



## Warrick County Economic Development Advisory Council

Regular Meeting – March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025 –3:00 pm

### Meeting Minutes

<b>Members Present:</b>	Paul Perry, Brad Pemberton, Ron Bacon, Courtney TenBarge, Steve Smith, Stacy Tevault
<b>Members Online:</b>	Sarah Seaton, Jenna Richardt, Aric Pryor
<b>Others Present:</b>	Steve Roelle, Holly Gossman, Jacob Shelton, Herb Davis, Rick Reid, Pat Brooks, Abbie Redmon

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- I. Call to Order
  - a. Paul Perry called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.
- II. New Board Member Introduction
  - a. Steve introduced Stacy Tevault, who was recently appointed by the Commissioners to fill Tony Aylsworth's seat on the EDAC and RDC boards. Stacy told the board about her background working at LNB Community Bank, previously serving on the Lynnville Town Council, and being involved in community projects like the Tecumseh Trail.
  - b. Steve also said Sarah Seaton, the new Commissioners' representative to the EDAC board was joining the meeting online.
- III. Approval of Minutes – February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025
  - a. Brad Pemberton made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the February 20<sup>th</sup> meeting as presented in the meeting packet. Ron Bacon seconded the motion. The February minutes were approved 8-0 (Aric Pryor had not yet joined the meeting).
- IV. Financial Reports – March 2025
  - a. Steve presented the EDIT financials for March and said there were no changes.
  - b. Courtney TenBarge made a motion to approve the March EDIT financial reports as presented. Brad Pemberton seconded the motion. The financials were approved 9-0.
- V. New Business
  - a. Meeting Livestreaming
    - i. Steve told the board that Indiana law will require most public meetings to be livestreamed for the public starting July 1<sup>st</sup>. He said we are currently working to make adjustments to our meeting format and technology so we are prepared ahead of the deadline.
  - b. Belong Here Program
    - i. Steve told the board about the new Belong Here initiative at E-REP. This is a program to attract population to the region, particularly targeting remote

workers. E-REP has taken over management of the effort after participating in a similar program for the past 2-3 years.

- ii. Grant funding provides a \$3,000 incentive and an addition \$3,000 worth of other amenities to qualified applicants who move to the region.
- iii. Steve showed the board E-REP's 2024 talent recruitment recap graphic. He said the success of this program raises the question of what we can do to welcome new residents.
- iv. Paul Perry said there used to be in-person welcome wagon visits for new residents.
- v. Stacy Tevault added that Lynnville used to hand out welcome bags when new residents came in to sign up for utilities.
- vi. Steve Smith suggested we could try to do a welcome program with the local realtors.
- vii. Ron Bacon said the business community used to be involved in new resident welcome activities.
- viii. Courtney TenBarge asked if the Chamber or Tourism could be involved in welcoming new residents. Steve said Tourism is in the process of hiring a new employee, so they may be able to help.

c. Warrick County Statistics

- i. Steve showed the board some recent statistics comparing Warrick County to other counties in Indiana and the United States. He said Warrick County is the 8<sup>th</sup> fastest growing county in Indiana and the unemployment rate of 3.2% is below the state and national averages. He showed a graphic demonstrating the increase in population in Warrick County compared to the surrounding region.
- ii. Steve showed the board our updated charts of income and property tax rates, noting that Warrick County's rates are some of the lowest on the charts. He also mentioned two recent articles by Michael Hicks from Ball State (included in the update email) that discuss tax rates versus available amenities in communities.
- iii. Brad Pemberton asked if we have any updates on the efforts to change property tax law in Indiana. Steve said the session goes until the end of April, so they are still debating and considering alternatives. Ron Bacon added that the latest version of the bill would allow, but limit, the growth quotient for property taxes.

d. 2025 Projects

- i. Steve discussed some of our plans for 2025 with the board. He said Economic Development does a good job of saving and planning for future projects.
- ii. Steve said the RDC has been discussing using TIF funds to help support the schools and first responders.
- iii. For EDIT projects, the parks still have a lot of projects that require funding and there are community projects that have some committed funding, but need additional support. The towns in particular have limited funds for community projects that would be beneficial.
- iv. Paul Perry suggested we need a more formal vetting and prioritization process for projects that need funding.
- v. Steve Smith asked if Elberfeld still had sewer projects that will require funding. Steve said yes, and added that the town is currently working on a pocket park as well.

VI. Old Business

a. INDOT and J-Turns

- i. Steve said he recently met at Kaiser Aluminum to discuss the proposed J-Turn near their facility. They weren't happy with the plan and had significant concerns about sending all the traffic at shift changes through a J-Turn.
- ii. Steve said the bigger concern for the public will be the proposed J-Turn at Bell Rd. and SR 66. He said we recently got new traffic counts for the intersection and Bobby Howard has asked INDOT for all their data.
  1. Paul Perry asked what issue they are trying to solve at Bell Rd. Steve said they have safety concerns based on crash data.
- iii. Steve said there was another recent incident with INDOT where they installed delineators by Castle Elementary School and Hucks. Abbie Redmon added that they installed the delineators in the middle of the day with no notice or communication. This prevented the school busses from turning left from Oak Grove Rd. into the school parking lot. Steve said they have removed the poles, but kept the yellow bases to discourage people from left-turning out of Hucks or the school.

VII. Additional Items

a. Upcoming Events

- i. Steve showed the board a list of upcoming events including the Race the Trails event on April 5<sup>th</sup>.

b. Trail Update

- i. Steve said the new bridge for the Friedman Park to Victoria Woods trail was just installed today.

VIII. Adjournment

- a. Courtney TenBarge made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Brad Pemberton seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 3:49 pm.