

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
OF WAYNE COUNTY, INDIANA
Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 10, 2023**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Cenova, Foster, Gaddis, Johnson, King, Robinson, Tanner, VanDerBurgt, Zaleski

BOARD MEMBERS VIRTUAL: Fennimore, Turner

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Bolser

STAFF PRESENT: Shaffer, Doty, Fisher, Lindsey, Mitchell

GUESTS PRESENT: Sowers, George – EDC Counsel
Crist, Duane – IAW
Emery, Millie – Hometown Media Group
Thurlow, Kim – Ivy Tech
Saunders, Gary – Wayne County Council
Johnson, Mark – Liberation Labs
Warner, Mark – Liberation Labs

1. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Sherrilyn Johnson called the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Economic Development Corporation of Wayne County, Indiana to order at 4:00 p.m. on July 10, 2023.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. 2023 June Minutes

Johnson stated the minutes from the June 15, 2023, board meeting need to be approved. No corrections were noted.

Motion to approve June 15, 2023, minutes as presented by Turner, seconded by King. Roll call.

Motion carried.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

a. 2023 June Financial Reports

Jim Tanner reported the Economic Development Corporation is over budget MTD by \$16,392.70 however, the EDC is under budget YTD by \$39,173.97. He said the following 4 items were over budget due to having 3 pay dates in June: 1001 Salaries, 1365 Federal Payroll Taxes, 1366 Retirement, and 1389 Disability. He reviewed several other items over budget due to various reasons and they were: 2221 Gasoline, 2249 In-House Supplies, 3310 Vehicle Lease, 3320 Contractual/Professional Service, 3321 Postage & Freight, 3323 Travel Lodging & Meals, 3342 Insurance Worker's Compensation, 3343 Vehicle Insurance, 3371 Rent-Equipment, and 3374 Rent-Building, Structures.

Motion to approve June financials as presented by Gaddis, seconded by Robinson. Roll call.

Motion carried.

4. CHAIR'S REPORT

Johnson stated the Executive Committee reviewed and approved Liberation Labs EDIT Grant Application #23-216, TOOTRiS Childcare platform, and Irongate's proposal all of which will be discussed in our meeting today.

5. EDC STAFF REPORTS

Fisher – Fisher stated she, Valerie and Theresa have started working on our 2024 Budget. She and Valerie met with Kelly at Opti-Visé regarding renewal of our IT agreement for 2024 and reviewed the hardware that will need to be replaced next year per our IT agreement. She attended Liberation Labs groundbreaking ceremony with staff members and the READI 2.0 community planning workshop with the staff members. She stated that Brady Ware will be here to conduct our 2022 Audit later this month.

Lindsey – Lindsey reported she submitted 4 projects: Alloy, Max, Breadbasket, and Green Eagle to IEDC this month. She had 5 BRE meetings in June and attended the K-8 and High School Coalition meetings. She continued work with TOOTRiS and area employers to move forward with bringing a childcare platform to Wayne County. She said she is participating in the Total Eclipse Initiative, and for those of you who are unaware, there will be a Total Solar Eclipse on April 8, that will be visible in Wayne County. There will be an Eclipse Community Information session on July 19th from 9 a.m.-10 a.m. at IU East Campus if you are interested in attending.

Doty – Doty stated we are getting close to kicking-off the Home in Wayne brand strategy. She has been working with Irongate on a cost proposal and they mentioned the possibility of developing a community calendar, but this has not been decided upon yet. She worked on the overview for the quarterly Marketing Committee to show the direction for the Home in Wayne brand. She stated we plan to do a soft launch of the Jobs EQ web portal in hopes of working out any issues prior to going public with it. At the request of Shaffer, Doty will send the Jobs EQ link to our board of directors so they can also test the site before we go public. She assisted Liberation Labs public relations firm to promote the company's groundbreaking, provided them with a list of local photographers and helped distribute information and photos of the groundbreaking on EDC's social media platforms and website.

Mitchell – Mitchell said we cancelled our Industrial Park meeting in June due to lack of added information or communication to provide the group. She attended the Rural Housing Summit presented by the Indiana Board of Realtors along with Melissa Vance from the Wayne County Area Chamber of Commerce. She has also been working on project profile development for HELP. She has been busy with housing development discussions with various developers who are wanting to move forward. She attended her last Community in Schools Board of Directors meeting after serving on this board for the previous 7 years.

Shaffer – Shaffer said Liberation Labs had their groundbreaking ceremony on June 29th at their site in the Midwest Industrial Park. She said Project Thomas, which is now known as Anchor Ingredients, announced they are locating a new rail transloading processing and bulk storage facility in Richmond's Midwest Industrial Park. This project will result in a \$40M investment and create 30 jobs at an hourly rate of \$25. The EDC is a pass-through for this project's \$900,000 rail incentive and said the City of Richmond is continuing to work on the three-way incentive agreement between the City, EDC, and the company. She has been participating in weekly meetings with Earlham and community leadership to work on identifying projects for Earlham's application to the Lilly Endowment's College and Community Collaboration Grant. Earlham will apply in the September round. She has also been meeting with IU East leadership regarding their application to the same grant from Lilly Endowment. IU East will be applying in the Spring of 2024. The monthly regional READI 1.0 meetings are still on going, and Shaffer said they have begun meeting a 2nd time monthly to discuss our region's application for READI 2.0. The kickoff meeting for READI 2.0 was in Richmond on June 13th with about 30 community members coming together to prioritize the needs of Wayne County. READI 2.0 has a \$500M allocation from the State of Indiana and some of the unapproved projects from READI 1.0 could benefit from this funding. She said the Ball Brother's Foundation in Muncie is offering ECIRP counties \$5,000 mini grants to assist with planning efforts. Shaffer asked the board for their approval to apply for these funds. All members agreed. She said we have three MakeMyMove offers pending, and the group will be meeting this week.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

a. Liberation Labs EDIT Grant Application #23-216

Shaffer welcomed Mark Johnson and Mark Warner from Liberation Labs who attended the board meeting virtually. She thanked all board members who were able to attend their groundbreaking ceremony. She said Liberation Labs has completed an EDIT Grant application requesting the \$250,000 grant proposed in their incentive package. Liberation Labs will be making a \$115M investment, creating 45 new jobs at an average hourly wage of \$35. Shaffer asked Mark Warner with Liberation Labs to explain their operation and plans for the EDIT Grant to the group.

Mark Warner said he appreciates all who attended their groundbreaking ceremony. He said construction has started on their project and there were no issues on the PER environment checks. The air permit is moving forward although there are certain phases of the project that cannot move forward until the air permit is approved. They have \$38M worth of equipment on order and are still on target to begin operations by the end of 2024. They are currently working on the foundation and sub-surfaces. Beginning in 2024 the building will start going up and operations should start in 4th quarter of 2024. They have hired their first local employee, Mike Witham. They are working with Ivy Tech on hiring and training support. Liberation Labs will serve as a contract manufacturing partner for companies creating alternative proteins for use in foods. They are not an end-product manufacturer. Shaffer stated we would like the board's approval for Liberation Labs EDIT Grant Application #23-216.

Motion to approve Liberation Labs EDIT Grant #23-216 in the amount of \$250,000 as presented by Tanner and seconded King. Roll call.

Motion carried.

b. TOOTRiS Childcare Platform

Shaffer said the EDC partnered with Forward Wayne County to develop, distribute, and compile a childcare survey to determine our local workforce needs. We had 18 employers participate in sending it to their workforce that resulted in 276 responses. The #2 requested benefit is childcare subsidies. Then, we found a platform called TOOTRiS run by a technology company based out of California. TOOTRiS will come to the community to evaluate our childcare providers and get them all on their platform making it easy for individuals to research and sign up for services. They also offer payroll deductions and help employers implement and manage a childcare subsidy. Since there is a cost to employers, the EDC applied to Duke Energy's Childcare Grant Program, and we will receive \$21,500 in funding to help employers with their costs to implement the program for the first year. The cost to employers would be \$1.25 per employee. Lindsey said she is in constant contact with employers regarding the childcare platform. Shaffer asked the board for support of the \$5,000 deficit in funding for the TOOTRiS platform so we can cover employers up to a total of 1500 employees.

Motion by Cenova and seconded by Robinson to contribute \$5,000 towards bringing the TOOTRiS platform to Wayne County. Roll call.

Motion carried.

c. Irongate Proposal

Doty stated that as we move forward through the Home in Wayne brand and enter the implementation phase, we have found that finding actual human interaction is important to people and could attract top talent to the area. We will have 2 workshops, the first workshop will have approximately 15 participants focused on brand identity, messaging, and guidelines. The second workshop will be comprised of approximately 30 strategic partners focusing on brand ambassadors, and the development of a newsletter. It is important for this to become a community initiative, not an EDC initiative. Irongate's proposal for \$20,500 covers the cost for facilitators, messaging, and all planning.

Motion by King and seconded by VanDerBurgt to approve the Irongate Proposal in the amount of \$20,500 for Brand and Community Building Workshops for Home in Wayne. Roll call.

Motion carried.

d. Tracy Cross & Associates Proposal

Johnson said Tracy Cross & Associates will provide an update on the viability of new housing opportunities throughout Wayne County. The information from our last report is out of date and needs to be completed again. She said they are adding in subsidized housing needs for low-income families this time around and they will of course update the market rate housing information provided in the 2021 report. For \$12,000 we have the opportunity to have the most up to date numbers for Wayne County.

Mitchell said there have been 96 apartments added to Chester Heights since our last report and market rate apartment costs are vastly different than they were in our 2021 report.
 Shaffer asked for the support of the full board to approve the Tracy Cross & Associates Proposal in the amount of \$12,250 to be paid from Contractual/Professional Services.
Motion by Tanner and seconded by Foster to approve the Tracy Cross & Associates Proposal in the amount of \$12,250. Roll call.
Motion carried.

Johnson asked if there was any other business to discuss. No comments were made.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Johnson adjourned the meeting at 4:58 p.m.

NEXT BOARD MEETING – Monday, August 7, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

Roll Call Vote Tracking: 07-10-23 EDC Board Meeting

Agenda Items						
Board Member	Approval of June Minutes	June Financials	Liberation Labs EDIT Grant Application #23-216	TOOTRiS Childcare Platform	Irongate Proposal	Tracy Corss & Associates Proposal
Bolser						
Cenova	Y	Y	Y	1st	Y	Y
Fennimore	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Foster	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	2nd
Gaddis	Y	1st	Y	Y	Y	Y
Johnson	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
King	2nd	Y	2nd	Y	1st	Y
Robinson	Y	2nd	Y	2nd	Y	Y
Tanner	1st	Y	1st	Y	Y	1st
Turner	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Van Der Burgt		Y	Y	Y	2nd	Y
Zaleski			Y	Y	Y	Y

Key
1st - motion made
2nd - motion seconded
Y - yes vote
N - no vote
A - abstained
I - Ineligible to vote
Blank indicates absence