

## *Pulaski County Economic Development*

Francesville Fire Station  
Francesville, Indian 47946

1 November 2011

### **Guest Presentation**

Mr. Ben Bohall, Rose Acres – Francesville, gave a presentation to members present, beginning at 6:45 p.m. In introducing him, President David Broad explained his desire to bring business to the PCED board, or the board to businesses, so that the board members can become more aware of what county businesses are doing. Mr. Bohall talked about the history of the company, which is the largest family-owned egg producer in the nation, and spoke about production capacity, company growth, and the Francesville facility. The local site was constructed in 1985 and sits on 632 acres. Wastewater from the site is recycled, used to irrigate the surrounding tilled ground. In response to a question from Executive Director Nathan P. Origer, Mr. Bohall noted that the Francesville farm employs approximately 135 workers. As Mr. Bohall's presentation neared its conclusion, President Broad asked what PCED can do to help Rose Acres: talk positively about the egg business, and encourage people to call to tour the plant.

### **Public Meeting Notes**

PCED members present: President Broad, Vice-President Rod Button, Courtney Poor, Monterey Councilman Jim Fleury, Christy Perdue, Andrew Fritz; Director Origer

Guests: Bill Champion, director of operations, Fratco; Brian Young; Emily Hizer

### **Call to Order**

President Broad called the meeting to order at 7:17 p.m.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Noting the lack of quorum, President Broad dispensed with the approval of minutes until the January meeting. No action could be taken on any issues before the board, but discussion and unofficial recommendations would be permissible.

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

*Strategic Relationships:* Director Origer reported that he had conducted a follow-up site visit with Kevin Bostic, Ivy Tech – Logansport, at Vurpillat's Opera House, with Steve Morrison, of the Pulaski County Historical Society, and Dan and Virginia Dolezal, consultants to the Historical Society. Mr. Bostic continues to express Ivy Tech's interest in this site, but various issues need to be addressed, particularly involving the costs of appropriate renovations and a leasing agreement.

Director Origer expressed his pleasure with the turnout for the 20-October "Branding Your Business" Economic Summit, held at the Winamac Knights of Columbus Hall and featuring guest speaker Jim Walton, of Brand Acceleration. About 35 people attended, heard an insightful presentation from Mr. Walton, and enjoyed lunch catered by Mary Ortman.

Director Origer is serving on the Winamac Safe Routes to School taskforce. He informed the board that the Friends of the Panhandle Pathway had finally acquired the land necessary to extend the trail into town, which is necessary for the complete implementation of Safe Routes. The Safe Routes program is intended to encourage safe non-motorized transport to schools; some of the work may coincide with proposed Complete Streets program for downtown.

In Francesville, Director Origer met with Roger Cummings, Brad Neihouser, and Ron Schlatter, of Pulaski West Developers (PWD), and Terry Stevens, of Alliance Bank, regarding potential west-side development and general relations between PCED and PWD. He was pleased with the meeting.

At the October Chamber-board meeting, discussions continued regarding the vision and focus of the Chamber; Plymouth Tube was named Organization of the Quarter, and plans were considered for a shop-locally holiday-shopping campaign.

*Infrastructure:* Director Origer successfully arranged for the County Highway Department to widen County Road 600 South, for a mile-long stretch from US-421 westward to improve safety, particular for truck drivers at Remington Seeds. He is also working with Highway Superintendent Kenny Becker to address the intersection at US-35, C.R. 50 East, and C.R. 150 South, a notably troublesome junction, in preparation for the addition of pedestrian and bicycle traffic when the Panhandle Pathway is extended.

*Business Retention/Expansion and Entrepreneurial Development:* The County Council awarded tax abatements to Remington Seeds and Plymouth Tube on projects totaling more than \$60MM. Director Origer met with Amy Beechy, of ProjectMatters, to discuss potential entrepreneurial-development collaboration, and participated in a teleconference for the Microenterprise Affinity Group meeting. He also attended the first day of the Indiana Main Street Conference, and met with a Francesville-area businessman interested in a potential expansion.

*Other Business:* Director Origer toured the County Courthouse with Morry DeMarco to see what structural issues affect the building; he will be looking for opportunities for grants and low-interest loans to address these issues. He also participated, on board member Carolyn Hildebrandt's request, in the West Central Middle School Reality Store.

*Workforce Development:* With the second welding-class session having ended, the coordinators have scheduled a mid-November meeting to review the semester and to plan for the future. Reviewing unemployment rates for Pulaski County and neighbors for September 2010, and August and September 2011, Director Origer noted that although Pulaski County's rate had dropped from 7.3 percent to 7.0 percent, other some counties actually experienced more impressive decreases in rates, some have better rates than ours, and Pulaski County's *real* unemployment rate is likely closer to 9.5 percent.

*Financial Report:* Through the end of August, PCED had expended \$60,840.75, or 67.6 percent, of its \$90,016 budget. The CDC Donation Fund had a balance of just below \$3,000.

*Priority List and Monthly Calendar:* The director's schedule for the next month was reviewed; Director Origer especially highlighted the Indiana Economic Forum conference (8 November); the adult-/alternative-student college fair proposed for early December and co-sponsored by PCED, Ivy Tech – Logansport, and the Pulaski County Public Library; the Indiana Rural Summit (1-2 December); and the Indiana Economic Development Association's annual conference (8-9 December).

## **Old Business**

*Strategic Plan – Economic Summits:* Director Origer further discussed the 20-October "Branding Your Business" Summit, noting that although the attendance rate was similar to that

at the September Summit, more local businesspeople were present, and fewer regional and State-level partners, the opposite of what happened in September. He reiterated his interest in annually hosting Summits, ideally with each event's theme related to *Pulaski County: Mapping a Path Forward*. For 2012, Director Origer suggested an entrepreneurship-themed session, with participation from various agencies that provide small-business lending, counseling, and support. President Broad instructed the director to begin considering potential dates for such an event.

*Strategic Plan – PC-CARE:* Director Origer again noted that he had met with the Pulaski West Develops, who expressing interest in and willingness to work toward development of the PC-CARE.

*Land-Use Update:* The County Commissioners approved the various land-use documents and ordinances as presented; effective implementation is the next challenge.

*Complete Streets:* Director Origer provided copies of the most important pages of the proposal provided by the Active Transportation Alliance. Scale and costs were discussed, with discussion limited until the director has the opportunity to investigate other avenues for completing and funding the work.

*Pulaski County signage/billboard Project:* Director Origer and Mr. Poor toured US-31 between Rochester and Indianapolis, and I-63 between Indianapolis and Rensselaer, investigating whether any communities employ billboards to attract visitors; very few were found that meet even a loose definition; the director and Mr. Poor suggested that, if any role be played by PCED, it ought to be the facilitation of a shared billboard advertising some of the county's niche businesses that may attract retail tourists.

*College Fair:* Director Origer noted that the PCED-/Ivy-Tech-/PCPL-sponsored college fair would be directed toward adult/alternative students, most likely on 15 December.

*Business Survey:* Not having distributed any of the prepared surveys that the Economic Summits, Director Origer inquired of the board how best to distribute them. It was suggested that he make them available online, as well as allowing for a hard-copy option. Local-paper advertising should be used to alert businesses to the survey, as well as electronic communications.

## **New Business**

*Indiana Economic Forum:* Director Origer drew the board's attention to the agenda for the one-day Indiana Economic Forum conference that he would be attending on 9 November; the eminence of some of the speakers was noted.

*Indiana Economic Development Association Annual Conference:* Without a quorum present to vote on the matter, the director ask if any members present objected to his attending this event, which he expects to be a worthwhile conference. No members opposed. It takes place on 8 and 9 December, in Indianapolis, and will offer networking opportunities and informational sessions focuses largely on building international relationships.

*Membership:* Director Origer announced that he had received Karrie Sutton's resignation, and that Secretary MacKenzie Ledley would not be serving a second term. Because Mrs. Sutton and Director Origer constituted the Membership Committee, the director suggested that one of the first agenda items for the next meeting be appointing a new Membership officer, so that potential candidates for the board can be considered. Both Mr. Young and Mr. Champion have expressed interest in joining; discussion ensued regarding the possibility of running advertisements to solicit new board, and non-board committee, members prior to the beginning of the next term, 1 March.

*Advertising Request:* Brandi Larkin, of the Chamber of Commerce's retail committee, asked Director Origer for support in advertising for Winter Wonderland; Mr. Poor suggested providing \$200 in support.

*2012 Meetings Schedule:* Without a quorum present to vote on the proposed schedule, it was decided to convene on Tuesday, 3 January, which would likely have been the first scheduled meeting of the year, at which point the rest of the year's schedule could be discussed.

*(Early) 2012 Goals/Objectives:* Director Origer provided a draft list of issues on which to focus PCED's attention in 2012 – workforce-development programming; the Pulaski-County-tourism brochure; entrepreneurial-development programming/workshop(s); PC-CARE; continued community-development projects (e.g., downtown-revitalization projects); and youth-retention programming, the student board, and developing an internship program. President Broad suggested that included in the list should be endeavors to attract or help the establishment of "symbiotic businesses" that complement our existing manufacturing and agriculture. Vice-President Button interjected that marketing efforts for the Winamac Industrial Park should be revisited.

*Funds Transfer:* Director Origer would be requesting funds transfers from the Professional Services appropriation to the Dues & Subscriptions and Schools, Meetings, Seminars appropriations, so that he can pay 2012 MidWest Indiana REDO dues and cover the expenses for the IEDA conference and Indiana Rural Summit. No objections were voiced.

*Welder-training-course issues:* Director Origer explained that although the welder-training courses had gone well, the logistics surrounding them were often troublesome, and the stakeholders involved in the program are in need of some strategic planning, and so a meeting would be occurring in mid-November. Amongst the issues are confusion over who should be responsible for which tasks, Wastequip's distancing Ms. Perdue offered to provide some contact information to the director for both someone at Plymouth Tube who may be able to offer his insight or support to the program, and for potential suppliers of cheap or free steel.

### **Community Reports**

- Vice-President Button: The sewer-separation project has reached 90-percent completion, with testing and final paving to follow in the next weeks to bring it to a close. Also, the girls'-volleyball team that he coaches went undefeated, having lost only one game in two years.
- Mr. Poor: The doctor who had replaced Dr. Johnson has tendered his resignation to Pulaski Memorial; the search for a new doctor has commenced.
- Councilman Fleury: The petition to have Tippecanoe Township de-annexed from the Culver Community School Corporation has 630 signatures.
- Ms. Perdue: Plans are in place for improvements at Plymouth Tube.
- Mr. Fritz: The harvest is nearing its end.
- President Broad: The members of the board have done a fine job of serving Pulaski County in 2011.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Fritz moved for adjournment at 8:12 p.m. Ms. Perdue seconded this motion, and the board approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Courtney Poor, Secretary *pro tempore*