

***Pulaski County  
Community Development Commission***

Tuesday, 2 November 2021  
Winamac Municipal Utilities Complex  
Winamac, Indiana

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, 3 August 2021  
Monterey Town Hall  
Monterey, Indiana

Members present: *President Sheila Jimenez (Winamac)*, Secretary Doug Denton (Monterey), Membership Officer Kelsie Zellers, board member Brandon DeLorenzo; County Commissioner Maurice Loehmer, *County Councilor Kathleen Thompson*, Aaron Paulsen (Chamber), *Lynn Johns (Francesville) (through 6:10 p.m.)*, Arthur Conley (Medaryville); Bill Champion, Blake Kasten, Brian Ledley. Executive Director Nathan P. Origer.

Members absent: Vice-President Christy Coon [personal]; Lynn Johns (Francesville) (after 6:10 p.m.); Breann Wilson [personal].

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

Call to Order

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

Consent Agenda

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

Old Business

*Revolving Loan Fund matters — general updates:* The director reported that all borrower remained in good or mostly good standing with the ongoing exception of IBC Thermoplastics. Members expressed frustration with this situation, suggesting that the Commission had shown more than enough patience with Mr. Voranoff, and that the director should speak with the County's attorney regarding bringing forth some manner of remedy to the situation.

*Revolving Loan Fund matters — program review:* The director reported that the program-review process would remain on hold until the County's attorney had submitted comment.

*Membership terms:* The director reported that he had still failed to find a replacement for Doug Roth in the nonexempt-manufacturing seat and suggested that this matter be tabled until near the end of the term year; members agreed.

*OCRA CDBG COVID-19 relief grants, round 3:* The director presented the final grant-recipient list, as had been approved by those members present at the June meeting and amended per their instructions, and reported that the State had approved the list. The director had been putting together individual grant claims and would be working with the Auditor's Office to get all paperwork in order to get the funds transferred from the State and distributed to the businesses. Between the two County rounds and the Town of Winamac's round, \$637,500 in grants will have been distributed once all checks had cleared.

*Solar-energy development generally:* The director reiterated that the Board of Zoning Appeals would be conducting a public hearing in late September regarding NextEra's Moss Creek Solar project, which would be significantly smaller than the Mammoth Solar project. Director Origer noted that NextEra is a well-established developer currently building the NIPSCO project in Jasper County. The director further reported that Judge Hall's final deadline for submissions in the Mammoth-petition case had passed, so a ruling would be forthcoming; it would likely be the case that an appeal would be made regardless of the judge's determination.

*2022 budget:* The director had submitted his draft after approval by those members present at the June meeting; he presented and briefly reviewed it, noting that he had reduced some personnel-cost line items based on guidance from the County Council regarding pay-increase request and further noting that he would be appearing before the County Council at 10:00 *a.m.* on Tuesday, 24 August. Councilor Thompson encouraged members to accompany him to defend the budget,

specifically regarding reinstating a second staff person in the office, to the Council; Mr. Champion agreed to attend.

#### New Business

*Strategic visioning — first draft of plan update:* The director presented the draft that the Strategic Visioning Committee had approved, providing a brief report on the process thus far, the plan moving forward, and an overview of each proposed Key Action Step and changes to their 2010 outlines, and asked for input from the members before approving the draft. Discussion ensued regarding content generation for a revived newsletter; addressing the community's housing stock; local Main Street organizations, the State's Stellar Communities program, and the State's READI regional-development program; the trade-off between keeping taxes lower and investing in amenities; County-staffing alignment, right-sizing, and outsourcing; and timelines for implementing objectives and evaluating successes, with the members agreeing that the committee should remain intact after plan adoption to monitor implementation and to fine-tune timelines. The members approved the first draft as presented.

**Motion: Mr. Paulsen; second: Mr. Champion; no discussion; approval: all.**

*2021 Economic Development Summit:* The Summit would be taking place on Tuesday, 5 October, in Medaryville. Mr. Conley confirmed that the annex of the Medaryville Christian Church would be the best venue; the director would be contacting church staff and confirming the slated keynote speaker, Ball State University economist Dr. Michael Hicks.

*Solar-energy development — Mammoth Solar abatement:* The director reported that Mammoth Solar would be requesting a 20-year, 100-percent tax abatement on its proposed investment with an economic-development agreement with guaranteed annual payments offered in exchange. Director Origer provided an overview of how tax abatements work and outlined the benefits and concerns of such an arrangement. Discussion ensued regarding how the revenue from the proposed economic-development agreement might be distributed; if any losses might be realized by taxing units on account of this abatement, which would not be the case unless a unit chose not to receive its entirely levy, or a unit incurred additional tax-cap losses due to the abatement, either of which would be a minimal loss; and Director Origer's intentions for seeking more-favorable terms for the County in the agreement. The director asked the members to consider the matter further and to come to him with any questions or concerns that they may have prior to future Commission discussion of the issue.

*Virtual meeting-attendance policy:* Recent State legislation having established parameters for videoconference attendance at public meetings outside of a state of public emergency, the director enquired as to members' interest in this. Councilor Thompson noted that the County's attorney had been working on a resolution for the County; the members agreed to hold off on this matter until the attorney had finished his work. The director would research whether a County resolution would be a blanket rule for all governing bodies, or if the Commission would have to adopt its own resolution.

#### Other Pertinent Business

*None.*

#### Public Comment

*None.*

#### Adjournment

**Motion: President Jimenez; second: Mr. Champion; no discussion; approval: all 7:52 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan P. Origer, Executive Director/Recording Secretary  
Doug Denton, Secretary