

Pulaski County Economic Development
(Pulaski County Community Development Commission)

Tuesday, 13 September 2016

Winamac Municipal Utilities Complex
Winamac, Indiana

Meeting Minutes

Members present: President Gregg Malott, Vice-President Annie Scholz; Aaron Paulsen (Chamber of Commerce), Darlene Mellon (Francesville), Suzanna Wilcoxon (Medaryville), Lawrence Loehmer (Monterey); Andrew Fritz, Dave Zeltwanger. Executive Director Nathan P. Origer, Project Coordinator Krysten Hinkle.

Members absent: Executive Secretary John Plowman [personal], Past President Bill Champion [personal], Membership Officer Larry Brady (Commissioner) [personal]; County Councilor Doug Roth [personal], Natalie Federer [personal].

Guests: Beth Grund.

Call to Order

President Malott called the meeting to order at 6:01p.m.

Consent Agenda

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

Membership Action

Director Origer presented two candidates for consideration for the at-large vacancy. Reiterating points of comparison between them, he noted that Membership Officer Larry Brady had recommended Beth Grund. The members appointed her.

Motion: Mr. Fritz; second: Mrs. Mellon; no discussion; approval: all.

Ms. Grund then joined the meeting, and introductions took place.

Old Business

Hometown Collaboration Initiative: Traffic counts had been completed under budget. Jasper and Fulton Counties had granted approval to include their roads in the routes, and Director Origer would be seeking Starke County's approval in two weeks. A soft-opening event could take place at TorchFest, but progress was running behind the aggressive schedule.

PC-CARE: Landowners had rejected the initial purchase-price cap established by the Advisory Commission on Industrial Development (ACID), so Director Origer asked if he could use the \$50,000 appropriated in the budget for land acquisition to supplement whatever funds the ACID would ultimately allow him to expend out of the proceeds from the sale of County-owned farmland.

Significant discussion ensued regarding negotiating the purchase price, the method of disposing of the County Farm, what would the sale not generate enough revenue, and the development potential of the Medaryville land. The director's request was approved on the condition that the sale of the County farmland generate enough funds that, along with the \$50,000, it cover the entirety of the final agreed-upon purchase price.

Motion: Vice-President Scholz; second: Mr. Zeltwanger; further discussion ensued:

Mr. Loehmer reiterated the need for ensuring that adequate funds for purchase be secured prior to entering into any agreement. Mr. Zeltwanger cautioned against tying the director's hands too tightly. Mr. Fritz enquired regarding any potential residency requirements for purchase.

Approval: all

Career and Technical Education curriculum grant: The two Intro to Advanced Manufacturing classes at West Central High School have a combined enrollment of about 45 students; teacher Tyler DeMoss had reported a strong start. County Attorney Kevin Tankersley had been working on a contract for the adjunct teacher to serve as an independent contractor for the County "on loan" to West Central. Because budget adjustments needed to accommodate the unexpected hiring of the adjunct had left the program unable to pay for all of the training modules, Director Origer requested between \$6,000 and \$7,000 from the CDC budget to support this program and to keep it compliant with State grant requirements. His request was approved.

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

2017 budget: Contrary to what the director initially had been told, the project-coordinator position had not been budgeted to be full-time in 2017; however, further conversation regarding the matter could be held with the Council and Commissioners in joint session. Members reiterated their support for fully funding the position, and many said that they would try to attend the joint session in a show of support, with Mr. Zeltwanger commending the staff by way of referring to them as the “Dynamic Duo”. The president and vice-president urged the director to prepare a report highlighting the office’s productivity, which accomplishments would not have occurred without Mrs. Hinkle, and where the CDC falls behind because of inadequate staffing.

Wage-and-benefit survey: While Director Origer waits to see what relevant data the County’s insurer could provide, the project remains on hold; the Pulaski County Human Resources Group would be evaluating it in October.

Francesville and Winamac Main Street organizations: Both communities’ groups had submitted their applications to Indiana Main Street and would soon be learning of the State’s decisions. The director, Mrs. Mellon, and Winamac Clerk-Treasurer Melanie Berger and Town Manager Brad Zellers had recently attended the Frankfort Community Exchange. Mrs. Mellon observed there that good leadership gets things done. Director Origer agreed to Mrs. Mellon’s request to serve as part of Francesville’s UpTown Project leadership; he currently serves as secretary of Wander Our Winamac!

Adopt-a-river program: Until the office’s work burden had diminished, this would remain on the backburner, which seemed to be reasonable given the nearing of the end of tourism season.

Pulaski County TorchFest: Planning has come along nicely, with a wide variety of events and live entertainment scheduled. Staff requested access to no more than \$3,000 from the Professional Services appropriation to help to cover costs. The request was approved.

Motion: Mr. Loehmer; second: Mr. Zeltwanger; no discussion; approval: all.

New Business

CDC future structure/reorganization: During the director’s budget meeting, prior discussion about merging economic- and community-development, planning and zoning, and building functions into one department were revisited, and County Council President Jay Sullivan asked Director Origer to broach this topic with the CDC. The director noted that he finds this to be worth considering, but is not certain if it is the wisest approach. Mr. Loehmer, Advisory Plan Commission president, expressed some skepticism. President Malott suggested that the director prepare an organizational chart showing how such a department would be structured.

Relationship with Pulaski County Farmers’ Market: Director Origer requested that if Mrs. Hinkle work full-time in 2017, and possibly even if not, then the CDC and the Farmers’ Market enter into a formal contract for Mrs. Hinkle to serve as market master. This would allow Mrs. Hinkle to be paid for her considerable time investment, and for the CDC to be recognized as a corporate sponsor. She explained that she would have undertaken this venture even without her current employment, but that all successful markets pay their market masters, and that she would like to be able to phase-out her own in-depth engagement. Consensus favored the proposal.

Other Business Deemed to Be Necessary

Community Foundation community forum: The Community Foundation of Pulaski County would be conducting a forum on the following Monday evening at Bethel Bible Church to solicit community input on its strategic planning for the next few years. Mrs. Hinkle would be representing the CDC, and members were encouraged to attend if able.

Francesville Fall Festival: Mrs. Mellon encouraged all in attendance to enjoy the festivities over the coming weekend.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

Motion: Mrs. Mellon; second: Vice-President Scholz; no discussion; approval all.
7:18p.m.

Nathan P. Origer, Executive Director/Administrative Secretary *pro tempore*
Dave Zeltwanger, Executive Secretary *pro tempore*