



Warrick County Economic Development Advisory Council

Regular Meeting – June 19th, 2025 –3:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Jenna Richardt, Paul Perry, Courtney TenBarge, Steve Smith, Stacy Tevault

Members Online: Lynn Lingafelter, Aric Pryor, Ron Bacon

Others Present: Steve Roelle, Holly Gossman, Jacob Shelton, Herb Davis, Greg Richmond, Jeff Valiant

- I. Call to Order
 - a. Paul Perry called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.
- II. Approval of Minutes – May 15th, 2025
 - a. Courtney TenBarge made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the May 15th meeting as presented in the meeting packet. Jenna Richardt seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved 8-0.
- III. Financial Reports – June 2025
 - a. Steve presented the EDIT financial reports for June. He said there were no changes, but that we have been further discussing the impacts of SB1 with Baker Tilly.
 - b. Courtney TenBarge made a motion to approve the EDIT financial reports as presented. Stacy Tevault seconded the motion. The financials were approved 8-0.
- IV. New Business
 - a. INDOT
 - i. Steve said he attended an INDOT meeting earlier in the month along with elected officials and representatives from the municipalities to discuss concerns with local State roads. He showed the board a chart from INDOT with the list of concerns from the meeting and the plans to resolve the issues.
 - ii. Herb Davis asked if there had been any additional accidents at Grimm Rd and SR 66 since the traffic light was reinstalled. Steve said we hadn't heard about any issues.
 - iii. Steve said they are starting the displaced-left construction at Cross Pointe and Burkhardt. He said some of the comments on news articles about the construction have mentioned that the Epworth displaced-left is working well.
 - b. Regional Transportation
 - i. Steve said the Evansville MPO recently put out an RFP for studying a regional public transportation system. He said these systems are common in other areas.

- ii. Currently there is only one connection point between the Evansville METS bus system and the Warrick County WATS system. Steve said we hear concerns about the lack of transportation from healthcare providers and employers.
- iii. This would be a feasibility study to look at creating a better-connected regional transit system.
- iv. Herb Davis asked about the current WATS system. Steve said they offer door-to-door service and some fixed routes in Ohio Township, Chandler, and Boonville.
- v. Steve added that the County currently supports the WATS provider, Ride Solutions, with a \$15,000 supplement each year.

c. RED Program

- i. Steve said someone from OCRA had reached out to us about their RED (Rural Empowerment & Development) program, saying that no counties south of I-64 had applied for the program and it might be a good opportunity for Warrick County. Steve said we are still working to get additional information from OCRA about the program, but it sounds like it might be particularly beneficial for the communities in northern Warrick County.

d. Rural Community Support

- i. Steve showed the board a list of some of the projects that the rural communities in Warrick County want to accomplish. He said we have heard about a lot of these projects that the communities will need help to accomplish, but there seems to be some momentum right now to get things done.

e. Parks & Trails Projects

- i. Steve showed the board a list of parks and trails projects underway in Warrick County. He said he will be asking County Council for EDIT funding for some of these projects.

- 1. Jenna Richardt added that the CenterPoint Foundation grants are open, and they are trying to spread awareness to projects that qualify.

f. Tourism

- i. Steve said he recently met with Tom White, the new CEO of Explore Evansville. He said Warrick County currently has a tourism board, but no employees. Tom White wants to start looking at the entire region as a tourism asset and reevaluate innkeeper's tax legislation.
- ii. Under the current legislation, Warrick County can only spend innkeeper's tax on things like staffing and marketing. In Vanderburgh County, the tax is 8% and they

can spend the revenue on facilities. Steve said the most difficult challenge would be changing legislation at the state level.

1. Steve Smith added that there was significant debate on the rate when innkeeper's tax was first passed in Warrick County. He said he is on the Tourism Board and they are currently considering a new office space for tourism in Warrick County.

V. Old Business

a. Alcoa & Kaiser Updates

- i. Steve gave the board a few updates from Alcoa and Kaiser. He said Alcoa is celebrating 65 years at the Warrick County facility. The new Roll Coat 4 line at Kaiser should be up and running in the next few weeks.

b. 2025 Tax Abatement Updates

- i. Steve reminded the board that he will be going to County Council to give the annual tax abatement compliance summary on July 8th. He said all of our active tax abatements are currently in compliance.
- ii. Steve said the four County departments that handle tax abatement met a couple of weeks ago to discuss ways to work together more efficiently. He said for 2026, we want to work on an updated scoring matrix and application. He added that many other counties have application and annual compliance fees for tax abatement, which we could consider.

1. Jenna Richardt added that Vanderburgh County recently updated their tax abatement program as well.

VI. Additional Items

a. Ribbon Cuttings & Groundbreakings

- i. Steve said we will have a number of groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings in the near future for Phenix, ePackage Supply, Matrix, and parks and trails. He told the board to watch for additional information on dates and times.

b. Upcoming Dates

- i. Steve shared a list of upcoming dates and events including:
 1. Boonville – Concert in the Park – June 21st
 2. Fireworks Over the Burgh – July 5th
 3. Parks Foundation Bingo – July 9th

VII. Adjournment

- a. Courtney TenBarge made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jenna Richardt seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 3:38 pm.