

***Pulaski County
Community Development Commission***

Tuesday, 6 October 2020
Monterey Town Hall
Monterey, Indiana

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, 1 September 2020
Medaryville Christian Church annex
Medaryville, Indiana

Members present: President Doug Roth, *Secretary Sheila Jimenez (Winamac)*, Membership Officer Kelsie Zellers, Suzanna Wilcoxon (Medaryville); Christy Coon, Tony Holliday, Blake Kasten. Executive Director Nathan P. Origer.

Members absent: Board member Brandon DeLorenzo [business]; County Commissioner Ken Becker, County Councilor Jay Sullivan, Aaron Paulsen (Chamber), Doug Denton (Monterey); Brian Ledley [personal].

Guests present: Francesville Town Council President Lynn Johns, *Larry Brady, Erica Dombey, and unidentified and uncounted other livestream viewers.*

(Roman text indicates in-person attendance; *italics indicate telephone (members)/online (guests) attendance.*)

Call to Order

President Roth called the meeting to order at 6:00 *p.m.* Director Origer thanked Mrs. Wilcoxon and the Medaryville Christian Church for the space as well as thanking Mrs. Wilcoxon for the doughnuts that she provided from Medaryville's Main Street Bakery, operated by the family of Revolving Loan Fund borrower Casey Williams.

Consent Agenda

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

Membership Action

Francesville seat: Director Origer introduced Francesville Town Council President Lynn Johns, who had stepped up to replace Darlene Mellon as the Town's representative; the members voted to confirm his appointment.

Motion: Mr. Holliday; second: Mrs. Coon; no discussion; approval: all.

At-large appointment: The director and Mrs. Zellers presented three candidates who had expressed interest in filling the seat vacated by former Vice-President Beth (Grund) Bales, who had resigned upon relocation from Pulaski County. After discussing what each candidate could bring to the Commission and the Commission's objectives in building its membership, the members voted to appoint Breann Wilson, of the Medaryville area, pending acceptance by the Board of Commissioners.

Motion: Secretary Jimenez; second: Mrs. Wilcoxon; no discussion; approval: all.

Officer Election

Vice-president: Secretary Jimenez expressed interest in replacing Mrs. Bales if someone else would agree to serve as secretary. Mrs. Zellers volunteered to serve as both secretary and membership officer, and Mrs. Coon agreed to fill a fifth spot on the executive board. No other members expressed interest in board service, and this slate was approved.

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

Mid-year Financial Review

The director reviewed the provided report, pointing out the significantly higher appropriation for the L.I.T. – Economic Development fund than had been adopted in 2020 and than is typically the case. Director Origer explained that, because he had been appointed to coordinate the County's courthouse and justice-center projects, funding for consultants' fees had been appropriated for the Commission's budget to streamline payment processes and recordkeeping. Noting that the year-end balance for the fund was expected to drop below \$1-million, the director further explained that, at the discretion of the Board of Commissioners and County Council, many of the project costs incurred could be reimbursed upon issuance of the bonds for the projects. Otherwise, spending was slightly lower than normal due to COVID-19-based restrictions on meetings and travel.

Director Origer had little to report on the Commission's donation fund. He then provided updates on the revolving loan fund.

Old Business

Revolving Loan Fund matters: The director reported that the G&G Guns loan had been repaid in full well ahead of schedule, and that one borrower was slightly behind on repayment. He had continued working with IBC Thermoplastics, where progress had remained slow, but expressed frustration with the continued delays. Members urged him to continue working patiently with Mr. Voranoff, particularly given that he recently had made a significant payment and that the County's long-term interests lie in seeing the business succeed, and not in taking possession of the property and machinery purchased with proceeds from the County loan.

Leadership Pulaski County: Purdue Extension – Pulaski County had hired a part-time community-development project manager to oversee the program, and the revived advisory committee had been meeting on a monthly basis. Due to COVID-19–related concerns, implementation of the program had been delayed to 2021, but the program manager would be lining up instructors, employer-sponsors, and class locations and marketing the program to potential participants in the interim.

Strategic visioning/Pulaski Co. budget concerns/path forward: The director reported gleefully that the County Council had recently adopted an ordinance to lower the Pulaski County Local Income Tax rate, reducing it from a state-highest 3.38 percent to 2.85 percent, no longer the highest in Indiana. Director Origer expressed some concern over the specifics of the new rate allocation, but noted that this could always change and is a minor issue relative to the bigger problem fixed by the Council's decision.

2020 tourism-marketing efforts: Director Origer reported having heard more concerns about river traffic for shoreline residents than in the last few years; he had received word that Tippecanoe River State Park had been tracking toward a record year and reported that the County's tourism website has seen the best monthly traffic ever in June, July, and August.

2020 tourism-marketing efforts — Adopt-a-River: This year's efforts covered more of the Tippecanoe than 2019's inaugural clean-up, with DNR staff from the state park and the Winamac Fish & Wildlife Area adopting sections. A significant amount of debris had been removed from the river, and a number of local businesses provided support in the form of food for volunteers, supplies, or helping to handle the removed trash.

Significant discussion ensued regarding further improving tourism efforts, better capitalizing on tourism (including revisiting the hotel question), and balancing such efforts with respecting the needs of residents (including working more closely with businesses that rely on the river). Vice-President Jimenez reported that Tippy's and other downtown restaurants had seen an uptick in out-of-county business from river floaters this year given that Riverside Rentals had discontinued its bus-trip floats, and all customers have had to arrive separately in their own vehicles.

2021 budget: The director reported that he had requested special joint session of the Board of Commissioners and County Council with Building and Planning staff, hoping that the elected bodies could provide clear guidance regarding their expectations of the two departments and how such expectations could be met based on Council decisions regarding staffing of the two departments.

CoViD-19 response: Director Origer had been continuing to serve on the County's Incident Management Team.

The Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs recently had awarded a \$250,000 grant to Pulaski County to grant to small businesses to help them to overcome negative impacts suffered due to the 2020 pandemic. The Commission would review all submitted applications and then make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners. K-IRPC likely would be responsible for grant-administration services.

Additionally, the County had been allocated funding through the federal CARES Act to direct toward efforts to address improvements to operations in the COVID/post-COVID world.

New Business

Mammoth Solar: Director Origer briefly updated the members on the status of the proposed Mammoth Solar project, detailing argued pros and cons and explaining the process.

Other Pertinent Business

None.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

Motion: Vice-President Jimenez; second: Mrs. Coon; no discussion; approval: all 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan P. Origer, Executive Director/Recording Secretary
Kelsie Zellers, Secretary