

***Pulaski County
Community Development Commission
Executive Board***

Tuesday, 1 August 2023
Winamac Municipal Utilities Complex
Winamac, Indiana

Minutes

Tuesday, 2 May 2023
Winamac Municipal Utilities Complex
Winamac, Indiana

Members present: Vice-President Maurice Loehmer (Commissioners), Secretary Brandon DeLorenzo, Membership Officer Kelsie Zellers. Executive Director Nathan P. Origer.

Members absent: President Sheila Jimenez (Winamac) [personal], Board member Bill Champion. Assistant Taylor Bailey [business].

Guests: Brittany Spicer.

Call to Order

Vice-President Loehmer called the meeting to order at 5:33 *p.m.*

Consent Agenda

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

2024 Budget

The director presented two options for the proposed 2024 budget, one reinstating a full-time project coordinator in addition to the director and office administrator, and a second adding a part-time position to the director and the full-time assistant; also provided for review and comparison were the Commission's 2020–2023 budgets.

Director Origer explained the rationale behind his desire to add a full-time position, discussing some of the struggles he has faced taking on a significantly expanded role for the County beginning in 2020 and not having sufficient time to train and to oversee Ms. Bailey, expressing hope that the addition of someone with greater relevant experience could both ease his workload and work closely with Ms. Bailey, and highlighting the likelihood of further expanding responsibilities as strategic-plan implementation continued.

Director Origer suggested that sharing the office-administrator position with another department while having a full-time project coordinator could potentially be viable, as could a split-role at a higher-level, possibly with Purdue Extension – Pulaski County if a community-development-educator position were to be considered. In response to a question from Mrs. Zellers, discussion ensued regarding the roles that past staff members have played during the director's tenure. Vice-President Loehmer cautioned that a well-developed plan supported by the partnering department would be required before any kind of shared role could be considered. The vice-president then asked if the director thought room for another position in the budget would exist given the County's finances and the need for an across-to-board wage increase; Director Origer suggested that, while it may not be as easy for other departments or with other funds, the Local Income Tax – Economic Development Fund had a large-enough balance to support the proposal.

Mrs. Zellers enquired into how other Counties structure their economic-development agencies; the director provided examples of different governing structures, agency and individual responsibilities and focuses, and departmental sizes. Further discussion then ensued regarding the responsibilities the director has accepted beyond his job description and the Commission's mission.

The Board advised Director Origer to proceed with the option including three full-time positions for the time being, expressing no concerns with the amounts proposed for operational line-items; the director would submit the proposal to the full Commission for consideration in June.

Strategic Plan Implementation Report

Restructuring and reorganization: The director reported that he had been waiting for feedback on the draft ordinances and resolutions that he had prepared before submitting them to the Board of Commissioners and Council for their consideration and adoption. He noted that he had been uncertain as to which organization should be represented by the seventh seat on the restructured commission and solicited input, noting that he would seek the commissioners' opinions on this matter, too. Ms. Bailey would continue meeting with tourism businesses, including seeking potential members for the tourism advisory council.

Community Foundation partnership projects: Director Origer and Community Foundation Executive Director Leeann Wright would be approaching the Winamac Town Council on the following Monday to seek their \$25,000 commitment for the housing project to match the \$25,000 pledged by the private and nonprofit sectors; READI State-grant funding would likely be sought for part of the cost of developing the residential neighborhood. The director had little news to report on Main Street Winamac and the broadband project at the time.

Implementation, other: The director had confirmed participation by Pulaski Memorial Hospital and the Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce in a quarterly coffee hour in Francesville, but a date had not yet been selected.

At this point, at 6:13 p.m., Secretary DeLorenzo departed the meeting in response to an E.M.S. call, leaving the Board without a quorum for the last seven minutes.

The director provided brief updates on the regional agricultural economic-development strategy project, the Bottlebrush Solar project, the MatchBOX regional-accelerator entrepreneurship program, and a grant-funded regional entrepreneurship-toolkit project in partnership with Jasper, Newton, and Starke Counties.

Regarding institutional- and community-capacity building, the director proposed scheduling a nonprofit summit that would bring together various community organizations to ensure that various groups in the county were all working in the same direction and avoiding duplication of services while leaving other gaps unfilled.

Adjournment

By the vice-president's declaration. 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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