

Pulaski County Economic Development
(Pulaski County Community Development Commission)

Tuesday, 4 August 2015
Pulaski County Public Library
Medaryville, Indiana

Meeting Minutes

Members present: President Bill Champion, Membership Officer Larry Brady (County Commissioner); County Councilor Doug Roth, Darlene Mellon (Francesville); Andrew Fritz, Annie Scholz, Dave Zeltwanger; Executive Director Nathan P. Origer, Project Coordinator Krysten Hinkle. Greg Comoglio arrived at 7:05p.m.

Members absent: Vice-President Lawrence Loehmer, Secretary Gregg Malott, executive-board member John Plowman (Winamac) [medical]; Amy Jo Cantu (Chamber) [scheduling conflict]; Rebecca Anspach, Natalie Federer [scheduling conflict].

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

- Mr. Fritz: He noted that the weather has made it a weird summer, with long stretches without field time; his crops look as if they'll turn out relatively well under the circumstances. Media Day, on the following day, would be kicking off the Indiana State Fair.
- Councilor Roth: Star City Youth Baseball's season has ended. He's serving on a Council committee reviewing salaries and job descriptions and establishing a new pay matrix. Budget sessions would be taking place soon.
- Mr. Zeltwanger: DK and Sons, after a weather-slowed early summer, is booked for the rest of the year.
- Commissioner Brady: The County has a couple of open positions, including an IT manager, which the Commissioners voted to establish as a full-time position pending Council approval. The Commissioners dissolved and re-established the Emergency Management Agency (EMA) board to comply with the Indiana Code; interviews for a new EMA director would be taking place soon. The County has to cut about \$10 million from 2016-budget proposals.
- Mrs. Scholz: Former CDC member Jamie Bales left Alliance Bank for a big-bank job in downtown Chicago; Mrs. Scholz has assumed his responsibilities. She expressed concern over the pending loss of the Library branch in Medaryville. Some discussion about possible opportunities ensued.
- Mrs. Mellon: Francesville received a \$300,000 State grant for lagoon improvements. The Town has hired a new marshal, Doug Lee. With a utility employee having left, the Town has rehired former long-time employee Walter Craig.
- President Champion: He seconded that it has been a weird summer; commercial accounts have kept Fratco somewhat busy, but the weather slowed them for some time. Business has since picked up significantly, and the company is considering installing another blow molder. An open house would be taking place on the next day, beginning at 11:00; Fratco would be unveiling its new Website.
- Mr. Comoglio: Business at Plymouth Tube has leveled out; a good plan for diversification has been established, but implementation will be slow.

Old Business

Hometown Collaboration Initiative: Two weeks prior, the committee had re-grouped with Ball State's Sharon Canaday, who would be guiding them through the project-development stage of the process. Meetings would take place bi-weekly beginning on 18 August. Director Origer noted that undertaking this project at the county, rather than town, level presents both challenges and obstacles. Noting that the final project would be some sort of long-term sustainable improvement to quality of life in Pulaski County, the director explained that, upon project approval, the State would return the County's front-end investment and provide additional capital for implementation.

RLF financial administration: The financial-services agreement with the Regional Development having been fully executed, the Revolving Loan Fund had been reactivated. The director provided a quick explanation of the loan process for borrowing at different principal amounts. Director Origer further noted that Adaptasoft had paid off its loan, and that Winamac Lumber Yard expected to pay off its loan about a year early.

CAGIT-rate issue: Director Origer had met with Commissioner Terry Young regarding this matter, and the commissioner had been receptive. The director would continue to meet with other elected officials individually prior to make any public presentations or requests.

Establishment of a Redevelopment Commission: The director had no updates.

Director Origer requested that discussion of the CAGIT-rate issue and the establishment of a redevelopment commission be tabled; the members consented.

Motion: Mr. Zeltwanger; second: Commissioner Brady; no discussion; approval: all.

PC-CARE: Director Origer had recently met with Vice-President Loehmer and Messrs. Fritz and Zeltwanger, who comprise the PC-CARE committee, to review the studies of the three properties and to discuss next steps. For the sake of newer members, the director and Mr. Zeltwanger briefly described the location of the sites and provided an overview of the feasibility-study process that had been undertaken. The committee, by a two-to-one vote, had prioritized the sites from most to least desirable from north to south, the site near the North Central Co-op in Medaryville ranking above a site near the West Central Schools campus and a site near the quarries. No objections were made to this ordering.

Further discussion ensued regarding future consideration of constructing a speculative building, the strengths and challenges of speculative industrial-infrastructure development in Pulaski County (with President Champion offering observations from his past experiences), the preferred process of optioning land and then seeking federal-grant assistance for acquisition and development costs, and the director's plan for approaching landowners.

Career and Technical Education curriculum grant: Director Origer reported that he had met with West Central High School faculty on a couple of occasions recently and would be ordering the equipment for the repair-and-maintenance program soon. Answering a query from Mr. Zeltwanger, the director stated that he would be most directly be involved in the project for about another year. The director further noted that, either locally or in partnership with Starke and other Counties, he had been considering applying for a new State grant program to fund workforce-development programming for adults. Governor Pence presumably soon would be appointing Director Origer to serve on the Region 1 Works Council.

Unified Development Ordinance (zoning): The first draft of the ordinance had been reviewed locally and was currently under legal review as well; the Advisory Plan Commission would be holding a public hearing in late September prior to recommending adoption of the new ordinance, after having allowed sufficient time for public review, and it would be presented to the Commissioners for adoption in early October.

New Business

Chamber of Commerce board membership: Having explained that, per Chamber bylaws, the CDC director holds an *ex-officio* seat on the board, Director Origer, citing voluminous concerns about the leadership, direction, and internal struggles of the organization, and generally questioning the current benefit of engagement with the Chamber, informed the members that some change needed to take place, his resignation being the easiest of any options. Significant discussion ensued, with Mrs. Hinkle offering her observations, questions arising about the mission of the Chamber, and Mr. Zeltwanger pointing out how few businesses outside of Winamac belong to a countywide Chamber.

It was agreed that the director would resign, and that the Commission would decline the Chamber president's offer to have the CDC appoint a member to serve on the board at present.

Motion: Councilor Roth; second: Mrs. Mellon; no discussion; approval: all, save Mr. Comoglio, who abstained. Motion carried.

As a follow-up, Mr. Comoglio asked if a long-term benefit was being sacrificed to address short-term concerns, wondering if a continued relationship would be worthwhile if the Chamber functioned more smoothly. Director Origer opined that rebuilding the relationship with a revived Chamber would not likely be difficult.

It was decided by consensus that discussion regarding continued financial support of the Chamber would take place at a later date

Other Pertinent Business

Grant projects: Commissioner Brady reported that, on behalf of Star City, the County would be applying to the State for a planning grant to pay for an engineering study to address drainage concerns. The Kankakee-Iroquois Regional Planning Commission recently had been awarded an eight-county brownfield-assessment grant worth \$500,000.

Membership issue: Director Origer expressed concern with the infrequent attendance of one member, remarking that when present, she has proven to be a valuable and insightful member, but that her absences have exceeded her appearances, and the new position that she has taken in another county is likely only to make her engagement even more difficult. Mr. Fritz volunteered to speak with this member about the situation before any action be taken by any party.

Medaryville representation: In the course of the previous discussion, Director Origer noted that the Town of Medaryville had yet to replace Derrick Stalbaum, who had resigned upon his resignation from the town council and moving outside of the corporate limits. Mrs. Scholz volunteered to speak with the town-council president about this.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

Motion: Mr. Zeltwanger; second: Mr. Comoglio; no discussion; approval: all. 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrew Fritz, Acting Secretary