



Warrick County Economic Development Advisory Council

Regular Meeting – January 15th, 2025 –3:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

Members Present:	Jenna Richardt, Paul Perry, Brad Pemberton, Ron Bacon, Courtney TenBarge, Steve Smith, Stacy Tevault
Members Online:	Brandon Hayes
Others Present:	Steve Roelle, Holly Gossman, Jacob Shelton, Herb Davis, Greg Richmond, Rick Reid, Pat Brooks

- I. Call to Order
 - a. Paul Perry called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.
- II. Election of 2026 Officers
 - a. Steve told the board it was time to select officers for 2026. Because Aric Pryor was serving as secretary, someone new will need to be nominated.
 - b. After some discussion, Brad Pemberton nominated Paul Perry as President, Courtney TenBarge as Vice President, and Jenna Richardt as Secretary. Stacy Tevault seconded the motion. The new officers were confirmed 8-0.
- III. Approval of Minutes – December 18th, 2025
 - a. Courtney TenBarge made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the December 18th meeting as presented. Ron Bacon seconded the motion. The minutes were approved 8-0.
- IV. Financial Reports – January 2026
 - a. Steve presented the EDIT financials for January and said we are working with Baker Tilly to get the updated projections for next month.
 - b. Jenna Richardt asked about the line item for the Castle pool. Steve said that is only included for potential forecasting and nothing has been appropriated. The pool needs work on the HVAC system.
 - c. Courtney TenBarge made a motion to approve the EDIT financials for January. Ron Bacon seconded the motion. The financials were approved 8-0.
- V. New Business
 - a. SKO 2026 Engagement Letter
 - i. Steve said we have Herb's 2026 engagement letter for legal services. He said there is a 30\$ per hour increase this year to \$290 per hour, which is still considerably below Herb's standard rate. Steve said the engagement letter also

addresses conflicts of interest with other government entities represented by SKO attorneys.

- ii. Brad Pemberton made a motion to approve the 2026 SKO engagement letter. Jenna Richardt seconded the motion. The motion carried 8-0.

b. Updates – Project Vivid and Project Firefly

- i. Steve gave the board some updates on projects Vivid and Firefly in the North Warrick Industrial Park.
- ii. Steve said Vivid, the large manufacturing project, is still working on their site plans and they have a utility coordination meeting scheduled for tomorrow. Their current plan is still to go to County Council for tax abatement in February and March.
- iii. Project Firefly, the Japanese automotive interiors manufacturer, has signed a purchase agreement for the shell building, but have asked for an extension for additional due diligence. They also plan to go to County Council in February and March.
- iv. Steve Smith asked about the purchase price for the shell building. Steve said it is about \$11.5 million for the building and the necessary buildout. He added that Firefly's plans are to do logistics at the site first, then expand to include manufacturing.
- v. Paul Perry asked if having the shell building available was critical to landing this project. Steve said this project needed an existing building to meet their timeline. He added that he would support another shell building to have these opportunities in the future if the plan was financially sound.

c. Economic Development Grant Program

- i. Steve gave the board and update on our plans to explore an economic development grant program to help get more quality of place projects completed. He said we recently met with Courtney TenBarge and Jenna Richardt to discuss some of our preliminary guidelines for the proposed program.
- ii. Steve said we want to limit the program to quality of place projects that can be completed within two years and have at least 20% matching funds. We also want projects to have a municipal applicant who can help see the project through. We are going to start working on a sample application and scoring matrix.
- iii. Herb Davis added that projects anywhere in the county will benefit everyone in the county.

- iv. Steve said we will continue working on the grant parameters and come back to the board for additional feedback.
 - v. Steve Smith asked if we had considered the minimum and maximum amounts for grants. Steve said it will all depend on the appropriation we can get.
- d. House and Senate Bills
- i. Steve said he sent the board a summary of some bills currently being considered by the Indiana House and Senate. He said most of these bills will die or will be significantly changed during the session. Some of the most relevant bills are about TIF and income taxes.
 - ii. Herb Davis asked Ron Bacon what percentage of bills actually pass. Ron said it's about 15%, but there are always changes.
 - iii. Steve told the board he will be going to EREP's Day at the Statehouse next week. Herb Davis asked if they will be meeting with anyone from INDOT. Steve said no, but they will be meeting the Secretary of Transportation.
- e. 2026 Project Updates
- i. Steve gave the board an update on some of our ongoing projects. He said he met with the Parks Department yesterday to go over the plans for the new gatehouse at Scales Lake. We also now have updated quotes for the Elberfeld pocket park.
 - ii. Steve said we also plan to have meetings about the 4-H barn, the Libbert Road trail, and park impact fees. We have already had some initial meetings about County branding and the regional transportation study is in progress.

VI. Old Business

a. INDOT – Intersections

- i. Steve said he recently met with Steve Sherwood and the MPO to discuss the three intersections in Warrick County where INDOT wants to install J-Turns. He said they spent most of the time discussing the Bell Rd and SR 66 intersection. INDOT's plan would mean no left turns at the intersection and we have concerns about issues with their modeling. At this point, we have been given the option to move forward with the J-Turn or do nothing, since INDOT lacks funds for other options.
- ii. Paul Perry asked if Walmart and Schnucks are aware of the plans to remodel the intersection. Steve said no.
- iii. Steve said INDOT has selected a consultant for the project, but they are not under contract. The project is currently scheduled for 2030.

- iv. Herb Davis asked if they would consider a displaced left turn. Steve said that would only be possible if we pay.
- v. Courtney TenBarge asked if INDOT is open to leaving the Bell Rd intersection as it is. Steve said yes, they have other projects they would like to get done.
- vi. Paul Perry added that INDOT's plans would have unintended consequences for traffic on High Pointe Dr.
- vii. Ron Bacon said the J-Turn they installed near Dale created major issues for trucks.
- viii. Paul Perry asked how serious the issues are at Bell Rd. Steve said INDOT rates an intersection based on number of crashes and severity. This intersection has a higher score which means they can pay for it out of their safety funds.
- ix. Jenna Richardt suggested we also talk to Tony O'Neill from Warrick EMS.
- x. Herb Davis asked if we have data on the safety improvements at the Epworth intersection. Steve said he would ask.

b. RED Program

- i. Steve said the RED program with OCRA and Ball State will take place on February 18th and 19th. He said we want representation from across the County and encouraged board members to attend or suggest anyone who might be interested.

c. EMA Flood Sensors

- i. Steve said we are not able to do additional appropriations in January, so we will be going to County Council in February to ask for the flood sensor funding.

d. Tourism

- i. Steve told the board the new Tourism Director, Ali Oliver, is working on new ads and billboards around the region. He added that she is working out of the Economic Development office a couple of days each month.

VII. Additional Items

a. Upcoming Dates

- i. Steve shared some upcoming dates from the Parks Foundation calendar including the Annual Gala on February 28th.

VIII. Adjournment

- a. Ron Bacon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Courtney TenBarge seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 3:50 pm.