



Economic Development Commission

Tuesday, October 28, 2025, at 6:30 P.M.

Washington Historical Society, 128 Washington Square, Washington, IL 61571

Present: Kevin Beale, Gregg Soltow, Bobby Martin, Drew Hillman, Corey Allen

Absent: Lisa Uphoff, Mike Herzog

Also Present: -

1. CALL TO ORDER: At 6:33 p.m., Commissioner Bobby Martin called the meeting to order with a quorum present.
2. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Commissioner Bobby Martin motioned to accept the September 9, 2025 meeting minutes; Commissioner Corey Allen seconded. Passed by voice vote.
4. NEW BUSINESS:

A. *Website Discussion*

1. Commissioner Bobby Martin expressed interest in creating a Facebook Page for the EDC. Ideally posts would be created by the EDC (in coordination with the City) and would be shared by the City, while the EDC builds its audience.
2. Commissioner Kevin Beale explained that the new Revize platform selected by the City will be implemented in 2026 after the rebranding direction is chosen. Commissioner Drew Hillman asked whether the new website would eliminate the need for HubSpot. The Revize platform provides all of the key website functionality needed by the EDC, but does not replace the need for relational database / marketing automation tool such as HubSpot.

B. *Leads Update*

1. Commissioner Kevin Beale explained that he reviewed the potential use of HubSpot with City communications lead Amanda Roberts. The City does not have any use for the functionality that the EDC intends to use, and this would lend itself for an eventual 'shared environment.'
2. The pricing of HubSpot would be mostly driven by the City's use, as the number of 'marketing contacts' (those used for marketing emails, etc.) is the primary cost driver.

C. *Washington Plaza*

1. Commissioner Bobby Martin explained that the modular Christmas tree is to be placed in Washington Plaza for this holiday season, provided there is electricity available.
2. Commissioner Bobby Martin explained that there is currently an intention for a green space in Washington Plaza that would eventually be a natural place for this type of holiday celebration, as well as community-oriented events including farmers markets, car shows, 'trunk or treat' events, etc.
3. Commissioners discussed exciting potential uses of this green space, and a natural separation of the parking lot that could create a safer area for walk-able events
4. Commissioners discussed potential locations of a coffee / specialty drink business in the Plaza. Commissioners and the Plaza owner want to optimize the use of the green space to facilitate the best use of the coffee shop, and the subsequent parking area created adjacent to the two.
5. Commissioner Kevin Beale is currently assembling a feedback panel for the Sunnyland area to solicit feedback on the development efforts, but also to gain community trust and buy-in.

6. Commissioner Drew Hillman expressed the benefits of maintaining seasonal/holiday activities at the Square, while also enhancing the use of the Plaza area

D. *Marketing Meeting*

1. Commissioner Bobby Martin expressed the need for a marketing committee where representatives from key stakeholders meet periodically for the improvement of communication/cooperation between entities.
2. Commissioner Kevin Beale took the concept further, by outlining an “All In” approach to event support and larger community initiatives that may extend beyond simple messaging and could extend into shared event planning and execution.
3. Commissioner Bobby Martin has contacted most of the entities and is waiting to hear back from the Chamber of Commerce to set a preliminary meeting.

E. *Partnerships*

1. Commissioner Kevin Beale discussed the importance of establishing a strong cooperative relationship with the Chamber of Commerce, and a desire to work hand-in-hand with the Chamber (to support their goals) while also supporting the overall economic development of Washington.
2. Commissioner Kevin Beale also re-iterated the potential benefits of the “All In” approach to economic development and community affairs – not just for direct business growth, but for overall resident satisfaction.

5. OTHER BUSINESS: None

6. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

- A. *Public Participation and Public Comments* – Commissioner Kevin Beale expressed interest in revising the meeting format to allow public comments during public meetings. The group agreed that this would be a good idea, and that commissioners can motion to allow comments or recognize meeting attendees for comments during portions of the meeting. The allowing of comments would need to be seconded, as other motions.
- B. *Importance of Record Keeping and Follow-up* – Commissioner Corey Allen expressed the importance of a record-keeping system for tracking business development efforts. The commission has been discussing the implementation of HubSpot for managing contacts and potential deals. The commission agreed to pursue pricing details for securing a system. Commissioner Kevin Beale will be the primary point of contact for this system and will collect pricing information.

7. ADJOURNMENT: At 7:57 p.m., Commissioner Corey Allen moved to adjourn; Commissioner Kevin Beale seconded. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Name, Title/Position