City of Evansville **Economic Development Committee**
Regular Meeting
City Hall, 3rd Floor, 31 S. Madison Street, Evansville, WI 53536
Monday, September 21, 2026, 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order.** 6:02 pm

2. **Roll Call**:

	Present/Absent
Norman Barker	A
Kelly Knoble, Chair	P
Jon Alling	P
Paul Liesse	P
Brandon Rutz	A
Alex Moderhock	P
Sue Berg	P

Others Present
Erik Ferrar, Nate Perry, ECSD
Colette Spranger, Com. Dev. Director
Shawn Dunphy, Chamber of Commerce
James Otterstein, Rock County Development

3. ***Motion to Approve Agenda as printed. Motion by Knoble, second by Alling. Motion carried unanimously.***

4. ***Motion to waive the reading of the minutes from August 17th, 2026 meeting and approve as printed. Motion by Knoble, second by Liesse. Motion carried unanimously.***

5. **Civility Reminder**

6. **Citizen Appearances, other than listed agenda items**
   - **A.** Nate Perry attends to talk about the referendum on November 3rd. There will be a number of informational sessions to explain why the district is going to referendum. Flyers are available for distribution.

7. **New Business**

   A. Update Building Improvement Grant for 2027

   There has been less interest/need for the limited nature of the existing building improvement grant over the past few years. Related to recent code enforcement efforts, Spranger wonders if a small grant program to fund art displays in downtown windows might be an avenue towards improving the look of the downtown. It is mentioned that Creekside Place has a rotating art exhibit which might be able to provide content for willing participants. Otterstein offers the perspective that the committee needs to decide if the object of the grants should be something long lasting or a one-time project to boost engagement. Both have their merits. Berg notes that the purpose of the BIG

was to increase the appeal of the downtown and it might be time for something just a little different than what's been offered. Liesse shares his opinion that instead of focusing on occupied storefronts, the grant should be tailored to empty storefronts, and the proceeds be flexible to include interior renovations. The message to landlords/renters is that we can help with build out if that's what's holding up a lease. Liesse would like to see the match be less – 75% grant, 25% owner funding. Other necessary items for Liesse would be participation in some sort of business preparation class or mentorship program, or requiring a business plan as a need before handing over the money. This will be on next month's agenda.

8. Old Business

A. 2026 Job Fair

Coming up next month. Creekside has been booked for the event. Spranger is working on getting updated banners.

B. Library Partnership Update

SCORE presented at the library on September 15th. The talk included a general overview of what services SCORE provides, how they partner like-minded individuals. Liesse reported around a dozen participants – a decent turn out for a first time offering. Library is hoping to offer an introduction to marketing for small businesses next.

C. Business Visits

Spranger reports an impromptu visit with the Delong Company, who is expanding and improving how it stores and distributes soybeans. Lexi Ramirez of Wicked Awakenings Coffee is looking for a brick-and-mortar space.

D. Promotional Materials Update

Alling finalized the design. It has been sent to the printers and will be ready in time for Fall Fest.

9. Monthly Reports

A. Community Development Report

Preparing for the new CHS plant has taken up most of Spranger's time this month.

B. Chamber of Commerce Report

Lots of groundbreakings this month. Bad weather for the Historic Home Tour but a decent turn out.

C. Tourism Commission Report

Tourism is looking for a new member to represent the lodging industry. Next meeting is Thursday, October 8th.

10. Discussion

11. Next Meeting Dates:

A. October 19, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

B. Job Fair -- October 21, 2026 at 4:00 p.m.

C. TBD – CHS Groundbreaking

12. ***Adjourn.*** ***At 7:05 PM.***