

## *Pulaski County Economic Development*

Winamac Municipal Utilities Building, Conference Room  
Winamac, Indiana 46996

13 September 2011

### **Public Meeting Minutes**

PCED members present: President David Broad, Courtney Poor, Commissioner Ken Boswell, Carolyn Hildebrandt, Cheryl Stone, Jamie Bales, Jim Fleury, Christy Perdue; Andrew Fritz (pending); Executive Director Nathan P. Origer

#### **Call to Order**

President Broad called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and acknowledged new Chamber representative Ms. Christy Perdue and Mr. Andrew Fritz, a potential new at-large member.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Upon the president's request, members reviewed the minutes of the 2 June 2011 meeting. Mr. Poor moved for approval, Mrs. Hildebrandt seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

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

*Strategic Relationships:* Director Origer reported on activities of the previous month, including the monthly MidWest Indiana regional economic-development group and Chamber of Commerce meetings, a Pulaski County Human Services Transportation Advisory Council meeting, two lunch meetings, Indiana Tourism's T-21 listening session, and a Pulaski Health Foundation strategic-planning session. He spoke about each briefly, in particular expressing some of his frustrations with the MidWest group's focus and lack of visible productivity. Mr. Poor commented on his belief in the important of regionalism; Director Origer agreed, clarifying that his doubts are with this group in particular, and not regionalism *per se*.

*Infrastructure:* Director Origer, President Broad, and Mr. Poor all attended the Plan Commission's land-use public hearing on 8 September, with the director and president assisting at the sign-in table. While there, Director Origer spoke with a representative of E.On Climate and Renewables regarding potential wind-power development in southwestern Pulaski County.

*Marketing:* Director Origer attended the July meeting of the Rural and Rustic tourism group. He had little to report on the group's activities or in-county marketing this month.

*Business Retention/Expansion and Entrepreneurial Development:* Director Origer reported that Remington Seeds and Plymouth Tube will be approaching the County Council in October to request tax abatements for expansion projects. The former is an approximately \$16MM reinvestment with five full-time and seven part-time jobs anticipated immediately, with more in the future; the project will double the company's capacity at Francesville. Related to this project, he reported that he should be asking the Commissioners to look into improving Country Road 600 South, near US-421; Remington Seeds has had multiple trucks go off of the no-shoulder road over the last few winters. Plymouth Tube's reinvestment, if it occurs at the Winamac

campus, would create about 20 jobs over the next three years. Director Origer should be writing a letter of support for state-level incentives on the company's behalf.

The director "attended" a Web-based seminar on funding for farmers and agriculture-related projects; is working with a local agri-businessman to find a suitable building for manufacturing tied directly to the business; and successfully shepherded Winamac Lumber Yard, LLC, through the revolving-loan-fund process, which culminated in a \$100,000 loan to the company and the re-opening of the county's sole lumberyard. Managing owner Kyle Kruzick had reported fairly strong business in the first weeks of operations.

*Workforce Development:* The director reported that the newest round of welder-training courses had begun successfully. The unemployment rates for Pulaski County, the nation, the state, and surrounding counties were reviewed. Director Origer noted that Pulaski County's remained the lowest, at 7.3%, in a 14-county region.

*Financial Report:* After eight months, PCED had expended nearly \$49,000, or about 54 percent, of the \$90,016 budget. The CDC Donation Fund had a balance of \$3,111.56.

*Priority List and Monthly Calendar:* Events for the month of September were reviewed. Of particular note were the upcoming Francesville Fall Festival, at which the director would have a public-outreach booth; the 22 September PC-CARE Economic Summit in Francesville; and the Indiana Economic Development Association's fall conference, 15 and 16 September.

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

## **Old Business**

*Strategic Plan – Economic Summit:* Director Origer presented the lists of invitees and responses, noting that he had run an advertisement in both papers in hopes of increasing attendance at the Francesville event, which had received fewer positive responses than the October Summit in Winamac. The director also attached to the meeting packet copies of a draft survey for attendees of the Summits; he asked board members to review the survey and to reply to him with any comments.

*County Revolving Loan Fund:* Director Origer reviewed recent activity with the fund – the aforementioned approved loan to Winamac Lumber Yard, LLC; a query about using the fund to support a daycare center; and the director's plan to apply for outside funding, including the USDA - Rural Development, to increase the County's lending capacity.

*Complete Streets:* Director Origer reported on the recently hosted Complete Streets presentation featuring Mr. Steve Buchtel of the Active Transportation Alliance, noting a crowd of about 30 people. He mentioned that the Pulaski Health Foundation's (PHF) architect gave a brief opening presentation on the possibility of PHF's new facility being constructed downtown, pointing out the beneficial effects that such a project could have on downtown revitalization. The director briefly discussed what a small-scale Complete-Streets makeover of Winamac, or any town, may entail. Mr. Poor, who attended the event, expressed his enthusiastic support for the project, having been impressed by the possibility of making "the trailhead of the [Panhandle Pathway] bike trail ... your garage", because streets throughout the community are safe and accessible.

Mr. Poor and Director Origer emphasized the downtown-revitalization possibilities of Complete Streets and expressed hope that, eventually, a combined effort of the Panhandle Pathway, Complete Streets, and PHF could breathe significant new life into downtown Winamac. The director noted that the Logansport *Pharos-Tribune* featured an article about the PCED-hosted presentation. Mr. Poor continued by noting that other Indiana communities are adopting Complete Streets policies, and that similar projects could be undertaken by other

Pulaski County towns; he specifically mentioned the trail in Monterey, about the popularity of which Mr. Fleury spoke. Mr. Fritz enquired as to whether PHF is definitely planning to develop a new facility downtown. Currently, no concrete plans exist, and PHF is considering multiple sites; their outside consultant strongly urged following the downtown plans. Further discussion of these intermingled topics ensued.

*Public Outreach – Francesville Fall Festival:* Director Origer reminded the board that he would be manning a booth at the Francesville Fall Festival in a continued effort to engage the public and to make himself known to the residents of the county.

*Membership Committee –* Director Origer formally introduced Ms. Christy Perdue, of Plymouth Tube, to the board as the Chamber of Commerce’s representative. He also introduced Mr. Andrew Fritz, whose name had been recommended by Secretary Ledley at the August meeting; he briefly spoke about himself, and on a motion by Mr. Poor and second by Mr. Fleury, the board unanimously welcomed Mr. Fritz to the board as an at-large member representing the agriculture sector. Fratco has reiterated its interest in having someone on the PCED board; such a person would improve both manufacturing and western-Pulaski representation on the board.

*Financial Support –* Director Origer reported on the status of various requests for support that he had received and been permitted to address by the board. Approximately \$900 had been contributed, from the Advertising appropriation and Donation Fund, to assist local festivals.

*Ivy Tech –* The director reported the he soon should be showing multiple buildings in Winamac to Ivy Tech - Logansport’s dean, Kevin Bostic; the college hopes to resume offering classes by January 2012.

*2012 Budget –* Director Origer presented the final budget as approved by the County Council. The overall budget of \$114,533 represents a 27 percent increase over the 2011 appropriation; the director expressed the importance of proving that such an increase was warranted. He noted that PCED received a 93 percent increase in operational appropriations, and a 2.7 percent increase in personnel appropriations.

### **New Business**

*Committee Structuring/Public Engagement –* Seeking both to improve PCED’s public engagement and to relieve PCED board members of some of the burden of committee membership, Director Origer proposed including interested members of the general public on committees established in the future. He came across a similar system on the Website of the Kossuth County, Iowa, Economic Development Corporation (with the director of which he intends to speak regarding internship programming). The director cited the existing PC-CARE committee, which could be revamped to feature the director, a board member, and interested individuals from the Francesville and Medaryville areas; and a Complete Streets committee that could involve Mr. Poor and the director as well as citizens concerned with downtown revitalization, the Panhandle Pathway, and mobility issues. The members present expressed overwhelming support for this initiative.

*“Jr. Board” –* Director Origer proposed establishing a “junior board” composed of students from local high schools – two each from Winamac and West Central, and one a Pulaski County resident enrolled at North Judson-San Pierre. Discussion ensued regarding the specifics; on a motion from Mr. Fleury, second from Mrs. Stone, and unanimous approval, it was decided that the director would invite each school’s principal to a PCED meeting to give them all an idea of what PCED is doing, and for what PCED stands, before nominating students; and that the students should serve from 1 March of their sophomore years through the end of February of their junior years. Director Origer would follow up with the principals.

*Financial-Support Request:* Brandi Larkin asked if PCED would assist her in advertising a fall arts-and-crafts show that she hopes to host, a follow-up to similar shows held in fall of 2010 and spring of 2011. With a member having suggested that anything that brings commerce to the community is worth considering for support, Mr. Poor moved to pay \$100 for advertising to support this; Mr. Fleury seconded the motion, and all members approved.

*Indiana Main Street Conference, Rural Summit:* Director Origer reminded members that he would be attending the first day of the Indiana Main Street Conference, on 19 October; the keynote speaker would be addressing topics relevant to downtown economic development. He presented information regarding the 2011 Indiana Rural Summit, asking the board if he ought to attend. Mr. Poor moved that he should expend the \$150 to register, given the list of participating sponsors and the nature of the event; Mrs Stone seconded Mr. Poor's motion; and the board voted unanimously in favor.

*Entrepreneurial/Funding-Opportunities Workshop* – Director Origer proposed that PCED host a workshop providing information on various sources of funding and counseling for existing businesses and start-ups; depending on the success of the two Economic Summits, he said that this could be the next Summit, at some point in 2012, in an annual tradition. It was decided to revive this topic early in 2012.

### **Community Reports**

In lieu of the traditional roundtable community reporting, President Broad asked for off-the-cuff recommendations from each member regarding upon which sorts of businesses Director Origer ought to focus attraction efforts.

- Commissioner Boswell: Focus on retention and expansion; businesses that complement existing employers
- Mr. Bales: Avoid attracting competitors to existing businesses; complementary businesses.
- Mr. Fritz: Fight brain drain – high-tech firms.
- Ms. Perdue: Technical and business services; accommodations appropriate for clients, customers of bigger firms; safety and environmental firms; tool-and-die makers; small-motor shops.
- Mrs. Stone: Retention and expansion.
- Mr. Poor: "Captive-audience businesses"; data storage; feeder industries for existing firms.
- Mr. Fleury: Consider demographic groups to be employed; smaller operations.

### **Adjournment**

With no additional business, President Broad called for a motion to adjourn at 8:54 p.m. Mrs. Hildebrandt made the motion, and Mrs. Stone seconded it. Mr. Fleury briefly interjected to express his gratitude for PCED's support for the Monterey Days Festival, and then the board voted unanimously to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,  
Courtney Poor, Executive Committee member,  
for MacKenzie Ledley, Secretary