

***Pulaski County
Community Development Commission***

Tuesday, 10 September 2019

Winamac Municipal Utilities Complex
Winamac, Indiana

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, 6 August 2019

Monterey Town Hall
Monterey, Indiana

Members present: President Gregg Malott, Vice-President Beth Grund, Secretary Sheila Jimenez (Winamac), Membership Officer Doug Roth; County Councilor Jay Sullivan, Doug Denton (Monterey); Tony Holliday, Samantha Williams, Kelsie Zellers. Executive Director Nathan P. Origer, Project Coordinator Krysten Hinkle, intern Emerald Blankenship.

Members absent: board member Brandon DeLorenzo [business]; County Commissioner Kenny Becker, Aaron Paulsen (Chamber); Darlene Mellon (Francesville) [personal]; Suzanna Wilcoxon (Medaryville) [civic] [personal].

Guests present: County Councilor Brian Young.

Call to Order

President Malott called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m.

Consent Agenda

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

Old Business

Strategic visioning/Pulaski County tax-revenue concerns: The County Council had been working with department heads on budget drafts to bring down budgets for 2020 in preparation for the financial hardships on the horizon. Councilor Sullivan confirmed the Council had been asking all departments to reduce their spending budgets by 10% and had approved thawing the levy freeze, which would increase revenue by about \$190,000 from 2019 to 2020. Financial consultant Jeff Peters would be appearing before the County Council on 26 August following department budget meetings. Items up for discussion would include property-tax-removal, adjustment to local-income-tax rate, and seeking legislative relief to increase the maximum levy as the Council works to fix finances without causing more harm.

PC-CARE: Per Chuck Mudd at Monon Northern (MN), CSX would not be selling the line, so MN would be amending its plans. Things are moving forward with the Putt family's project. Director Origer suggested removing the item from futures agenda until it would become relevant again.

RAM-Tech program: RAM-Tech instructor Dave Reif had retired, but would be returning to the classroom; Director Origer would connect with him a few days after the 9-August first day of classes at West Central. The director would like to begin conversations with new leadership at Eastern Pulaski about opening RAM-Tech to Winamac students.

Leadership Pulaski County: Mrs. Hinkle had little to report, other than that progress was underway, and the program was coming together.

Passageways' OnBoard meeting-packet software: Director Origer spoke with Passageways, and they purportedly would be addressing the request for a refund; the director would follow-up with them in the coming days.

Workforce-gap project: Demand continues to exist for investigating the possibility of workforce busing, with JSI most recently having expressed interest in participating. Director Origer would resume conversations with Northwest Indiana partners to try to move this plan forward.

Adopt-a-River: The recycling pilot at the Winamac Town Park had failed, but the program was succeeding otherwise. Pulaski site adopter Beth DuBois had begun planning a river clean-up day. Ms. Blankenship had been working on phase three, or the project, mile-marker signage.

2020 budget: At the County Council's request, the director had cut an additional \$6,000 out of Marketing, which was still up \$3,000 from 2019. With 10% raises, the 2020 budget would be 9.8% lower than 2019's, and with no raises, it would be down 13.8%. Director Origer reported that he may shift more from Professional Services to Marketing based on potentially increased marketing efforts. The primary source of the reduction is the removal of the \$50,000 Land Acquisition appropriation. Upon the president's recommendation, the budget was retroactively approved.

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

Regional broadband project: No update at this time.

New Business

2018-2019 achievements report: Approved as presented

Motion: Mr. Denton; second: Mrs. Zellers; no discussion; approval: all.

2019 tourism-marketing review: According to data from April through June, the tourism website had received the most traffic when website takeovers and commercials had occurred in the same timeframe. Director Origer proposed recommended planning to purchase fewer commercials in 2020, but in better timeslots coordinated with takeovers. He and Mrs. Hinkle would be discussing plans with a revived tourism advisory committee before making final recommendations to the Commission, but they had developed some preliminary ideas for with which partners to continue working and to end relationships. Additionally, a website upgrade to encourage deeper visits would continue to be pursued.

Discussion ensued regarding surveying river tourists about how they had heard about Pulaski County and the likelihood of their staying overnight if lodging was available/etc. Councilman Young mentioned the Tippecanoe River State Park (TRSP) had conducted a survey of its guests in the past. Staff approach TRSP/DNR to learn more.

Revolving Loan Fund matters: Director Origer reported on the possibility of a small-business-sale application's coming before the Commission in September, noting that approximately \$90,000 remained in the fund.

IBC Thermoplastics' tariff would not likely be waived, adding to the obstacles that Mr. Voranoff had been facing in his path to starting operations. The commissioners had extended his interest-only payments from six months to up to an additional year, as his machine remained with Customs awaiting Mr. Voranoff's payment. Director Origer would follow-up with Customs to confirm the status and existence of machine. The director brought forward a request that IBC Thermoplastics' payment be forborne; the request was denied.

Motion: Secretary Jimenez; second: Councilor Sullivan; no discussion; vote: 4-5; motion failed.

Other Pertinent Business

None.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

Motion: Mr. Denton; second: Councilor Sullivan; no discussion; approval: all.

7:11p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Emerald Blankenship, summer intern/Recording Secretary *pro tempore*
Sheila Jimenez, Secretary