

***Pulaski County
Community Development Commission***

Tuesday, 12 September 2017

Winamac Municipal Utilities Complex
Winamac, Indiana

Meeting Minutes

Members present: President Gregg Malott, Vice-President Annie Scholz, Membership Officer Doug Roth (County Council), executive-board member Lawrence Loehmer (Monterey); Aaron Paulsen (Chamber), Darlene Mellon (Francesville); Bill Champion, Beth Grund, Dave Zeltwanger. Executive Director Nathan P. Origer, Project Coordinator Krysten Hinkle.

Members absent: Executive Secretary John Plowman (Winamac) [business]; Laura Wheeler (Commissioners), Suzanna Wilcoxon (Medaryville); Ross Davis, Doug Hoffman, Samantha Williams [business].

Call to Order

President Malott called the meeting to order at 6:03p.m.

Consent Agenda

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

New Business

Revolving Loan Fund request: Tippy's: Director Origer presented the Commission with the risk-rating report for Tippy's loan request. He explained that the report had been provided by the Regional Development Company, following their review. The project scored a four out of eight, which, the director noted, and Vice-President Scholz seconded with respect to Alliance Bank policies, typically is strong enough to be approved. The requested funds would cover relocation expenses, including an enlarged dining room, additional tables and chairs, required ventilation upgrades, a walk-in cooler, and other general construction work that is required to transform the space to become restaurant-friendly. Mrs. Jimenez is requesting \$40,000, although she likely won't need the entire amount. The current balance in the Revolving Loan Fund is \$112,585, with all borrowers in good standing. Extensive discussion ensued, and the Commission recommended the request to the County Commissioners for final approval.

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

Pulaski County tax-revenue concerns: Director Origer explained that the County's levy-freeze tax (.04%) is not allowed to be ended or decreased, and that any excess revenue is deposited into a Stabilization Fund. Due to population loss, and the consequential loss of income-tax revenue, funds from the Stabilization Fund have been withdrawn slowly over time to the point of depletion. The County received \$730,000 less than if it were able to tax at the .083% maximum rate. The town of Winamac is receiving \$95,000 less, with the total deficit for all municipalities being greater than \$1,000,000. Given that the population of Pulaski County has decreased by more than 700 in the last six years, and the number of seniors, much of whose income is not taxed, has increased by nearly 150, the County Council is beginning to look at other ways to sustain County finances without relying so heavily on income taxes. Director Origer pointed out that revelation of this situation goes hand-in-hand with the need for an updated CDC strategic visioning to determine how and where the Commission should be focusing its efforts.

Old Business

2017 strategic visioning: Director Origer provided the Commission with an overview of rural-development strategies that had been recommended by the USDA, the most relevant sections of the 2010 plan, and input from committee members. Discussion ensued regarding current efforts, school funding, educational attainment, progress that has been made, and stagnated efforts. The committee would be meeting to discuss these matters in greater detail.

Hometown Collaboration Initiative: Pricing quotations for bike-route brochures had been received, with the only delay being the uncertainty of the proposed Panhandle Pathway northward

extension, because a couple of routes would likely overlap part of the trail. Director Origer was awaiting word from the Friends of the Panhandle Pathway as to where they believe the Pathway will end up going. Local printers had not been quick in responding to quotations requests for bike-route signage. The director noted that he may request a time extension from the Office of Community and Rural Affairs.

RAM-Tech program: No updates, other than a meeting is planned between Director Origer and the teachers to review the program thus far. On a related note, however, the CDC and Superior Court Judge Kocher had been in discussion over providing a training and employment program with work-release participants in Pulaski County, rather than Logansport and Delphi.

Wage-and-benefit survey: Director Origer reported that the surveys would be going out to employers later in the week.

Adopt-a-River program: Signs had been printed, received, and mounted. They would be installed sometime in the next month.

Leadership Pulaski County: Nothing to report.

PC-CARE: Director Origer had spoken with a possible tenant, although with the County's unwillingness to initiate the land purchase, the tenant again had begun looking at other sites.

Tax-abatement process: The director had taken no further action on this, but no abatement requests had been made recently, either.

Other Pertinent Business

Chamber of Commerce: Mr. Paulsen reported that the Chamber had gained several new members over the course of the last month.

Francesville Fall Festival: Mrs. Mellon reported that Festival planning had been coming along swimmingly, and the event would occur in just a few days.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

Motion: Mr. Paulsen; second: Mr. Champion; no discussion; approval: all. 7:04p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Krysten Hinkle, Administrative Secretary
Bill Champion, Executive Secretary *pro tempore*