

Board Meeting Minutes for the May 2025 Meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

Monthly board meeting called to order by Sam Breene, at 10:43 AM. Those present at the public meeting of the Venango County Economic Development Authority on 5/19/2025, held in person at 100 Seneca Street, Oil City PA (Fifth Floor Conference Room):

Members Present:

- ☒ Sam Breene, *Chair*
- ☒ Maureen James, *Vice-Chair*
- ☒ Bonnie Summers, *Secretary/Treasurer*
- ☐ Ken Bryan
- ☐ Chip Abramovic
- ☒ Alan Schiller
- ☐ Rod Griffin

Staff Present:

- ☒ Emily Lewis, *Executive Director*
- ☒ Rich Winkler, *County Solicitor*
- ☒ Diona Brick, *Finance Director*

Guests Present (List):

- Ashley Zaccari, Venango Chamber
- Susan Williams, Venango Chamber

Quorum Present: ☒ Yes ☐ No

The attendance of 4 board members (of the 7 current appointees) was accounted for by Ashley Zaccari.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. 4/15/2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

- ✓ Motion to approve the minutes with the adjustment of adding a "s" after Bonnie Summers' name in the around the table from last month made by Maureen James; Seconded by Alan Schiller. All approved.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

- None.

IV. SPECIAL PURPOSE MATTERS

- a. **Approval of Project Manager Position** – Emily Lewis provided and update on the new Grant Writer and Project Manager position, which will be funded through the McElhattan grant dollars that were recently awarded. This position is intended to support ongoing and upcoming projects by handling both grant writing and project management responsibilities. While there are still a few unknowns Emily is addressing, the goal is to publicly advertise the position once those details are clarified. Historically, job postings have followed the county's standard format, which is known for being thorough. However, efforts are being made to modernize the job posting to appeal to a broader audience. This includes updating the language and adding basic educational requirements to help attract a wider pool of qualified applicants. The addition of this new staff member is expected to provide valuable support to the organization's work.
 - ✓ Motion to approve project manager position by Bonnie Summers, seconded by Maureen James. All approved.
- b. **Approval of Package D Change Order 13**– Emily provided a proposed change order in the amount of \$38,030.76 was presented for consideration. This total reflects a combination of cost increases and credits tied to various adjustments made throughout the course of the project. Some of the changes included in this order were necessary to maintain progress and were completed by the contractor in advance of formal approval, undertaken at their own risk to avoid delays. Specific items addressed in the change order include revised light fixtures, removal of abandoned equipment, raising floor at basement elevator hall, wall cleanouts, and lavatory trap

primers. Although sufficient funds remain within the project's expanded contingency to cover this change order, it was noted that the available contingency is being significantly stretched. It was further acknowledged that this will not be the final change order for the project. Nonetheless, construction is approaching completion, and a progress walkthrough with Massaro is scheduled for the end of the month. Overall, the project remains on schedule.

✓ Motion to approve package D change order 13 by Alan Schiller, seconded by Maureen James. All approved.

V. FINANCIAL REPORT

- a. **Financial Report:** Diona Brick, *Venango County Fiscal Director* – presented the financial report to the Board which summarized all accounts and budget items for the month of April. There were eighteen (18) invoices paid during the month mostly focus on construction in progress.

✓ Motion to approve made by Alan Schiller; seconded by Maureen James. All approved.

VI. ONGOING PROJECTS

- a. **100 Seneca at Cornplanter Square** – Coordination with the tenant is ongoing, particularly regarding inspections required by the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board (PALCB) and the kitchen inspection. These steps are being factored into the overall timeline, with the tenant's liquor license inspection expected by the end of the month. Plans are in place for the chef to begin testing recipes in early June, with a soft opening currently targeted for mid-June. There is some flexibility in the timeline, and the opening may be adjusted to late June if needed. Side Hustle Brewing applied to Oil City Main Street Program's façade grant for signage.

Emily noted that she applied for makerspace development funding through federal earmarks with Congressman Thompson, Senator Fetterman, Senator McCormick, and also applied for OC Commercial Blight Remediation through Senator Fetterman's office.

VII. STAFF REPORTS

- Emily Lewis, *Executive Director* – shared that she has been working with the Lyrics Theater to see how VCEDA can be of assistance. She has also been working with the Cranberry Rec Center to create their nonprofit with the proposed board of directors.

VIII. AROUND-THE-TABLE REPORT

- Maureen James, *Oil Region Alliance* – shared that Oil City's First Fridays will begin June 6th on the Northside. Bridgefest is scheduled for August 15th and 16th and the new Artist Riverfest is September 12th and 13th. Graffiti Gallery is being rebranded as the Music Art and Culture (MAC) Center at 228 Seneca Street, Oil City.
- Sam Breene, *Venango County Commissioner* – noted that Haggerty's Ice Cream is opening in Oil City and that he toured the airport property with the county engineers for possible solar development to offset county costs.
- Alan Schiller, *Oil City Redevelopment Authority* – Reported they are continuing work to acquiring properties to demo in Oil City with the Land Bank.
- Bonnie Summer, *Cranberry Economic Development* – Reported that Farmers Daughters is for sale and that she toured Venango Campus giving a shoutout to Seth Hettrick from the ORA on the good work he is doing there.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT – GENERAL

- Susan Williams, *Venango Chamber* - noted that the Latonia building is being put up for sale for \$160k through Gates and Burns.

X. ADJOURNMENT

✓ Motion to adjourn by Maureen James, seconded by Bonnie Summers. All approved at 11:32 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley Zaccari, Venango Area Chamber of Commerce