

City of Evansville **Economic Development Committee**
 Regular Meeting
 3rd Floor City Hall, 31 S Madison Street, Evansville, WI 53536
 Tuesday, April 20th, 2026, 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

1. Call to Order. 6:00 pm by Geoffrion.

2. Roll Call:

| | <u>Present/Absent</u> | <u>Others Present</u> |
|----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Joe Geoffrion, Chair | P | Erik Ferrar, ECSD |
| Kelly Shannon | P | Bronna Lehmann, Eager Free Public Library |
| Jon Alling | P | Colette Spranger, Com. Dev. Director |
| Paul Liesse | P | James Otterstein, Rock County ED |
| Brandon Rutz | P | Shawn Dunphy, Chamber of Commerce |
| Pat Carr | A | |
| Sue Berg | P | |

3. Motion to Approve Agenda as printed. Motion by Berg, second by Shannon. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Motion to waive the reading of the minutes from March 17, 2026 meeting and approve as printed. Motion by Berg, second by Shannon. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Civility Reminder

6. Citizen appearances, other than listed agenda items
None.

7. New Business

A. Review Sec. 94-81. Powers and Duties.

Request originated to review the actual powers of the committee. Spranger included verbiage from the Municipal Code and the 2026 goals of the committee set at the end of 2025, which were based on the Economic Development chapter of the comprehensive plan.

Liesse spoke of his want to better small business retention in Evansville and to provide an environment conducive to growing and starting businesses.

Alling would like to see more for onboarding for new businesses, even conducting exit interviews if possible.

Berg notes those kind of items are labor intensive, and sounds like a social worker for businesses.

Lehman notes there are many resources, such as SCORE, that do a lot of this kind of work for free or for a nominal price. Continued discussion regarding a marriage of private and public partnerships.

Otterstein offers his advice on running a successful economic development campaign. These include using technology, leveraging relationships, and “rinse and repeat” of tried-and-true tactics. Suggests focusing on one do-able task instead of taking on many needs. Group acknowledgment that a lot of baseline need either needs to be understood or met before a proper campaign can be taken on. Otterstein also advised to “keep data fresh” and to partner with the private sector to get the data needed to make a case.

8. Old Business

A. Library Partnership Update

Lehman reports that she has looked into an Intro to AI class that the library would host and that would be open to the public. She has been communicating with a representative from SCORE.

9. Monthly Reports

A. Community Development Update.

Spranger mentioned the highlights of her monthly report, which included a brief overview of a talk given by Phil Powell at Indiana University. Statistics for building permits and building starts were shared.

B. Chamber Update.

Dunphy updates on new chamber members, upcoming ribbon cuttings, and other events. Art Crawl is coming up on May 8th.

C. Tourism Update.

Berg reports from the latest Tourism meeting. The 5 ladies mural is being re-hung at Lake Ridge Bank the day before Art Crawl. Creekside Place is acting as fiscal agent for the 4th of July Celebration.

10. Discussion

11. Next Meeting Dates:

- A. Regular Meeting: April 20, 2026 at 6:00 PM.

12. Adjourn. Motion by Berg, second by Shannon. Motion carried unanimously.