

***Pulaski County
Community Development Commission***

Tuesday, 13 September 2022

Fratco Production Plant

Francesville, Indiana

Meeting Notes

Tuesday, 7 June 2022

Monterey Town Hall

Monterey, Indiana

Members present: President Sheila Jimenez (Winamac), Vice-President Maurice Loehmer (Commissioners), board member Kathi Thompson (Council); Doug Denton (Monterey), Bill Champion, Blake Kasten. Executive Director Nathan P. Origer, Assistant Taylor Bailey.

Members absent: Secretary Brandon DeLorenzo, Membership Officer Kelsie Zellers; Lynn Johns (Francesville), Art Conley (Medaryville); Christy Coon [business], Brian Ledley [personal], Breann Wilson [personal].

Guests present None.

Call to Order

President Jimenez called the meeting to order at 6:11 *p.m.*; Director Origer noted the absence of a quorum and reported that Leslie Hanson had resigned her Chamber-appointee seat.

Consent Agenda

Without a quorum present, the Commission could not approve the consent agenda.

Monthly Reports

Executive Director's report: The director highlighted the responsibilities that had kept him busy over the previous month, particularly the justice-center construction project and agricultural-partner business-retention reports.

Financial report: The director provided a midyear update on the Commission's budgets and the Local Income Tax–Economic Development Fund, noting that the office budget and Fund were in good shape, NIPSCO had made a \$2,500 contribution to the Donation Fund, and the Revolving Loan Fund's balance had grown back to nearly \$90,000. Commissioner Loehmer enquired as to the timing of re-opening the loan program; the director noted that the County's attorney would need to sign off on proposed changes before the process could begin. Councilor Thompson asked about progress with the attorney, and Director Origer stated that he had spoken with the attorney recently and learned that he would soon be reviewing the proposed amendments to the program's guidelines. The director had been contacted by a few parties potentially interested in borrowing from the program, but none of them had followed up in earnest.

Monthly calendar: Director Origer highlighted construction projects — courthouse rehabilitation, Highway-garage roof replacement, and the work-release facility in the justice-center basement —; the Aspirations-in-Action housing symposium and Wabash Heartland Innovation Network roadshow; and the Ball State economic-development training for elected officials as key events and appointments over the following two-plus months.

Strategic Plan Implementation Report

The Main Street Winamac launch committee would be meeting on the next day with a focus on planning starter projects to create momentum for the organization. The Housing Resource Hub consultants had provided an update on the market-potential study that they had commissioned, and the director had been working with them on assessing some potential properties for residential development.

The director had been holding aforementioned agricultural-partner business-retention meetings as part of the regional agricultural-development strategy project; he reported briefly on some of the results of the surveys that he had been conducting: improved internet access had proven to be a common theme.

The first revived CDC coffee hour would tentatively be scheduled for later in June; the director would attempt to have a different local elected official or other person of interest join him for

each quarterly session; the *Economic Development Digest* quarterly newsletter would be resurrected in either July or September, possibly the former, when the director would have a summer intern in the office.

Old Business

Revolving Loan Fund matters — general updates: The County's attorney had begun foreclosure proceedings against the owners of the IBC Thermoplastics property on County Road 200 South but had been managing the process slowly in hopes of allowing the owners to sell the property in an effort to reduce costs and complications for all parties. All other borrowers remained in good standing.

Revolving Loan Fund matters — program review: The director reiterated that the program remained suspended pending legal review and adoption of proposed rule changes.

Solar-energy development: The Board of Commissioners had amended the County's unified development ordinance to permit solar-energy developments by right; objecting property owners had filed suit against the County over this decision. The director confirmed for Councilor Thompson that the ordinance amendments would be in full effect despite the legal challenge until such time as a judge might rule against the County in the matter.

New Business

2023 budget: The director presented and reviewed his Executive Board-approved budget draft, with slight necessary amendments that he had needed to make in the interim, for full-Commission consideration. Director Origer noted that he would be asking the Board of Commissioners and Council to amend the County's personnel handbook to adjust his workweek from 35 hours to 40 at least for the duration of the courthouse-construction project, noting that the budget reflected this; discussion ensued regarding the sufficiency of this adjustment. The absence of a quorum precluded the members from formally approving the proposal, but they approved it by consensus.

Strategic Plan Implementation C.D.C. restructuring: Reflecting on the troubles with obtaining quorums at recent meetings, including at the April meeting prior to the Economic Development Summit; the lack of access to tools afforded to statutory development commissions; and conversations with Mr. Champion regarding these matters, the director expressed his interest in expediting the review of and potential adjustment to or overhaul of the Commission's structure as part of Key Action Step X., "Institutional Capacity Building", of the updated strategic plan. He reviewed the proposal for undertaking this process that he had drafted; significant discussion ensued, with Councilor Thompson expressing her support, and Mr. Champion suggesting that it would create a much more effective and focused organization. The members approved the director's taking this to the Board of Commissioners and Council in joint session on the following Monday by consensus.

Other Pertinent Business

None.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

Motion: Councilor Thompson; second: Mr. Champion; no discussion; approval: all
7:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan P. Origer, Executive Director/Recording Secretary *pro tempore*