



Venango County

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Board Meeting Minutes for the September 2025 Meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

Monthly board meeting called to order by Sam Breene, at 10:03 AM. Those present at the public meeting of the Venango County Economic Development Authority on 9/16/2025, 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 Manager*
- ☒ Rich Winkler, *County Solicitor*
- ☒ Diona Brick, *Finance Director*

Guests Present (List):

- Ashley Zaccari, Venango Chamber
- Kara O'Neil, The Derrick

Quorum Present: ☒ Yes ☐ No

The attendance of 6 board members (of the 7 current appointees) was accounted for by Ashley Zaccari.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. 7/15/2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

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

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

- None.

IV. SPECIAL PURPOSE MATTERS

- a. **Ratification of Plumbing Contract** – Emily Lewis presented a proposal totaling \$7,493.43 for plumbing work on the first floor was reviewed and approved via email and ratified. Work included hot water tank installation and metering for the Woods & River space. Work has been completed. Emily noted that the Woods & River build out is planned for the end of this month after their exterior door is installed.
 - ✓ Motion to ratify the plumbing contract by Maureen James, seconded by Bonnie Summers. All approved.
- b. **Ratification of KRG Management Contract** – The board ratified the management contract with Ken Garland (KRG Management) to transition from Owner's Representative to Building Manager of the Facility. Board members expressed appreciation for Ken's professionalism and commitment.
 - ✓ Motion to ratify the KRG Management Contract by Ken Bryan, seconded by Rod Griffin. All approved.
- c. **Ratification of Change Order 18 Contract** – Emily presented Change Order #18 for \$20,129.85 to address L&I permitting requirements for the freight elevator on Sycamore Street. Work is within the contingency, and upcoming additional electrical work is being quoted by Snyder Electric after receiving a quote that was high from Massaro's electrical subcontractor.
 - ✓ Motion to ratify the Change Order 18 by Bonnie Summers, seconded by Maureen James. All approved.
- d. **Approval of Change Order 19** – Emily presented Change Order #19 totaling \$19,158.19 for completed miscellaneous construction work that was ran into during the duration of construction. All work has been completed and are formalizing the change orders. Architectural punch list is complete; HVAC and plumbing



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items remain and Emily is working with Massaro's subcontractor to address these plumbing issues. Emily noted that only minor change orders remain under review.

✓ Motion approve change order 19 by Ken Bryan, seconded by Tom Friedhaber. All approved.

- e. **Approval of Mobilcom Proposal** – Emily presented a proposal from Mobilecom for ADA door button installation on Seneca Street entrance totaling \$4,997.00. This will be funded through the project grant contingency and work will connect to the existing access control system for fob users as well.

✓ Motion to approve the Mobilcom Proposal by Maureen James, seconded by Ken Bryan. All approved.

- f. **Approval of Bert Klapec, Inc Proposal** – Emily presented a proposal from BKI to deliver gravel and restore the lot across the creek that was used for construction staging. This lot, made available for employee parking through the generosity of Jack Roser, will be re-graveled to return it to the condition it was in prior to construction use.

✓ Motion to approve the Bert Klapec, Inc proposal by Bonnie Summers, seconded by Rod Griffin. All approved.

- g. **Approval of First Amendment to Woods and River Lease** – Emily presented an amendment to reflect Woods & River's relocation to the rear first-floor space and part of the second floor, with updated rental terms for the 5-year term lease.

✓ Motion to approve an amendment to the Woods & River lease by Ken Bryan, seconded by Tom Friedhaber. All approved.

- h. **Approval of Amendment to Balmaghie Beverage Group Lease** – Emily presented an amendment to update The Exchange's leased space following their swap with Woods & River. Originally, Woods & River leased the area immediately to the right upon entering the building, but they encountered challenges fitting their equipment in that space. As a result, they moved to the back of the building under the alcove along Center Street. The Exchange graciously agreed to swap spaces with them. The Exchange plans to remain in the new location, so this amendment formally updates the lease to reflect the current square footage and actual occupancy.

✓ Motion to approve an amendment to the Balmaghie Beverage Group lease by Tom Friedhaber, seconded by Maureen James. All approved.

V. FINANCIAL REPORT

- a. **2024 Audit Report:** Diona presented the draft audit report and management letter.

Key highlights: Unmodified (clean) audit opinion. No findings in the audit; only management recommendations provided. Required Single Audit completed due to receipt of >\$750,000 in federal funds.

Management Letter Highlights:

Financial Reporting: Need to record deferred lease revenue per new accounting standards (GASB). To be corrected in next fiscal year.

Fiscal Relationship with Venango County: Recommendation to establish a formal written agreement documenting the financial relationship.

Data Security: Recommendation to ensure cybersecurity insurance coverage and employee awareness. County IT Director Bill Krasinski manages cybersecurity for the organization. Board discussed increasing cybersecurity threats and confirmed that staff are aware of procedures to forward suspicious emails to IT for verification.

✓ Motion to accept the 2024 Audit Report by Rod Griffin; seconded by Tom Friedhaber. All approved.

- b. **2026 Draft Budget:** The budget-to-actual review showed that the Authority is tracking on budget overall. Revenues from State Engage funds, the McElhattan grant, and County contributions remain on target, while expenditures for salaries and benefits are within expectations, with workers' compensation already paid in full for the year. Training and lodging expenses are slightly over or under budget depending on timing but remain within reasonable variation. Professional and legal services are expected to exceed the budget due to audit expenses and legal fees associated with Knox McLaughlin.

In the project-specific accounts, the Polk Facility continues to show fully reimbursable expenses. For Cornplanter Square, utility and insurance costs are being closely tracked and will be a focus area in the 2026 budget. EDA grants are on schedule, with the County's matching funds fully transferred and pending payments anticipated from both the LSA and USDA.

Concerns were raised regarding rising electricity costs for 100 Seneca, which have increased from \$2,000–\$3,000 to over \$5,000 monthly. Staff are investigating potential billing discrepancies or conversion issues and are coordinating with Gary Svetz to review accounts. The Authority currently maintains three electric meters (fifth floor, first floor, and house panel). Board members noted that the rates appear unusually high compared to similar properties, and staff will conduct a deeper review to identify potential causes and cost-saving measures.

✓ Motion to approve the 2026 Draft Budget by Ken Bryan; seconded by Rod Griffin. All approved.

- c. **Financial Report:** Diona Brick, *Venango County Fiscal Director* – presented the financial statements for the period ending August 31, reporting that the Authority’s equity in pooled cash totaled approximately \$9.3 million, with \$280,000 currently held in the Authority’s bank account. This balance includes a recently received \$100,000 PHMC grant, which will be transferred to cover project expenses. Receivables total approximately \$8.09 million, consisting of EDA grants, ARC funds, and a forthcoming \$200,000 LSA grant. All receivables are expected without issue, though delays have occurred due to frequent turnover among federal grant managers. The 100 Seneca building project has reached \$17.57 million in total costs to date, including remaining payables to Massaro Construction. Accounts payable reflect outstanding payroll taxes, reimbursements to the County, and accrued time, while the fund balance remains consistent with the 2023 audit report at \$10.088 million. Diona expressed confidence in the accuracy of the financial statements following a comprehensive reconciliation process.

✓ Motion to approve the financial report made by Maureen James; seconded by Bonnie Summers. All approved.

VI. ONGOING PROJECTS

- a. **100 Seneca at Cornplanter Square** – Emily reported updates on ongoing projects, including a website refresh that now allows online booking for co-working and maker space memberships. In grant activity, the Authority was awarded a \$50,000 PNC Charitable Trust Grant to fund exterior and interior wayfinding signage. Plans are underway to apply for a Main Street façade grant, using the PNC grant as a match, which could provide up to \$60,000 for signage improvements. Additional funding requests for the maker space are also in development to support ongoing programming and operations.

VII. STAFF REPORTS

- Emily Lewis, *Executive Director* – introduced Joe Brooker as the newest member of the team. Joe was praised for his qualifications, including his MBA and management experience with his family’s local business at the mall’s dialysis center and medical practice. Joe expressed excitement to join the organization and offered his availability to the board and staff.

VIII. AROUND-THE-TABLE REPORT

- Tom Friedhaber, *Oil City Redevelopment Authority* – shared that he was aware that Flea Flickers is looking for additional space with parking 200 cars for their clothing sale days, and they mentioned they would be interested in the Mall but haven’t had much success in getting ahold of the owners. Ken Bryan noted that they are looking at a potential property and will help engage after.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT – GENERAL

- None.

X. ADJOURNMENT

✓ Motion to adjourn by Rod Griffin, seconded by Ken Bryan. All approved at 11:50 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley Zaccari, Venango Area Chamber of Commerce