

***Pulaski County  
Community Development Commission***

Tuesday, 7 March 2023  
Winamac Municipal Utilities Complex  
Winamac, Indiana

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, 1 November 2022  
Winamac Municipal Utilities Complex  
Winamac, Indiana

Special Bylaws Meeting

Members present: President Sheila Jimenez (Winamac), Secretary Brandon DeLorenzo, Membership Officer Kelsie Zellers, board member Kathi Thompson (County Council); Doug Denton (Monterey), Lynn Johns (Francesville); Bill Champion. Executive Director Nathan P. Origer, Assistant Taylor Bailey.

Members absent: Vice-President Maurice Loehmer (County Commissioners); Art Conley (Medaryville) [business]; Christy Coon, Blake Kasten, Brian Ledley, Breann Wilson [personal].

Guests present: None.

Call to Order

President Jimenez called the meeting to order at 6:31 *p.m.*

Proposed Bylaws Amendment

*Temporary Suspension of §§2.4, 2.5, 2.7.1, 2.7.2., 2.8.1., and 2.11:* The director reviewed the bylaws targeted for suspension, reiterating that in light of the possibility of significant restructuring of the Commission in 2023, it seemed unnecessary to address term limits and vacancies at the time; in the event that reorganization would not occur, or would occur in a less-substantial manner, the targeted bylaws would resume being effective in early 2024, with current members each adding one year to their three-year terms. The members approved the suspension of these bylaws.

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

Adjournment

**Motion: Councilor Thompson; second: Mr. Champion; no discussion; approval: all**  
6:34 *p.m.*

Regular Meeting

Members present: Same as above.

Members absent: Same as above.

Guests present: None.

Call to Order

President Jimenez called the meeting to order at 6:35 *p.m.*

Consent Agenda

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

Monthly Reports

*Executive director's report:* Director Origer reported on the Ball State presentation by David Terrell presented as part of the Community Foundation's Forward Thinking Leadership educational programming; the status of the work-release, Highway-roof, and courthouse-rehabilitation projects; the County Council's adjustment of the income-tax-rate reallocation; the UPTOWN Project's ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Francesville Market; Panhandle Pathway extension efforts to be funded by a recently announced \$2.5-million State grant.

*Financial report:* Director Origer estimated a year-end cash balance of between \$1.1- and \$1.2-million in the Local Income Tax – Economic Development Fund, as well as a \$580,000 c.d. The donation fund was also reviewed.

*Monthly calendar:* The director noted a slough of year-end holiday closures and that the first tentative meeting of the new year would be on 17 January.

### Strategic Plan Implementation Report

*Implementation, generally:* The Report had been distributed electronically; the director encouraged members to contact him with any questions.

*C.D.C. restructuring:* Director Origer expressed 100-percent confidence that having the Board of Commissioners and Council establish the statutory redevelopment, economic-development and tourism commissions would be a good step at this time. Eventually, the elimination or restructuring of the C.D.C. would allow for meetings that are a more agile and easier to get quorums for; the new commissions would provide access to development and incentive tools not currently accessible for when they may be needed, and an innkeeper's tax could replace or supplement the income taxes used to support marketing and other tourism initiatives. The director would move forward with asking the Board, Council, and attorney to begin the process if no one objected, noting that, for the time being, the C.D.C.'s structure would remain in place until eliminating or reorganizing made sense. Mr. Champion expressed that the time had come for this restructuring.

### Old Business

*Revolving Loan Fund matters — general updates:* The County's attorney had been drafting an assignment-of-loan to Ryan Rohloff for the IBC Thermoplastics property; a court order had given Mr. Voranoff's wife the authority to transfer ownership and required Mr. Voranoff to agree. Mr. Rohloff had already purchased some of the excess acreage previously and would take over the debt.

The Fund had a current balance of \$105,096.11; two borrowers had been moderately behind on payments, but nothing drastic.

*Revolving Loan Fund matters — program review:* The Director had distributed the County's attorney's comments to the RLF Review Committee and would be setting up a committee meeting to review this feedback and to consider next steps. Director Origer noted Mr. Terrell had been helpful in clarifying that the Department of Commerce's original rationale for awarding grants to establish RLF's was to support start-ups and growing small businesses.

*Solar-energy development:* The Court of Appeals had upheld the local Court's ruling against Mammoth 1 and the County, the Circuit Court had ruled against Moss Creek, and the Mammoth 2 appeal had not yet been decided. Realistically, the director noted, all of these could become irrelevant depending on the Court's ruling regarding the changes made to the County's ordinance. There had been no rulings on the appeals of the decisions upholding the County Council's awarding of tax abatements to the two projects.

*2023 budget:* The salary ordinance had not been approved yet, so whether employees would be receiving raises, and what those raised might look like, remained unknown. As of the budget adoption, Ms. Bailey's assistant position had been approved for full-time status. The Council approved enough of an increase to the Professional Services line-item to cover early-year costs related to the courthouse-rehabilitation project, but, depending on when the bond would be issued, additional funding may be required. The Council had also approved a slight increase to the Marketing line-item for tourism promotion.

### New Business

*Executive director's reappointment:* The Executive Board had conducted a performance evaluation and held an executive session prior to the meeting to review the results with the director and then, in a brief public session, had recommended reappointing Director Origer for 2023. The Commission accepted the recommendation.

**Motion: Mr. Johns; second: Ms. Thompson; no discussion; approval: all**

*2023 meeting schedule:* The proposed 2023 schedule largely follows the 2022 calendar, with six full-commission meetings and the January and April meetings bumped back until the third Tuesday so that any necessary appointments could be made first. Changes from the 2022 schedule include pushing the September meeting back to the third Tuesday instead of the second and replacing the February and August executive-board and strategic-visioning meetings with joint meetings. The Economic Development Summit would be held back in Monterey. The schedule was adopted with recognition that the implementation of C.D.C. restructuring could alter it significantly.

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

*2023 tourism marketing:* Before committing to the proposed budget with finality, Director Origer intended to review tourism-website traffic and to discuss with marketing partners, as well as to meet with local tourism partners. The 2023 draft plan is largely the same as recent years', with a few minor increases; the County Council had not allocated enough funds to return to the Fort Wayne market without cutting Chicago or elsewhere. Director Origer would be sending out a GreatNews year-end review. Ms. Thompson asked that GreatNews be scheduled to cover the lighting of the Memorial Bridge in July; *Travel Indiana* had already been slated to cover this event, too.

#### Other Pertinent Business

*Acknowledgements:* Director Nathan Origer thanked Councilor Thompson for her service and congratulated Mr. Denton for receiving the 2022 Halleck Award.

#### Public Comment

*None.*

#### Adjournment

**Motion: President Jimenez; second: Mr. Champion; no discussion; approval: all**  
7:10 *p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Taylor Bailey, Assistant/Recording Secretary  
Brandon DeLorenzo, Secretary