine appropriate rights-of-way to designate for pedestrian-/bicyclist-student traffic, developing educational programming, and selecting signage.

Business Retention/Expansion and Entrepreneurial Development: Director Origer joined representatives from the Kankakee-Iroquois Regional Planning Commission (KIRPC) and the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) for a meeting with Parkview Haven, in Francesville regarding whether planned expansions could be in part funded with grant moneys; the director has heard nothing in response, nor have KIRPC or OCRA, and it is anticipated that the project will have to be undertaken without State-grand funding.

In November and December, Director Origer attended the Indiana Economic Forum's annual conference, the Indiana Rural Summit, and the Indiana Economic Development Association's (IEDA) annual conference. At the first, he heard noted Indiana economists Morton J. Marcus and Mike Hicks, as well as an exceptional talk on good zoning, the infrastructure costs of sprawl, and the benefits of walkable development and re-development from Carmel Mayor Jim Brainard. The director expressed interest in inviting Mayor Brainard to Pulaski County to offer his insights to the Pulaski County, Winamac, and Francesville Plan Commissions, as well as municipal governing boards in the county.

At the Rural Summit, he benefitted from networking opportunities; learned about agricultural-entrepreneurial development and the Rural Health Innovation Collaborative, which partners key stakeholders together and providing simulated training for students in medical fields, as well as helps in neighborhood-redevelopment efforts in Terre Haute; and attended the State Department of Agriculture's presentation on the need for "Smart-Growth" zoning policy to encourage sound development, walkability, and the protection of farmland

The IEDA conference was not as beneficial as the director had hoped; he now feels, having attended three IEDA conferences, that he can gauge which will be worth his attending, and which not, based on themes and agendas provided in advance. He also participated in the Economic Development Administration's *How Incubators Lead to Successful New Ventures* online seminar; he reported on some of the major takeaways from this..

Marketing: The director participated in the November meeting of the Rural and Rustic regional-tourism group. (No December meeting took place.) Finishing touches are being made to the outdoor-recreation brochure.

Other Business: The director participated, with various community stakeholders, in the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority's online seminar for its Communities for a Lifetime pilot program. He also spoke to Economics-class students at West Central High School about PCED, economic development in Pulaski County, and related topics as part of the Junior Achievement program. He will return to address another class in February.

Workforce Development: Along with Pulaski County Public Library and Ivy Tech - Logansport, PCED hosted an adult-oriented college fair in December. Turnout was not good, but those who attended seemed to benefit greatly from it, and the foundation for a good relationship with Indiana Tech was built. Discussion ensued about strategies for improving future attendance. The director attended a job-ready-graduates discussion at Ancilla College.

Unemployment rates for October and November were reviewed; Director Origer happily noted that not only did Pulaski County's official unemployment rate decline again (from 7.2 percent to 7.0 percent), but, for the first time in some months, the real unemployment rate decreased (from an estimated 9.5 percent to an estimated 9.1 percent), indicating an increase in both employed persons and the size of the labor force.

Financial Report: Through the end of December, PCED had expended \$75,096.34, or 83.43 percent, of its \$90,016 budget. The entire CEDIT fund has reached a balance greater than \$2 million. The CDC Donation Fund had a balance of just below \$3,500; Director Origer thanked Trustee Fleury for Monterey's annual \$500 contribution to PCED. The Pulaski County Revolving Loan Fund balance was just shy of \$108,000, with all reported loans being repaid according to schedule.

Priority List and Monthly Calendar: The director's schedule for the next month was reviewed; Director Origer especially highlighted the IEDA Legislative Day on 10 January and Medaryville's January town-board meeting, at which he intends to introduce himself to new members, to conduct "PCED 101", and to discuss the recently adopted land-use regulations and how the Town can make use of them. Trustee Fleury noted a mistake regarding the time of the Eastern Pulaski School Board's meeting. President Broad reminded members that they are welcome to accompany Director Origer to meetings, workshops, and other events. On a call from the president, Secretary Ledley moved to approve the Executive Director's and Financial Reports, Mrs. Stone seconded the motion, and the board approved unanimously.

Old Business

Airport-expansion Project: President Broad had spoken with a member of the Board of Aviation Commissioners (BOAC) regarding the project; once a response is received from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the director will meet with the BOAC and the project engineer. If necessary, the director will compose a letter to FAA expressing PCED's belief in the need for this project.

Youth-retention Efforts: Director Origer shared the student-board-invitation letter that he had distributed to the 18 North Judson-San Pierre (NJ-SP) sophomores who reside in Pulaski County. No responses yet; he plans to re-approach Winamac Community and West Central High Schools, as well as to continue communications with NJ-SP. The director enquired about working one-on-one with companies in the county to find interns, prior to the establishment of a formal program. This was received positively by the board members.

New Business [At this point, Director Origer unintentionally skipped Old-Business agenda items, to which the board shortly returned.]

2012 Meeting Schedule: After conversation, and on a motion from Secretary Ledley and a second from Trustee Fleury, the board unanimously approved, without post-motion discussion, the 2012 meeting schedule as proposed by the director, deciding to convene in Medaryville in April, Monterey in August, and Francesville in October.

2012 Goals/Objectives: Discussion was continued from the November meeting regarding where to focus the Commission's energies in 2012. President Broad offered a report on his workforce-development-board experiences, noting the forecasted skills-gap in Indiana, proposing a local "candy-striper" program, and emphasizing the need for local action on the workforce-development front. The president also emphasized the importance of focusing on developing the Pulaski County Center for Agricultural-Renewable Energy in 2012.

Old Business (cont.)

Business Survey: Director Origer reported having received about ten surveys thus far, most via the online option. He ran an advertisement in local papers encouraging business owners to complete the survey, and the ad will run again early in 2012. The director asked board members to encourage any business owners whom they know to fill out the survey; he plans to go door-to-door, visiting business, in hopes of collecting as many data as possible.

Complete Streets: Little has happened on this front, although the director has been in contact with Pete Fritz with the Indiana State Department of Health. It is likely that some of the work that would fall under Complete Streets will be accomplished through Safe Routes to School development.

Strategic Plan: Economic Summit: Director Origer reiterated his interest in dedicated 2012's Economic Summit to entrepreneurial development; he proposed a mid-afternoon open house with representatives of various agencies dedicated to entrepreneurship, followed by a State of the County Economic address, and dinner with a keynote speaker. He will begin contacting potential participants and working on a location and a spring date.

Tourism Brochure: The director disclosed that he found a substantial quantity of the county-map brochure, thought to be limited in quantities. Nevertheless, it was decided to pursue the publication of an updated, more-compact, and tourism-oriented brochure for the county, perhaps even multiple smaller, single-attraction brochures. Distribution plans were discussed. Secretary Ledley suggested that a new brochure could be used to attract tourists to Pulaski County, and then the older brochure could be distributed heavily throughout the county to help visitors to find their ways around.

New Business (cont.)

Executive-director Review: On a motion from Mr. Bales and a second from Mrs. Stone, the members voted unanimously that a one-year-anniversary review of Director Origer should be conducted by the Executive Committee in April, and afterward PCED would follow the County's annual-review policy.

2012 Goals/Objectives (cont.): Director Origer elaborated on a comment that President Broad made in November regarding trying to attract businesses that complement our existing industrial base: He hopes to begin communication regularly with purchasing agents for local manufactures to determine how to contact their numerous vendors, to see if that may lead to any re-location or expansion efforts on those vendors' parts.

Communities for a Lifetime Initiative: The director reported that Winamac had been selected as one of 20-some eligible communities to apply for a \$16,000 planning grant for aging-in-place initiatives through a pilot program from the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority. He is working with community stakeholders to develop a notice of intent. If, based on that notice, Winamac is selected, it will be one of three communities in the state chosen to receive a grant to develop a request for proposal, which then may lead to implementation funding.

Membership: Director Origer reminded the board that he had received Karrie Sutton's resignation, and that Secretary MacKenzie Ledley would not be serving a second term. He asked that President Broad entertain nominations or volunteers for a replacement of Mrs. Sutton as Membership Officer. Mr. Poor nominated Carolyn Hildebrandt, pending her acceptance. [Secretary's note: Mrs. Hildebrandt accepted on Wed., 4 Jan.] Secretary Ledley seconded the motion, and all members approved. Director Origer included and discussed the résumé of Mr. Bill Champion, director of operations, Fratco, who has expressed interested in joining PCED; it would be passed along to Mrs. Hildebrandt.

The director then addressed the member-recruitment issue; he would distribute the text that he had drafted for a recruitment ad for members' approval; discussion ensued regarding various criteria upon which Director Origer and Mrs. Hildebrandt should judge applicants before making recommendations to the full board. Finally, a slate of officers for the 2012-2013 board year was requested. The following nominations were made:

- President: Vice-President Rod Button, pending his acceptance [*Sec's note: Vice-President Button accepted on Wed., 4 Jan.*], by Mr. Poor. Mrs. Stone seconded. Mr. Poor moved to close nominations, Trustee Fleury seconded, and all members approved.
- Vice-President: Mrs. Stone, by Secretary Ledley. Mr. Poor seconded. On a motion from Trustee Fleury and second by Mr. Poor, the board voted unanimously to close nominations.
- Secretary: Mr. Poor, by President Broad. Mr. Poor respectfully declined. Mr. Fritz, by Mr. Poor. Ms. Perdue seconded. Nominations closed upon a motion by Mr. Poor, Trustee Fleury, and a unanimous vote.
- Mrs. Hildebrandt, as Membership Officer
- President Broad, as Past President, by Mr. Poor, with a second from Mrs. Stone and a unanimous vote.

2011 Accomplishments Report: Mr. Poor moved to publish the Accomplishments Report as presented, Trustee Fleury seconded, and the members voted affirmatively unanimously.

IACED Workshop: Director Origer presented information regarding a comprehensive-community-development workshop being put on by the Indiana Association for Community Economic Development. The board saw no problem with his attending, but he cautioned that scheduling conflicts may preclude him from so doing.

Welder-training-course Expansion: The coordinators of the welder-training course are considering the purchase of a plasma cutter for the two-fold purpose of adding to the program's benefits and cutting down on wasted steel. After discussion about the two options and the benefits to the class, Mr. Poor moved to contribute \$500 from the Economic Development appropriation, Commissioner Boswell seconded the motion, and all approved. The director explained that he may pursue a grant to help to sustain, and possibly to expand, the program; Secretary Ledley noted that a PACE grant round would soon open.

Revolving Loan Fund letter: Director Origer presented the text of a letter to the editor that he had drafted to run in local papers explaining and promoting the County's Revolving Loan fund. No objections were raised, and the idea of running a complementary advertisement for the fund was discussed.

Rural Entrepreneurial TIF District: The director apprised the board of a bill to be proposed by State Representative Sue Ellspermann (R-Ferdinand) to create county-wide rural tax-increment-finance districts to encourage rural entrepreneurial development. Brief discussion ensued.

Restaurant idea: A local resident had proposed to the director the idea of a community-shareholder-sponsored restaurant to fill the obvious gap in Winamac. The board advised that while the director certainly could help in providing information to the resident and other interested parties, PCED should not play an active role in such a venture.

Chamber of Commerce: It was decided that a tourism contract should be drafted, commented on by PCED members, and presented to the Chamber of Commerce board of directors for their consent prior to disbursing Clerical/Contractual funds to the Chamber for tourism-support purposes. Discussion regarding contract specifics ensued. The director reported on a fairly successful first attempt at a Chamber-sponsored holiday-season shop-locally campaign.

PC-CARE – Land Acquisition: Reiterating President Broad's emphasis on developing PC-CARE, Director Origer expressed his belief in the need for public ownership of land slated for such development, given the risks associated with private ownership in this sort of venture and the benefits of public ownership with respect to eligibility for grants for infrastructure planning

and development. The director received permission to commence informal, non-binding discussion with property owners; discussion ensued regarding which governmental entity/ies ought to purchase and to oversee the land and subsequent development.

Chicago Commercial Real Estate Forecast Conference: NIPSCO will pay for the director's registration; the board left attendance to the director's discretion.

PCED/Community relations: Director Origer expressed his interest in improving communications with the four towns in Pulaski County, whether through town-board meetings, electronic communications, or other means. It was determined that he should leave this to each town board's discretion.

Community Reports

- Trustee Fleury: KIRPC would have a representative at the January town-board meeting to discuss potential grants for the Town's wastewater plant, a historic gazebo, and the train depot. Director Origer agreed to attend this meeting.
- Mr. Fritz: Preparations for the planting season are underway.
- Commissioner Boswell: The Commissioners made 2012 appointments tonight; NIPSCO will be constructing a new across-northern-Indiana transmission line that will run through Pulaski County; the Plan Commission is working on how to implement land-use regulations.
- Ms. Perdue: The Chamber is preparing for its annual meeting/Halleck Award dinner.
- Secretary Ledley: The Library will be adding fiber-optic connectivity and has a new Website.
- Mrs. Stone: Medaryville has two new town-board members.
- Mr. Bales: At a recent auction, 664 acres in the Francesville area sold for \$6 million, or about \$9,035 per acre. He expects to see even higher prices at a forthcoming sale.
- Mr. Poor: Pulaski Memorial is still searching for a new doctor; construction is continuing on the medical-office building, which will be fully occupied upon opening. The hospital faces similar workforce trouble to other sectors. Secretary Ledley offered plaudits for the new cafeteria at the hospital.

Adjournment

Mr. Poor moved to adjourn at 9:22 p.m., Mrs. Stone seconded this motion, and the board approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
MacKenzie Ledley, Secretary