



FULL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

July 22, 2025

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Board Members Present: Caleb Beasley, Ron Best, Bryan Brackemyre, Doug Brenneke, Chris Brown, Lance Halsey, Caitlin Hancock, Pat Haney, Rob Keisling, Kirk Robbins, Jacob Runion, Joe Schumacher, Ashley Surpas, Jimmy Watters

Board Members Absent: Jamen Bales, Virgil Bremer, Joe Henry, Commissioner John Lancaster, Kevin Polivick, Jason Troutwine, Shelley York

Others Present: Lyndsey Hellems, Gus Linde, Stephanie Clawson

CALL TO ORDER: Chair, Ron Best, called the meeting to order at 9:02 am. A quorum was present. Clawson took a roll call of all members present. Best welcomed everyone to the meeting.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS:

Virgil Bremer – Blue River Beef, LLC (Rush County)

Caitlin Hancock – Forge ECI (Econ. Comm. Dev. Seat)

Pat Haney – East Central Educ. Service Center (Workforce Youth Organization Seat)

Jacob Runion – Central Midwest Carpenters Union (Labor Seat)

Jason Troutwine – Reid Health (Randolph County)

Jimmy Watters – Naturally Recycled Proteins (NRP) of IN (Blackford County)

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: Best called for any declaration of conflicts of interest from Board Members. None were noted.

CONSENT AGENDA: The Board Meeting Minutes from 5.21.25 were provided in the advanced materials. Motion to approve by Rob Keisling. Second by Doug Brenneke. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

FISCAL REPORT: Hellems presented the financial report ending 6/30/25 with 100% of the year completed. Motion to approve the financial report by Rob Keisling. Second by Kirk Robbins. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

ECONOMIC COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE: Caitlin Hancock informed the board about what was happening at the state level concerning the IEDC audit process and looking for a strategy moving forward. Currently, there are less incentives being offered for projects. READI 1.0 grant is 65% dispersed. There was a pause on READI 2.0 but will move forward with it in the Fall.

YOUTH & EDUCATION UPDATE: Pat Haney provided a PowerPoint presentation explaining what the East Central Education Service Center (E.C.E.S.C.) does and who it serves. ECESC serves 14 counties, 42 organizations, 4,521 teachers and 67,478 students. ECESC's mission is to "Empower East Central Indiana educators, schools, and communities through innovative educational and workforce solutions that support career-connected learning, prepare students for post-secondary success, and drive educational and economic growth." The core values focus on service, support, collaboration, joy and stewardship. At the center, there is an emphasis on career exploration in the classrooms. The RIASEC (Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional) rooms try to link personal strengths, interests, and values to career options. ECESC is working with EIW on a Career Coaching Grant. With the grant, we have 34 school coaches, impacted over 40,000 students, and have had 6,000 coaching sessions.

BOARD EXECUTIVE TEAM UPDATES: Hellems informed the board of contract updates showing Equus Workforce Solutions at \$685,064.00, Electronic strategies Inc. (ESI) at \$60,912.00, and the new Richmond Office Lease at \$6,000 for the year. DWD completed their annual monitoring of PY24, and we are waiting on the final report. WIPFLI will begin the fiscal audit in October for PY24 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025). The fiscal team is working to close out the fiscal year and prep for the audit. Funding allocations include WIOA (\$1,587,231.00), Business Consultant (\$60,000 with additional funding mid-year), Next Level Jobs (\$50,000 with potential additional funding after 1st qtr.), and the Workforce Ready Grant (\$225,000). Linde shared regional data discussing labor market, poverty, and the unemployed. Region 6's workforce services report of July 2024 – June 2025 details that 4,477 individuals received 37,746 services, 707 internal

job orders created, 1,114 employer services provided, and program-specific data including 4,477 Wagner-Peyser applications, 170 WIOA applications and 333 generic program applications. We are moving from all face-to-face interactions to leveraging state and regional systems to engage our population at varying need levels. We are also looking at how AI tools can support our limited staff levels to meet community needs. Our Region's barriers to employment are amplified as compared to the State of Indiana. Internet access, disconnected youth, transportation, substance use, and skills gap are top barriers with education, childcare, criminal records also being significant barriers to gaining employment. These will continue to be areas of focus with our service delivery team and discussions with our eco-system of partners. We will continue 6 of our 10 JAG (Jobs for Americas Graduates) programs thru June of 2026. YouthBuild is ending the 6th cohort with a graduation in August. We are participating in a US Chamber initiative and Indiana Chamber sponsored program called Talent Pipeline Management (TPM). TPM is a strategic approach to workforce development that aligns education and training systems with the needs of employers. Fund development and collaboration with partners continues to be a top priority for EIW.

BOARD CHAIR REMARKS: Business is about building and maintaining relationships. It helps foster trust, collaboration, and loyalty which leads to increased opportunities and a stronger network. He and Gus met with Jeremy Duncan, the newly appointed superintendent of Fayette County Schools, to build good communication and offer support. "Everything you want is on the other side of fear." "You can't control what happens, you can only control your response." These quotes were discussed and while we can't control the circumstances we face; we can control how we respond.

ADJOURN: There being no further business Ron Best adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:54 am.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bryan Brackemyre