

Pulaski County Economic Development

Winamac Municipal Utilities Complex

Winamac, Indiana

1 May 2012

Executive Session

Executive Committee members present: President Rod Button (Winamac), Vice-President Cheryl Stone (Medaryville), Secretary Andrew Fritz, Past President David Broad, Membership Officer Carolyn Hildebrandt; Executive Director Nathan P. Origer (*ex-officio*).

President Button called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The primary item of business was Director Origer's one-year review; Director Origer received a rating of 3.675 out of 4. Discussion ensued regarding the director's strengths and weaknesses and how he can improve his service to the organization and the county. Upon conclusion of the review, the director presented a 2013 budget proposal for review prior to public discussion; no objections were raised. Potential future uses of the CEDIT Fund were discussed. The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Regular Meeting Minutes

PCED members present: As noted above; County Commissioner Ken Boswell, Medaryville Board-of-Trustees Vice-President Derrick Stalbaum, Monterey Board-of-Trustees President Jim Fleury; Becky Anspach, Dave Zeltwanger. PCED members absent: County Councilor Alex Haschel, Jamie Bales (Francesville), Christy Perdue (Chamber); Bill Champion.

Guests: Mary Perren, Pulaski County *Journal*.

Call to Order

President Button called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Director Origer briefly reported on the executive session that had just occurred.

Membership Action

The board diverted from the agenda to address membership. Mrs. Hildebrandt would be leaving PCED after this meeting; Director Origer asked Vice-President Stone to assume an at-large seat, and for Trustee Stalbaum to replace Vice-President Stone *qua* Town appointee. On a motion from Trustee Fleury and a second from Mr. Zeltwanger, the board approved this unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

After brief review, a motion to approve the minutes of the 3 April 2012 meeting was made by Commissioner Boswell. Vice-President Stone seconded, and all approved without further discussion.

Executive Director's Report

Strategic Relationships: He attended the April meeting of the Northwest Indiana Forum's Economic Development partners, having previously met with the organization's president and Charles Weaver, executive director of the Starke County Economic Development Foundation and chair of the Forum's economic-development partners committee. The director noted that the Forum considers itself in the service of Pulaski County, so he sought to investigate. He would report further under New Business. Director Origer also had a brief meeting with Van Janovic, an engineer out of Koontz Lake. Along with Dave Bennett, he conducted a follow-up site visit with Ivy Tech – Logansport Dean Kevin Bostic of Ivy Tech and State Representative Mike Karickhoff, Executive Director of Facilities for Ivy Tech – Kokomo, at the former Center Group on Keller Street; the building seemed to be approved of by Representative Karickhoff. More would be reported under Old Business. At the April meeting of the Chamber of Commerce board, the PCED/ Chamber tourism agreement was approved, and discussion was held regarding tourism and fundraising efforts.

Infrastructure: The director assisted Greenspace Winamac with a grant application for the proposed pocket park at the corner of US-35 and Washington Street. He explained that the Town supports the

project, but has asked Fred Zahrt to develop a firm proposal, including accurate costs and available financial resources, before reporting to the trustees again; it is hoped that this grant would help to address this request. The director noted that the Advisory Plan Commission continues to wait on the final land-use maps; he has no copy of the County's contract with Rhein-Bach. Commissioner Boswell reported that the County will work with the existing marked-up maps, and that the County and WTH to see what the company can do to hasten this process.

Continuing PCED's support of the Winamac Safe Routes to School Taskforce, had just finished a grant application for phase-one infrastructure improvements; he expressed hope not only for this project, but for broader walkability development in the county. A second Walk-to-School Day would occur in mid-May.

The director reported successfully initiating communication with CSX regarding west-side rail-based development. He then explained some of the basic requirements for the State's Shovel Ready and CSX's Select Sites programs for industrial parks.

Business Retention/Expansion and Entrepreneurial Development: Director Origer spoke with the Indiana Municipal Power Agency's (IMPA) Susan Reed and United States Department of Agriculture – Indiana Rural Development's Phil Lehmkuhler regarding alternative-financing strategies for the Plymouth Tube project; he successfully schedule a follow-up meeting with the Company, the Town of Winamac, the County, and IMPA for 8 June.

The director had been working with various State agencies to set up entrepreneurial-development workshops in the run-up to the 2012 Economic Development Summit; he would elaborate under Old Business. He attended the Young Entrepreneurs Program Preview Event at Purdue, but was disappointed that no ventures would be appropriate for Pulaski County.

Marketing: The director attended the monthly Rural and Rustic meeting in Rochester. In addition to finishing the outdoor-recreation brochure, the group discussed regional-interest trails.

Professional Development: With Mr. Broad and Dan and Virginia Dolezal, Director Origer attended the Inside, Outside, All Around the Town workshop on senior-supportive development and design, which provided an opportunity for idea-sharing with practitioners from across the state.

Other: Director Origer noted that he continues working with Pulaski Memorial Hospital on their Community Health Needs Assessment; both parties have been delayed on this project, though.

Workforce Development: The level-two welding class had concluded successfully; a review meeting would be held on the following evening, the director report. He then presented the labor-force report for April. Pulaski County's unemployment rate was 6.9 percent, down from 7.3 percent in March and 7.9 percent in April 2011, with an estimated real rate close to the official rate. Commissioner Boswell noted that Fratco still struggles to find workers with appropriate skills; discussion ensued regarding this persistent problem. Director Origer suggested that programs addressing the "brain drain" should better focus on skilled and semi-skilled labor, and not solely on white-collar and "knowledge" workers. Mrs. Anspach asked if any tracking mechanisms are in place for the welding program; Mrs. Hildebrandt noted that Extension has attempted to follow graduates, but that this has proven to be difficult.

Financial Report: At the end of April, \$91,109.37 remained in PCED's budget; the CEDIT Fund had a balance of nearly \$1.93 million not appropriated. The balance of the Donation Fund remained just below \$3,000, and the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) had a balance of almost \$134,000.

Mr. Zeltwanger enquired about the tax income being returned to Counties by the State; it was not known exactly how much money would be returned to any one fund within each county.

Mr. Broad moved to approve the Executive Director's and Financial Reports, and Mrs. Hildebrandt seconded. With no further discussion, the Reports were approved by all.

Priority List and Monthly Calendar: Forthcoming events on the director's schedule were reviewed; those of note were the Midwest Indiana Economic Development and KIRPC-CEDS/Brownfields meetings, the executive session at which he would be appearing before the County Commissioners, and the Safe Routes to School taskforce meetings and Walk-to-School Day.

Old Business

Ivy Tech update: Director Origer shared an e-mail from Representative Karickhoff, wherein it was noted that without financial buy-in from the community, the development of an Ivy Tech satellite in Winamac is unlikely. The director was disheartened upon learning this after six-plus

months of courting Ivy Tech. Despite the setback, the director expressed his belief that it still is a worthy project and would continue to work on it; in general, the Board agreed that this is an important asset to bring to the community, although some dissent was expressed in light of the new circumstances. President Button suggested that the elementary school in Monterey may be worth considering and Trustee Fleury agreed. This could be so, depending on ownership and costs. Discussion ensued on the benefits of a community college's presence in the community.

Economic Summit 2012: The director provided a list of events to be hosted by PCED:

- Monday, May 21, 5:30 p.m., Pulaski County Public Library – Winamac: PCED Presentation on the Pulaski County Revolving Loan Fund.
- Thursday, May 31, 10:00 a.m., Francesville site to be determined: Small Business Administration workshop.
- Monday, June 4, 5:00 p.m., Pulaski County Public Library – Winamac: Northwest Indiana Small Business Development Center presentation.

The director intended to work with other agencies, including the Service Core of Retired Executives, to schedule other events in mid-June. The Board assented to a 28 June Summit date; it will occur at 6:30 p.m. at the Medaryville Lions Club. Discussion regarding the program ensued; the director would work on securing catering and presenters, and advertising would be addressed.

Chamber tourism agreement: After the director reported on some of the Chamber board's incipient tourism efforts, and on a motion from Commissioner Boswell and a second from Trustee Stalbaum, the agreement was unanimously approved; Director Origer would submit the claim.

Quarterly Newsletter: The director reminded members that he hoped to publish the inaugural quarterly PCED newsletter later in the month; he asked that they submit to him anything that they would like to have considered for inclusion in the letter. He provided a list of items that he already had considered, including local-business anniversaries. Mr. Zeltwanger asked, "Who's the audience?" The director mentioned economic-development peers, county officials, business leaders, and anyone whose e-mail address he could get. Distribution methods were discussed.

Youth Retention Committee: Trustee Stalbaum agreed to join President Button (and possibly Commissioner Boswell) on this committee. President Button encouraged the director to move forward on this committee; the director agreed to do so, and said that he would reach out on a community member who previously had expressed interest in serving on this group. He also briefly relayed some potential projects for this committee.

IMPA ED program questionnaire: Returning to the previous month's discussion on the survey, Director Origer asked if there were any services offered through IMPA that PCED should investigate; he noted that, based on conversations with Jim Walton of Brand Acceleration, that neither the Website audit nor the Website template should be considered. No action was taken.

Pulaski Online — Virtual-building site: Having spoken with Mr. Walton, the director realized that this would be too costly for the County.

Pulaski Online — Current billing, future development: Having followed up on the previous month's discussion about the cost of *Pulaski Online*, the director presented an e-mail from Golden Technologies, wherein it was noted that Pulaski County's fee is significantly higher than the normal monthly fee; the director would enquire as to a more reasonable price. He also reiterated his interest in pursuing the development of a new Website in 2013. He encouraged the Board to continue discussing this and to approach the County; discussion ensued.

RLF Administrative Guidelines: The director presented an updated draft of the proposed administrative guidelines, having incorporated comments from the Board, Commissioner Boswell, and County Attorney Kevin Tankersley. He asked for approval to present this document to the Commissioners, pending final approval from Mr. Tankersley. Mr. Zeltwanger moved on this, Mr. Broad seconded, and after the director satisfactorily addressed Trustee Fleury's concerns about voting before receiving Mr. Tankersley's approval, the board voted unanimously in the affirmative.

New Business

Northwest Indiana Forum: The director attended the April meeting of the Economic Development partners of the Northwest Indiana Forum. This group, similar to the Midwest Indiana group, is a regional economic-development and marketing group. The director presented a list of various positive and negative attributes of each group. Lengthy discussion ensued, and no action

would be taken any time soon, particularly because Pulaski County has paid its 2012 dues to the Midwest group, but the members believed further discussion to be worthwhile. The director would continue to research these options and to present information to the Board.

2013 Budget Proposal: The director presented the 2013 budget proposal, as well as a comparison with previous years' proposed and approved budgets. He noted that depending on what the State Board of Accounts says is permissible, a meals-and-entertainment line item may be added. Excepting the additional Professional Services funding requested to develop a new Website, the 2013 request is for less money than requested in 2012; the requested amount of \$140,012 is \$20,585, or 17 percent, larger than the approved 2012 budget. The proposal, with the potential addition of the expense-account item, was approved unanimously on a motion from Vice-President Stone and a second from Trustee Fleury.

PCED/PCPL programming proposal: Pulaski County Public Library Director MacKenzie Ledley proposed a partnership with PCED to offer presentations at quarterly or semi-annual intervals, at the library. The Board thought it to be worthwhile; the director expressed an interest in doing them perhaps every four months, and to include the Medaryville branch. Discussion ensued regarding programming, as well as the director's need to balance his personal life and work schedule.

Membership-Officer appointment: Mr. Broad moved to appoint Jamie Bales to replace Mrs. Hildebrandt as the Membership Officer, pending Mr. Bales' acceptance; Mr. Zeltwanger seconded the motion, and the board approved unanimously. [*Sec's note: Mr. Bales accepted on Wed., 2 May.*]

Community Reports

- Mrs. Hildebrandt: Extension is preparing for the Fair; they are looking to expand their educational component. A Community Foundation grant was awarded for the computer lab. After retiring at the end of August, she and her husband are moving to Louisiana.
- Secretary Fritz: Corn was planted in April, but popcorn and beans still need to be planted.
- Trustee Fleury: The Town would be deciding on an engineer for the wastewater study on the next evening; preparations are underway for Monterey Days.
- Mr. Broad: Downtown is looking good, and the cash-for-gold business is running in the Winamac Plaza. Alliance EMS passed its State certification for ALS. The company is upgrading its BLS-certified employees and hiring; the hospital project is ahead of schedule.
- Mr. Zeltwanger: He dined on their State-Fair steaks before the meeting; the steer took third place out of fifty, and he seasoned the steaks perfectly. Noting that Monticello and other bigger communities have empty-building issues, he cautioned against judging progress too much on that metric. The community is supportive of replacing the destroyed Town building in Francesville. PCED cannot forget about Ivy Tech. His business has been good.
- Commissioner Boswell: County zoning will be in effect soon.
- President Button: Safe Routes to School and the hospital project are the big projects in Winamac right now.
- Trustee Stalbaum: The storm-sewer project is finishing up; a pork-chop dinner would be held at the fire station on Saturday.
- Mrs. Anspach: Bonnell Grain Handling is celebrating 35 years in business. As of 10 May, residents will have 90 days in which to tie in to the Star City sewer system.
- Director Origer: One of the tables being used for the meeting had been his grandparents' dining-room table.
- Vice-President Stone: The town is busy, business has been good at the shop, and her daughter's committee is still going strong.

Adjournment

With no additional business, President Button called for a motion to adjourn. Vice-President Stone moved to do so, Mrs. Hildebrandt made her last PCED second, and all approved to end the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrew Fritz, Secretary