

Pulaski County Economic Development
(Pulaski County Community Development Commission)

Tuesday, 3 February 2015

Winamac Municipal Utilities Complex
Winamac, Indiana

Meeting Minutes

Members present: President Bill Champion, Vice-President Lawrence Loehmer (Monterey), Membership Officer Doug Roth (County Council), executive-board member Andrew Fritz; Jamie Bales (Francesville), John Plowman (Winamac); Becky Anspach, Greg Comoglio, Gregg Malott. Executive Director Nathan P. Origer, Project Coordinator Krysten Hinkle.

Members absent: Secretary Dave Zeltwanger [work-related]; County Commissioner Larry Brady [Commissioner business], Amy Jo Cantu (Chamber) [work-related], Medaryville Town Council President Derrick Stalbaum [work-related].

Call to Order

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

Consent Agenda

With no requests for extraction having been made, the Consent Agenda was adopted.

Community Reports

Community reports were foregone due to the lengthy agenda and inclement weather.

Old Business

Hometown Collaboration Initiative: Director Origer reiterated that Pulaski County had been chosen as a participant in the inaugural round of HCI. Mrs. Hinkle stated that the first meeting was slated to take place on 16 February at Moss Creek Golf Course and would be mostly celebratory and introductory in nature. At this point, the community coach had not been named for Pulaski County. Director Origer requested approval for a \$5,000 investment that the State requires for HCI. He clarified that the \$5,000 would be returned to Pulaski County, plus potential State funding for a capstone project as the program nears completion.

Motion: Councilor Roth; second: Mr. Comoglio; no discussion; approval: all.

Pulaski Online: Director Origer stated that the Website would be live this week, but that it would be a soft-launched, and that adjustments would still have to be made and content created before the grand launch, which could potentially coincide with the Economic Summit and Annual Meeting in March. Furthermore, Director Origer stated that he expected the cost to come in slightly under budget. Crane + Grey would be back in spring to capture more warmer-season, high-quality photos of the County for the Website.

CAGIT-rate issue: Before addressing new concerns, Director Origer recapitulated the situation.

Generally, a County Adjusted Gross Income Tax (CAGIT) rate cannot exceed 1.0 percent. By special legislation, Pulaski County has permission to assess up to 1.3 percent, with the extra .3 percent specifically allocated for maintenance and operations of the Justice Center.

The County Economic Development Income Tax (CEDIT) rate, which funds the CDC and is used for the \$260,000-plus yearly jail-lease payment, is currently set at .25 percent, annually accruing about \$240,000 fewer than the special .3-percent CAGIT fund. Further, the special CAGIT fund has a surplus of about \$500,000 relative to the CEDIT fund, and tends to generate more revenue than is typically expended in a year.

The CDC seeks to have the Indiana Code amended to allow for the lease payments to be made from the special CAGIT fund, so as potentially to free CEDIT funds for economic-development projects.

Director Origer, with the approval of the CDC, Commissioners, and County Council, had approached Senator Ed Charbonneau (R-Valparaiso) and Representative Doug Gutwein (R-Francesville) about proposing such legislation. Sen. Charbonneau had been open to helping, but had let Rep. Gutwein take the lead. The latter had repeatedly expressed concern that, in light of the 2013 override of a gubernatorial veto pertaining to the special CAGIT

fund, such legislation would be toxic. In response to these concerns, Director Origer had reached out to the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, a staffer in which had reported that he had no reason to believe that any problems would arise; contact information was provided for the General Counsel and Policy Director of the Office of Management and Budget, who expressed similar sentiments. The director had then apprised Sen. Charbonneau and Rep. Gutwein of these conversations.

One week prior, in a local media report on the CAGIT issue, both Director Origer and Rep. Gutwein had been quoted explaining their stances on the issue. The director expressed some concern about Rep. Gutwein's understanding of and position on the matter and said that he would follow-up with the legislator in the following week. He then suggested that the issue is probably dead for 2015, but that he would continue working on the matter and seek to have it addressed in the General Assembly in 2016. Mrs. Anspach reported that she would be meeting with Rep. Gutwein and Governor Pence on 4 March and would be happy to bring up the topic if needed.

2015 Summit: Director Origer stated that the Summit would occur on 3 March, in Francesville, with the business meeting starting at 6:30*p.m.*, and the Summit beginning at 7:00. Dinner would be provided, and a keynote speaker from OCRA would be talking about the Hometown Collaboration Initiative. Director Origer asked if the board would prefer to host the summit at the firehouse or Cornerstone Event Center. The general consensus favored Cornerstone, citing the ambiance as being more tasteful. Sandy Saltsman with Celebrations would be catering the meal.

Establishment of a Redevelopment Commission: Director Origer stated that the infrastructure costs of a potential expansion in Winamac could be supported by tax-increment financing (TIF). He further noted that he had been contacted by Cobblestone Hotels recently in regard to a change of contact/staffing. After further discussion with the new contact, he determined that creating a TIF district could be beneficial in reducing the amount of funding required from investors. Additionally, Director Origer explained that Ball State recently published a study in which TIF funding was presented in a somewhat negative light and he is waiting to see what legislation, if any, comes out of that study before moving forward with TIF districts in Pulaski County. Mr. Plowman inquired whether a Town or County Redevelopment Commission (RC). Director Origer explained that, due to the size of the county, it would likely be a County RC, with input from each municipality considered in an decision-making.

Career and Technical Education curriculum grant: Director Origer stated that he expected an announcement to be made on Monday, 9 February, as to whether Pulaski County had been selected as a recipient.

RLF financial administration: Director Origer had met with a representative from the Regional Development Company (RDC) in the previous week. She had stated that the RDC would be able to pull credit scores (something to which the CDC has no access), along with other tools to summarize each applicant for the CDC approval committee's review, and (depending on multiple factors) complete finalization steps for a maximum of \$500 per loan. He emphasized that the final decision would still be the left up to the CDC. Director Origer proposed a restructuring of loan classifications and to contract RDC for the servicing of loans larger than \$20,000. He then proposed that the decision be turned over to the RLF committee and that a moratorium temporarily be put into place on the program until such decisions and changes had been finalized.

Motion: Mr. Plowman; second: Mr. Fritz; no discussion; approval: all.

Indiana Bicentennial: Mrs. Hinkle stated that the committee would meet with Ms. René Stanley, State Bicentennial Coordinator, on 10 February. Mrs. Hinkle also requested assistance from the members in finding committee members from the west side of the county and received several suggestions. Furthermore, she will be sending out an invitation to the Historical Society Annual Meeting, of which Ms. Stanley is a guest speaker.

Project Diesel: Director Origer stated he had not heard anything since submitting the RFI, but that the appraisals are underway for the industrial park. Director Origer also reported that a real-estate broker had visited the office on behalf of a company in Elkhart and had been pleasantly surprised about the asking price of land in the industrial park. The company is looking for roughly ten acres and would be in contact with Mr. Origer in the future.

New Business

Membership — Confirm term renewals: All five members whose terms are ending had expressed willingness to continue into a second term. These five are Becky Anspach, Bill Champion, Doug Roth, Dave Zeltwanger, and Derrick Stalbaum.

Motion: Mr. Bales; second: Vice-President Loehmer; no discussion; approval: all.

Membership — Francesville appointment: Jamie Bales would be resigning for personal reasons, effective 28 February. The Town of Francesville had appointed Darlene Mellon to take his place.

Motion: Mr. Malott; second: Mr. Fritz; no discussion; approval: all.

Membership — At-large slate: Director Origer and Councilor Roth recommended Mrs. Annie Scholz, of Alliance Bank, who had been recommended by Mr. Bales, to fill one of the two vacant seats, for a one-year term.

Motion: Mrs. Anspach; Mr. Malott; no discussion; approval: all

Membership — Officer nominations: Officer nominations are due by 3 March and should be emailed to Director Origer; nominations from the floor would be accepted at the March meeting, as well. Open positions include president, vice-president, secretary, and membership officer.

2014-2015 Achievements report: This report would be included in the program for the Annual Summit. Mrs. Anspach suggested that the benefits of such accomplishments be included in the report. No other suggestions were made.

Chamber after-hours event: Director Origer proposed to the Chamber that this spring, the CDC (with donation funds) would be the first sponsor of a Chamber After-Hours event, on the condition that the Chamber Board find two or three other member-organizations to host after-hours events. He was met with a positive response.

Other Pertinent Business

None.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

Motion: Mr. Malott; second: Mr. Plowman; no discussion; approval: all. 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrew Fritz, acting secretary