

***Pulaski County
Community Development Commission
Strategic Visioning Committee***

Tuesday, 3 August 2021
Monterey Town Hall
Winamac, Indiana

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, 7 July 2021
Winamac Municipal Utilities Complex
Winamac, Indiana

Members present: President/Committee Chair Sheila Jimenez (Winamac) *Membership Officer Kelsie Zellers*; County Commissioner Maurice Loehmer, County Councilor Kathleen Thompson, Lynn Johns (Francesville); *Bill Champion*. Executive Director Nathan P. Origer.

Members absent: None.

Guests present: None.

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

Call to Order

President Jimenez called the meeting to order at 5:00 *p.m.*

Work-to-Date/Format Review

The director asked for feedback regarding the layout and formatting of the working document and regarding anything in the content that needed to be amended after he had fleshed out the language from previous conversations. Members approved of the formatting and layout.

Councilor Thompson suggested that some entrepreneurial-development programming may be better suited for another organization, rather than the Commission; Director Origer agreed but for the lack of adequate staffing and funding for other entities in the community. Discussion ensued regarding potentially earmarking part of the Revolving Loan Fund for the proposed business-pitch competition, with the president expressing opposition to this idea.

Regarding business-retention efforts, Mr. Champion noted that the community is working against demographic trends and needs to emphasize efforts to counter this in working to keep existing employers competitive locally.

Regarding tourism-development efforts, specifically with respect to accommodations development and facilitating partnerships among existing tourist attractions, Councilor Thompson noted that the absence of rental vehicles nearby may be an obstacle to maximizing potential on this front. The president suggested that, in the absence of progress developing a hotel, compiling a comprehensive list of local property owners offering homes through VRBO and AirBnB and publishing it on the County's website may be an advisable project.

The president reported, regarding housing, that she had recently had conversations with local builders who had expressed interest in developing apartments, but had struggled to find available property that could be developed or redeveloped easily.

President Jimenez asked if the Pulaski County Tribe could include a list of daycare providers in their new-resident welcome baskets; Mrs. Zellers suggested that she thought that they do, and the director agreed to enquire. It was noted that Pulaski County Human Services likely has a comprehensive list.

Key Action Steps Review

Metrics: The members agreed that the Metrics K.A.S. should be removed entirely, while the Commission's Executive Board should revise the director's performance-evaluation form to weigh programmatic outcomes more heavily.

Pulaski County's Fiscal Health: Discussion of this occurred within the context of staffing issues within County government.

New Key Action Steps to be Considered: Discussion here focused largely on addressing staffing the Commission adequately and structuring other County departments that work closely with or rely on the director so as to allow the Commission's staff to focus on implementing the

strategic plan and other development-oriented programming. Mr. Champion cautioned against approaching staffing issues hastily, while the president suggested that the matter be framed in terms of “If you want X to happen, then this is what staffing is required for that to happen.” Reviewing the various restructuring/staffing options provided by Director Origer, Councilor Thompson suggested that the list be narrowed to one or two preferred options before being presented to the Board of Commissioners and Council.

President Jimenez emphasized the need on addressing the Commission’s staffing first before looking at personnel issues elsewhere in the County, and Commissioner Loehmer suggested that there may not be a significant need for additional staffing for building-inspection purposes.

The director would clean up existing language regarding Key Action Steps, implement the input from this conversation into the draft document, and provide an updated draft to the members for review prior to the 3-August full-Commission meeting.

Partner Priority Review

Community Foundation of Pulaski County: No discussion.

Building/Planning/Zoning: Discussion of this occurred within the context of staffing issues within County government.

Other Business Determined to be Necessary

Human Resources: As an outgrowth of the discussion of County staffing issues, Councilor Thompson raised concerns about how human-resources issues are managed within the County, and discussion ensued about how the County might more efficiently and effectively handle such matters. The president suggested that the County should look into provided ongoing ethics training for its employees.

Adjournment

Motion: Councilor Thompson; second: Commissioner Loehmer; no discussion; approval: all. 6:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan P. Origer,
Executive Director/Recording Secretary