

Washington Economic Development Commission

Meeting Minutes

September 9, 2025 at 6:30pm

Washington Historical Society Board Room

Commission members called the meeting to order at 6:34pm.

Present: Corey Allen, Kevin Beale, Lisa Uphoff, Drew Hillman, Bobby Martin

Not Present: Mike Herzog, Kregg Soltow

1. Public Comments: None
2. Approval of Minutes from August 12, 2025: Kevin Beale made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Corey Allen. Motion carried.
3. Business Items
 - a. Functions and Duties Discussion: Commission members took turns reading (item-by-item) the key responsibilities of the EDC from Municipal Code Sec. 12-223
 - b. Core Objectives Discussion: Kevin Beale moved to approve the revisions to the Core Objectives, seconded by Corey Allen, motion carried.
 - c. Appointment and Approve Leads (Roles and Responsibilities)
 1. Feedback was shared by a commissioner that the Grant lead could be combined with the "Finance, Stakeholder and Community Liaison" but the group agreed that the roles and responsibilities were approved as presented (motion by Lisa Uphoff, seconded by Corey Allen, motion carried)
 2. Confirmed **Chairperson / Strategic Coordinator** will be Bobby Martin (approved during 8/12/2025 meeting)
 3. **Business Retention & Recruitment Lead** will be Corey Allen – motion by Bobby Martin, seconded by Kevin Beale, motion carried.
 4. **Planning, Research & Grants Lead** will be Kregg Soltow – motion by Kevin Beale, seconded by Corey Allen, motion carried.
 5. **Marketing & Communications Lead** will be Kevin Beale – motion by Corey Allen, seconded by Bobby Martin, motion carried.
 6. **Finance, Stakeholder, and Community Liaison** will be Mike Herzog – motion by Bobby Martin, seconded by Corey Allen, motion carried.
 - d. Chair Updates

1. Bobby Martin discussed that the budgets are due in April, and that there is existing funding for commissioners to attend professional development courses/seminars etc. Stakeholder & Community Liaison.' Members will review and provide feedback on the associated 'key responsibilities' before the next meeting.
- e. Communication and Data Updates: Kevin Beale presented findings from recent collaboration with several City employees, including marketing/communications lead Amanda Roberts, city planner Jon Oliphant and interim city administrator Dennis Carr.
 1. Overall, it is becoming clear that full cooperation between the EDC and City employees will be mutually beneficial. We plan to funnel any broad messaging through the city marketing/communications lead.
 2. Members discussed the importance of aligning with the city branding and tone of voice (which is currently being developed)
 3. Members discussed the future desire of the EDC to use a marketing automation tool (and web technology in general) to collect “leads” for new businesses wanting to start or grow their business in Washington. Ultimately, the EDC will maintain a database of businesses that have expressed interest in Washington, businesses that are currently established in Washington, and those that the EDC is targeting for prospecting activities, as well as a centralized record-keeping system for any current economic development projects / deals being worked on
 4. A demo of a marketing automation platform, called HubSpot, showed what this might look like. This platform could be shared by the EDC and the City with the proper security roles / mechanisms in place.
 5. Members discussed the benefits of having access to such a tool and briefly discussed the need for the ability to quickly and easily survey Washington residents about economic development such as what businesses to pursue. It was mentioned that the city has access to a survey platform that could be used – at least for the interim.
 6. Members discussed the continuing search for guidance (from the city) on the use of personal/work email addresses for any official communication.
4. Other Business
5. Commissioner Comments
 - a. Members discussed the Comprehensive Plan and the participation of the current city council members in that planning. The commission also discussed the value of the EDC using the principles of the Comprehensive Plan to focus efforts and gather support from the city council (and the community as a whole). Examples shared were incorporating bike lanes, and walkability. Members discussed Pekin's current

initiative that is incorporating similar design principles. Members agreed that cooperation (among the team, and across various city committees / groups / constituent groups) is critical for overall success.

6. Adjournment