

*Pulaski County
Economic Development Commission*

Thursday, 5 February 2026
Pulaski County Courthouse
Winamac, Indiana

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, 18 November 2025
Winamac Municipal Utilities Complex
Winamac, Indiana

Members present: President Al Breyfogle (Winamac Town Council), Vice-President Blake Kasten (Council), Secretary Christian Smith (Board of Commissioners). Department of Community Development (D.C.D.) Executive Director Nathan P. Origer.

Members absent: D.C.D. Assistant Taylor Bailey [personal].

Guests present: Connie Ehrlich, Darrel Gudeman, Doug Klausing, Jennifer Knebel, Gail Lambert, Joe Moyer, Jamie Murray, Bill Smith, Bev Smith.

Call to Order

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

Consent Agenda

With no requests for extraction having been made, the consent agenda was approved.

Motion: President Breyfogle; second: Secretary Smith; no discussion; approval: all.

Old Business

Housing projects — Willow Creek Villas: The director noted that, after this meeting, he would be removing updates on this project from agendas. With the project nearing completion, seven of eight tenants had picked up their keys for the easternmost building; Sullivan Development had expected to finish construction before Christmas.

Housing projects — Pleasant View Village: The director noted that, after this meeting, he would be removing updates on this project from agendas. He would be addressing the project and the proposed land swap at the next Board of Commissioners meeting or Board/Council joint session; he suggested that he had had reservations about both raising enough local-match funding to qualify for the entire \$1-million that had been tentatively awarded and proceeding with a neighborhood-scale development at this time, instead contemplating using excess funds from the proposed land swap to facilitate lot-by-lot infill development.

Housing projects — Willow Creek Villas, continued: President Breyfogle shared his experiences thus far living across the street from the development, noting that he had introduced himself to a new neighbor and spoken with the Winamac chief of police regarding on-street parking. The president also noted that plans had been developed to improve traffic flow at Galbreath Drive and the Winamac Plaza and to connect Galbreath Drive to State Road 14 on the east side of town. In general, President Breyfogle had been impressed by the project, noting that he would recommend Sullivan Development for other projects, and also noted that two other houses had been going up in the subdivision.

Director Origer noted that Sullivan Development leadership had confirmed that the company owns the vacant land immediately east of the project but had not yet determined how this ground might be developed.

Revolving Loan Fund: The director had contacted the County's attorney earlier in November, but progress had not yet been made. The fund had a balance of nearly \$290,000. *[Correction: the total balance exceeded \$370,000 at the time, and the director, having misread his report, had misreported this information.]* All three borrowers had been in good standing. President Breyfogle had spoken with current borrowers, the Beckers, regarding their interest in borrowing again; Secretary Smith asked what members could do, and the director encouraged them to attend Board of Commissioners meetings to encourage action. Vice-President Kasten expressed his frustration over the duration of the program's hiatus, and Director Origer briefly explained how the County had gone more than four years without the program. Discussion ensued.

Mammoth Grazing Lands tax-abatement request: Director Origer provided a recapitulation of what had transpired since the Commission's discussion of this project in September; the Council would be resuming consideration of the tax-abatement/designation request at a special meeting on 1 December. Responding to a question from the president, the director confirmed that the Commission's role in the process had been completed. Director Origer then apologized to the members for not articulating the Commission's non-recommendation to the Council in a public meeting (although he had done so in an electronic-mail thread in which all three members shared further thoughts with council members) and for inadvertently providing potentially errant information regarding the future effects of Senate Enrolled Act 1 (2025) (S.E.A. 1) on local income-tax revenues, something he had learned a few days after the September Commission meeting.

The director then proceeded to explain the complexities and uncertainties associated with potential future impacts. The director then explained an expected impact of S.E.A. 1 that would eliminate property-tax revenues from solar-energy equipment after five years of operations. Vice-President Kasten asked why, given the shortened tax-obligation period, the developer would still pursue the 20-year abatement with larger payments to the County; the director suggested that the uncertainty about potential changes to S.E.A. 1 through future legislation that could reduce these protections led to Doral's hedging their bets on the agreement, also noting that the project has to be kept on its timeline to meet scheduling benchmarks for the federal Investment Tax Credit. Secretary Smith added that a project as large as this is a lot to underwrite. Further discussion ensued.

New Business

Pulaski County comprehensive plan: The director had been working toward resuming the comprehensive-planning process, with Council leadership having been pushing this in hopes of using the new plan as a framework for developing spending guidelines for future solar-project economic-development payments. He had shared a draft request for proposals with commissioners, council members, the County's building inspector, and the president of the Advisory Plan Commission (A.P.C.); pending Board and Council approval, the director would distribute the final request in January.

The Commission would not likely play a direct role in the process, but Director Origer encouraged member engagement, noting that the new plan could provide guidance for updates to the County's economic-development strategic plan and related plans, and provided a brief history of the current plan and recent efforts to work toward an update

2026: Director Origer noted that the vice-president would not be seeking reappointment, so the Council would have to recommend a candidate to the Board of Commissioners. The director would be receiving letters of interest from potential candidates that he would then submit to the two governing bodies. Discussion about the appointment process ensued; in response to a question from the public, the director noted that the term for Commission seats is four years.

Other Pertinent Business

Note of Appreciation: Vice-President Kasten was thanked for his several years of service on the Community Development Commission and, more recently, this Commission.

Public Comment

Joe Moyer: Director Origer confirmed that the Mayapple Solar project would be proceeding without a tax abatement

Connie Ehrlich: White County had ceased approving tax-abatement requests for renewable-energy projects but still had been negotiating economic-development agreements, contracts the terms of which had retained the 30-percent depreciation floor. Mrs. Ehrlich expressed concern about the lack of a guarantee of economic-development payments over the twenty-year payment period. Discussion ensued.

The director noted that information regarding the vice-president's seat and other vacancies on the commissions with which the director works had been posted on Facebook. Discussion ensued.

Jennifer Knebel: The director explained that the County's attorney needed to review the proposed changes to the Revolving Loan Fund's guidelines before he could ask the Board to re-open the program. Discussion ensued regarding public awareness of the program. Mrs. Knebel described herself as feeling heavy-hearted after having attended the Council's public hearing regarding the

solar-project tax-abatement request and then listened to the Commission's discussion this evening. Mrs. Knebel then expressed concerns with the impacts, including fiscal, of the ongoing solar-project construction. Discussion ensued.

Jamie Murray: Drivers working on the Mammoth Solar project had consistently been disregarding the terms of the project's road-use agreement, and holding them accountable had seemed to be an infrequent occurrence.

Connie Ehrlich: The new comprehensive-plan should focus on ensuring that future land-use decisions prioritize diversification; the Commission should give due consideration to how the County could encourage existing industry to grow by 10–15 percent annually. Discussion ensued.

Jennifer Knebel: It is puzzling that the commissioners have recommended that the A.P.C. proposed a moratorium on data centers but have declined to consider a solar-energy moratorium without the A.P.C's first acting.

New Business continued

2026 continued: Noting that the Commission would have a tight window in which to schedule its first 2026 meeting between 1 February and the 10-February Community Development Commission, the director agreed to send workable times and dates in that period to the members for their consideration. Director Origer suggested that, in light of S.E.A's expected changes to property-tax policy, the Commission may want to revisit the County's tax-abatement criteria, at least after the 2026 legislative session.

Adjournment

Motion: President Breyfogle; second: Vice-President Kasten; no discussion; approval: all. 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Christian Smith, Secretary