



Venango County

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Board Meeting Minutes for the November 2025 Meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

Monthly board meeting called to order by Sam Breene, at 10:32 AM. Those present at the public meeting of the Venango County Economic Development Authority on 11/18/2025, 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
- ☒ Tom Friedhaber
- ☒ Rod Griffin

Staff Present:

- ☒ Emily Lewis, *Executive Director*
- ☒ Joe Brooker, *Grant & Project Manager*
- ☒ Rich Winkler, *County Solicitor*
- ☒ Diona Brick, *Finance Director*

Guests Present (List):

- Kara O'Neil, The Derrick

Quorum Present: ☒ Yes ☐ No

The attendance of 5 board members (of the 7 current appointees) was accounted for by Joe Brooker.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. 9/16/2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

- ✓ Motion to approve the minutes made by Bonnie Summers; Seconded by Maureen James. All approved.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

- None.

IV. SPECIAL PURPOSE MATTERS

- a. **Ratification of Snyder Electric Costs** – Emily explained that Snyder Electric would spend up to \$8,575, most like less, to install the electrical components for the new freight elevator on the Sycamore Street side of the building. Emily will report the actual cost at the December 2025 meeting. This quote is less than Right Electric, Massaro's electrical contractor's quoted price. This work is needed to keep the elevator installation on schedule. This is not a repair job; this was an anticipated cost in the elevator installation.
 - ✓ Motion to ratify the Snyder Electric Costs by Rod Griffin, seconded by Maureen James. All approved.
- b. **Approval of Change Order 20** – Emily explained there are three components to this change order, which is a net \$14,405.11 credit. The first component is a \$3,478.35 charge for fire alarm work on the first floor. The second component is a \$3,504.20 for increasing the water tap size on the first floor. The final component is a \$21,387.66 refund as a reimbursement for the temporary cooling system that was installed over the summer when the cooling system went down in the building. The Authority had paid for the rental of the temporary system up front, with the understanding that the contractor would reimburse them for the cost. Emily noted that this should be one of the final change orders. Sam remarked that he is fine with change orders as long as they result in refunds.
 - ✓ Motion to approve Change Order 20 by Bonnie Summers, seconded by Maureen James. All approved.



- c. **Approval of Snow Removal Proposal** – Emily explained that Venango County maintenance had previously provided snow removal service for the building, that only included shoveling the sidewalk. Now that the building is occupied, the parking lot needs to be plowed and salted in addition to the sidewalks. Ken Garland received an estimate from King's Family Landscaping, Inc for \$7,275, this cost is for the entire 2025-2026 snow season and includes full snow removal services after a 2" snowfall. Sam notes that King's service is ideal for the building, but wants the best price. Bonnie noted that now is not the ideal time for snow removal quotes to be obtained, as providers' schedules are filling up. Rod wants the fastest service possible, agreeing that King's would provide that service. Maureen doesn't want the Authority to get cited for lack of snow removal. The board wants to see two more quotes before choosing a snow removal vendor. Emily said she will solicit more quotes and reach out to the board for an email quote, as this matter needs to be decided before the next board meeting in December. The board agreed to table the matter for now.
- ✓ Motion to table the Snow Removal Proposal by Maureen James, seconded by Rod Griffin. All approved.
- d. **Approval of Surge Protector Installation** – This surge protector is 1 of 6 needed for the building, it will be installed on the first-floor panel, which is experiencing problems with power surges in the building. This surge protector was part of the settlement with Hudson Construction. Penn-Ohio Electric's cost (~\$1,800) is competitive to Right Electric's cost (~\$5,000). Sam noted that this cost, while not ideal, is the cost of being a landlord, as well as occupying a newly renovated building. Rod recommended calling Penelec, as this is probably an issue on their end. Emily said she and the Commissioners are working to get a meeting with Penelec to discuss the surging issue, while noting that there are several industrial companies using the same power lines as the building that may be contributing to the surging, and also noted that the building had sat vacant for decades prior to the renovation, using no power. Maureen noted that surging had been experienced separately every year at Bridgefest on Center Street. Diona notes that the cost of a surge protector is small compared to the cost a power surge could cause to tenant and House equipment. Emily also noted that a House generator may be acquired through the third-floor build-out to help with these issues as well.
- ✓ Motion approve Surge Protector Installation by Rod Griffin, seconded by Tom Friedhaber. All approved.
- e. **Approval of AHU Circulator Pump Replacement** – This was an unexpected issue that requires an immediate fix. This is the pump that runs hot water through the coils of the air handler on the roof, preventing the water from freezing in the winter. HydroClean Products, which has worked with the Authority in the past, will spend up to \$11,700 to repair or replace the pump. Emily says the building is going to try to build a stock of critical parts, such as pump components, to have on hand in the event of an emergency such as this, as the parts for the pump were difficult to source on short notice. Tom suggested that the pump may be rebuilt off site. Sam again noted that this is the cost of being a landlord in a newly renovated building. The cause of this issue has not yet been determined, the board asked if this was also because of power surging issues, this is unclear but most likely not the cause. Ken Garland provided the scaffolding for the repair work at no cost, saving the Authority a little money. Tom brought up that this issue and repair may be covered under the mechanical insurance on the parts, as the pump was out of warranty. Diona was going to look at the Authority's insurance policy to determine if this was covered. Tom said that this would be a rider on the policy, and should be looked into if we don't have this coverage, as it is not a lot of money. Sam wants the Authority to get this coverage if it does not already have it.
- ✓ Motion to approve the AHU Circulator Pump Replacement by Bonnie Summers, seconded by Maureen James. All approved.

V. FINANCIAL REPORT

- ✓ **Financial Report:** Diona Brick, Venango County Fiscal Director – Diana noted the balance sheet, \$8 million worth of cost has been sent out that we have not yet been reimbursed for as of yet. We have \$7.5 million in receivables. We are not currently, due to the government shutdown and PA State budget impasse, having money come in. However, since these have been resolved, the County has received some State funds, not related to the Authority. We are currently holding a ~\$500,000 bill to Masaro Construction. Sam commended Diona for her exceptional work navigating the budget impasse keeping operations running smoothly. Bonnie Summers raised the issue of the lights on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th floors being on. Emily explained that the 5th floor tenants are utilizing the space into the evenings. 4th and 3rd floor lights are on because of fire safety issues, but since access controls are now in place, those lights may be able to be turned off.

- ✓ Motion to approve the financial report made by Rod Griffin; seconded by Tom Friedhaber. All approved.

VI. ONGOING PROJECTS

- a. **100 Seneca at Cornplanter Square** – Emily provided an update on the grants for 100 Seneca and Makerspace. Seventy-five computers were obtained and asset tagged for the Makerspace. \$50,000 was received from the PNC Charitable Trust for exterior and interior wayfinding signage. The Makerspace submitted a RACP and ARC POWER application for \$591,966 and \$50,000, respectively for development, design, and planning for the third-floor buildout. The Makerspace was awarded \$25,000 of the \$50,000 it applied for from Phillips Charitable Trust for development. A grant application was submitted to the McElhattan Foundation for the Venango Rec Center development. The Authority is working on an LSA grant application for the Makerspace construction of the third-floor. Additionally, the Authority plans to submit an application to the Oil City Main Street program for a \$10,000 façade grant for exterior signage. The Authority is in the process of asset tagging all equipment.

VII. STAFF REPORTS

- Emily Lewis, *Executive Director* – Emily noted that she is in regular meetings for 100 Seneca’s redevelopment. She has been trained on the access controls, and is working with DES to light the fiber going into the building. She has been in contact with someone in eastern Pennsylvania who received an ARC ARISE grant for incubator spaces which may be able to fund a staff member for the Makerspace.
- Joe Brooker, *Grants & Project Manager* – Joe has been helping with the grants described above. He has been in meetings with Emily for the access controls and fiber. He has also helped Ken with various projects throughout the building.

VIII. AROUND-THE-TABLE REPORT

- Maureen James – OC Main Street is preparing for Small Business Saturday and Artist Sunday, as well as Christmas Past, in addition to preparing for 2026, expanding First Friday Programming.
- Rod Griffin – Rod inquired about the revised agreement between Venango County and the VCEDA. Emily said the agreement is being worked on, and will be available at the December board meeting.
- Tom Friedhaber – Tom noted that the Wilson Avenue property was torn down and redevelopment is already underway.
- Bonnie Summers – Bonnie noted that Marshalls in Cranberry is opening on Thursday, November 20. Kyle Melat will be presenting to the Cranberry Economic Development Committee at the December 2025 meeting regarding the Venango Rec Center.
- Sam Breene – Sam noted that, in addition to all of the development happening in Cranberry, 2 Cousins Pizza is also doing very well. He announced that he and his wife are expecting a baby boy, due April 16, 2026.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT – GENERAL

- None.

X. ADJOURNMENT

- ✓ Motion to adjourn to executive session by Rod Griffin, seconded by Bonnie Summers. All approved at 11:25 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Brooker, Venango County Economic Development Authority