

Pulaski County Economic Development
Winamac Municipal Utilities Building, Conference Room
Winamac, Indiana 46996
6 March 2012

Special Session

PCED members present: President Rod Button (Winamac), Secretary Andrew Fritz, Membership Officer Carolyn Hildebrandt; County Commissioner Ken Boswell, Jamie Bales (Francesville), Monterey Board-of-Trustees President Jim Fleury, Christy Perdue (Chamber); Rebecca Anspach, Bill Champion, Courtney Poor, David Zeltwanger; Executive Director Nathan P. Origer. Vice-President Cheryl Stone (Medaryville) arrived at 6:37 p.m.

PCED members absent: Past President David Broad, County Councilor Alexsandra Haschel.

President Button called the meeting, convened to discuss potential changes to the bylaws of the Pulaski County Community Development Commission, at 6:32 p.m. Director Origer presented a number of proposed changes to the bylaws, explaining that most related to ensuring that Commission practices and bylaws conform, especially regarding officer positions and the executive committee, membership, and term limits. Commissioner Boswell suggested that a final decision would be more easily reached if the proposed changes were entered into the written bylaws and presented in that format. On a motion from Vice President Stone, a second from Mr. Poor, and a unanimous vote, support for the changes (Appendix A), as amended (Appendix B), was affirmed pending full-document review and a final vote at a special session in April. There being no further business, the special session was adjourned by President Button at 6:48 p.m.

Public Meeting Minutes

PCED members present/absent: As noted above.

Guests: Benjamin Hess, C.F.O., Milestone Development Group ('Milestone'). Mary Perren, Pulaski County *Journal*, arrived at 7:10 p.m.

Call to Order

President Button called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Special Guest

Director Origer introduced Mr. Hess to the members. Mr. Hess then proceeded to explain Milestone's objectives and business model: The Company, based in Knox and serving northwestern and north-central Indiana, as well as a few communities outside of the state, aims to promote local, independent businesses through a card-membership savings program. He explained some of the long-term financial and immeasurable benefits of patronizing local, rather than chain, stores.

At no cost, businesses may participate in the program, which provides free advertising, including an online presence; the only expectation of the participating company is to offer a discount to cardholders. Mr. Hess provided a few examples of these discounts; information, including a recent brochure indicating participating companies and their offered discounts, was also distributed. Cardholders pay a \$20 annual fee. In addition to direct sales, the Company also works with charitable and community organizations, permitting them to sell cards for fund-raising purposes. Milestone also has developed a program whereby it returns some of its proceeds to families or community organizations in need in the communities where it operates. After a question-and-answer period, Director Origer and the members thanked Mr. Hess for his time; PCED generally responded favorably to the aims of Milestone.

Approval of Minutes

At the president's request, a motion to approve the minutes of the 7 February 2012 meeting was made by Ms. Perdue. Mrs. Hildebrandt seconded, and all members approved without discussion.

Executive Director's Report

Strategic Relationships: The director reported on various happenings of the previous month. He and his wife, along with then-President David Broad, then-Secretary MacKenzie Ledley, a former director Dan Dolezal, and Mr. Dolezal's wife represented PCED at Ivy Tech – Logansport's "For the Love of Education" fundraising ball; the school raised about \$18,000 for scholarships for students from Cass, Fulton, and Pulaski Counties.

Infrastructure: The director noted that he'd lunched with Joe Hunting, of 1st Source Bank and now on the Winamac Industrial Park Advisory Board, and then attended said board's organization meeting, at which were discussed potential types of businesses ideal given the park's location, and marketing measures. Director Origer attended the February meeting of the Pulaski Co. Advisory Plan Commission (APC); Building Inspector Dave Dare will serve as the Plan Administrator, and County Attorney Kevin Tankersley will represent the APC. The director has been helping the APC to fill empty APC and Board-of-Zoning-Appeals seats.

The director submitted an online grant application to the ScottsMiracle-Gro Company on behalf of Greenspace Winamac; notice of award or rejection will come in April. He also participated, via telephone, in a meeting of the Indiana Complete Streets Campaign; he made contact, through this, with Richard Vonnegut, of the Hoosier Rails to Trails Council, who has worked in the past with the Friends of the Panhandle Pathway. The director also met with Gavin Ford, general manager of the Plymouth Tube Hot Mill, regarding the proposed substation for the Hot Mill.

Business Retention/Expansion and Entrepreneurial Development: The director met Milestone Development Group officers for breakfast, and then put them in contact with the Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce. He spoke with two local residents interested in starting food-service businesses in Winamac, providing information to them and directing them to the Indiana Small Business Development Center's local consultant, based in Knox. Additionally, Director Origer reported that someone had opened a gold-buying business in the Winamac Plaza; he noted, too, that, despite various rumors in town, according to the owners of the Indian-Head building, nothing is happening there. Through the State's site-selection Website, Director Origer submitted the Winamac Industrial Park in response to a project lead for a galvanizing plant.

Marketing: Jacki Frain, representing the Chamber of Commerce Board, accompanied the director to the monthly Rural & Rustic meeting; at the meeting, the proof of the forthcoming outdoor-recreation brochure was reviewed, and Mrs. Frain suggested partnering with local REMC's to help to fund tourism initiatives. Director Origer reminded the members that he had spoken with someone from Carroll White REMC who has expressed interest in engaging in economic-development partnerships with counties served by that utility.

Professional Development: The director participated in the Economic Development Administration's 2013-budget conference call; he reported some shifts in proposed funding and an increased emphasis on regional partnerships, entrepreneurships, and competitions for earmarked funds. In Carroll County, he attended Economic Development 101, hosted by his counterpart and that county and Carroll White REMC and put on by Ball State's Building Better Communities program. The spring 2012 Indiana Economic Development Association (IEDA) conference "was definitely the best that [the director has] attended" — the most relevant —; he would report in greater detail under Old Business.

Workforce Development: January 2012 unemployment rates had not yet been published. The director attended the Center of Workforce Innovations/Conexus winter workshop, focused on manufacturing-job-skills needs and training, in Michigan City.

Financial Report: At the end of February, \$99,124.99 remained in PCED's budget; including appropriated moneys, the CEDIT Fund had a balance of nearly \$2.07 million. The Donation Fund balance remained just below \$3,000, and the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) had a balance of \$122,726.04, with all current loans being repaid on or ahead of schedule. President Button asked about administrative guidelines for the RLF; Commission Boswell noted that the director had drafted some guidelines, and expressed a belief in the greater need for PCED involvement in post-award oversight; Director Origer noted that his proposal was on the agenda.

Mr. Poor moved to approve the Executive Director's and Financial Reports, and Ms. Perdue seconded. With no further discussion, the Reports were approved unanimously.

Priority List and Monthly Calendar: Forthcoming events on the director's schedule were reviewed; those of note included a meeting at Pulaski Memorial Hospital to discuss PCED's role in a community-health-needs assessment and two other meetings on the same day, a workshop at Ball State-Indianapolis, a meeting regarding the shovel-ready industrial park, and a scheduling conflict. On 20 March, the director would be double-booked, with both a presentation to the Winamac Red Hats group and a workshop in Indianapolis on his calendar; he asked if any board member could substitute at the Red Hats meeting. Ms. Perdue noted that she could; the director would follow up on this, and he would also ask Mr. Dolezal if he could be available. Finally, the director noted that April's meeting would take place in Medaryville, at Pulaski County Public Library; Ms. Perdue noted that she would be out of town for that meeting.

Current Membership Information: The director provided an update list of PCED members, their contact information, and the end-of-term dates for each member.

Old Business

Communities for a Lifetime, et c.: Director Origer reported that Winamac's proposal for the Communities for a Lifetime program was not funded; he encouraged the board to continue focusing on senior-oriented development, noting that grant funds or not, this issue will remain important. He noted that independent, market-rate senior housing and Complete Streets/walkability should remain on PCED's radar. At the IEDA conference the director learned that the most entrepreneurial age group is the 55-plus cohort.

RLF Guidelines: Director Origer drew members' attention to the proposed RLF-administration guidelines that he has proposed to the Commissioners. He seconded Commissioner Boswell's earlier comments, claiming that PCED should have more post-loan oversight responsibility. Discussion ensued; it was decided that the Auditor should continue to receive payment, rather than the PCED director, and the director would be expected to confirm receipt of payment by the Auditor. The director would make changes to the proposal suggested by the board before discussing it with the Commissioners.

Mr. Zeltwanger enquired about reviews of and revisions to the RLF program, and whether the program serves an appropriate function. The director noted that a review occurred in 2011; he added that AdaptaSoft had expanded and attracted out-of-state white-collar employees, and that Clear Decision Filtration continues to be a successful small business because of the help from the RLF. Mr. Zeltwanger expressed his concern that PCED is under an intense microscope because of the Chesapeake-loan issue. Further discussion ensued. Vice-President Stone asked if current borrowers would be grandfathered in against new oversight guidelines; Director Origer responded that he saw no reason for them to be exempted, noting that they currently are expected to adhere to what guidelines do exist.

IEDA Spring Conference — Review: The director expounded on his comments about the worthwhileness of the conference, elaborating that the conference's emphasis on entrepreneurship made it particularly pertinent to PCED's plans. He provided a sketch of his impressions and how they could be put into effect better to support potential and young start-up businesses in the county. He also provided information on Economic Gardening, a development strategy that focuses on smaller companies that are in "growth mode", which a number of Pulaski-County companies are.

Ongoing Projects: The director provided a brief overview of the status of ongoing projects, noting that in the coming weeks he would be focusing his attention on them anew.

New Business

New Appointments — PC-CARE Committee: Noting that Mr. Poor and President Button had constituted this committee, and that the latter is now president and the former leaving PCED, Director Origer asked for new committee members. He provided an of the plans for this proposed ag.-tech park. Secretary Fritz and Mr. Zeltwanger agreed to serve. Non-PCED committee members would be solicited from west-side residents involved and interested in development.

New Committee — Small Business and Entrepreneurial Development: Having already discussed the importance of entrepreneurial development both historically in Pulaski County and in contemporary economic development, the director asked for the creation of a committee dedicated to

improving PCED strategies on this front. Mrs. Anspach agreed to serve on the new committee; non-members would be sought, too, including at least one member of Chamber board of directors.

Benefit Bank/Poverty Information: Director Origer presented a news article, regarding the Benefit Bank, supported by Purdue Extension, wherein it was noted that Pulaski County ranks first in the state for percentage of population living in concentrated poverty; he charged the members to recall that addressing issues such as this is ultimately why PCED exists. Mrs. Hildebrandt noted that Pulaski County Extension offers Benefit-Bank services.

Vacant-Building Ordinance: Director Origer provided a copy of a recently adopted vacant-building ordinance in Cook County, Illinois, and suggested that, given the newly implemented land-use ordinances in the county and the hiring of a plan administrator, and that he does not have a comprehensive list of commercial and industrial buildings that could be marketed for development, the County may wish to consider implementing a vacant-building ordinance, which would require enrollment of vacant buildings on a County register and a minimum level of building upkeep. Lengthy discussion ensued, with many concerns expressed. Ultimately, it was agreed that PCED has no business with respect to vacant residential buildings, and any action on that end should be taken up by the APC; that requiring enrollment may prove to be unpopular, unenforceable, and too time-consuming; and that some means by which to compile a list of marketable commercial and industrial buildings would be beneficial to the director.

Public Outreach: Having been encouraged to do so by Mr. Broad, Director Origer brought up well in advance having a booth at the 4-H Fair and festivals in the county better to market PCED's presence to residents. Mr. Zeltwanger asked how many visitors the director received when manning tables in 2011; he said that it was hit-and-miss, with few visitors, but with generally good conversations with those who did stop at the booths. Trustee Fleury noted his disappointment at the poor attendance in the Fair's community-booths buildings. No decisions were made about specific events, but members did express willingness to man tables with the director.

Quarterly Newsletter: Explaining that most surrounding counties' economic-development offices have a newsletter, often monthly, the director asked if starting a quarterly electronic publication to apprise stakeholders, partners and peers, and residents of PCED's doings would be advisable. Members all supported this initiative, suggesting publishing it on *Pulaski Online* and submitting it to local media, as well.

Community Reports

- Secretary Fritz: He has attended numerous farm shows of late and expects to be in the fields in early April.
- Mrs. Anspach: Star City sewer users should be connected to the system within 90 days.
- Mr. Poor: Construction of the medical office building has resumed, after labor issues, and occupancy is expected by September.
- Mrs. Hildebrandt: The enrollment period for 4-H is continuing; Alan Kurtz is leaving Extension for the private sector; with funds from Purdue, the office may be able to elevate one employee from part-time to full-time status.
- Mr. Champion: Winter 2011-2012 has been the best that Fratco has ever seen.
- Commissioner Boswell: Mr. Dare is getting situated as Plan Administrator, and the APC's budget has been approved. The County is still waiting on final land-use maps. The County may soon be using WebGIS to make some map files available to the public.
- Ms. Perdue: The Chamber's Halleck Dinner/Annual Meeting would be taking place on Thursday at 6:00 *p.m.* at Moss Creek. The Hot Mill had a record year and is looking for more process engineers. Peyton Manning was leaving the Colts.
- Vice-President Stone: The Medaryville storm-water project continues ahead of schedule; a new pizza restaurant, the Pizza Pit, has opened; her daughter has been leading a committee to find funding to buy new Christmas decorations for town.
- Mr. Zeltwanger: His masonry business had a good winter. Because agriculture is strong, Francesville is strong, but he wonders how to prepare for the inevitable decline in the current agricultural boom.

- 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. He hopes to hear news regarding the community's petition to have Tippecanoe Township de-annexed from the Culver schools within the next two months. Someone is negotiating to purchase the now-closed mini-mart in town.
- Mr. Bales: Alliance Bank was ranked 11th, up from the 20's, amongst 150-some Indiana banks in an annual stability/strength report. Parkview Haven has put its renovation/expansion plans on hold; bids came in higher than expected, and regulatory issues have caused the directors to reconsider.

Adjournment

With no additional business, President Button called for a motion to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. Trustee Fleury moved thusly, Vice-President Stone seconded the motion, and all members approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrew Fritz, Secretary