



Economic Development Commission

Tuesday, November 11, 2025, at 6:30 P.M.

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

Present: Kevin Beale, Kregg Soltow, Bobby Martin, Drew Hillman, Corey Allen, Mike Herzog

Absent: Lisa Uphoff

Also Present: -

1. CALL TO ORDER: At 6:30 p.m., Commissioner Bobby Martin called the meeting to order with a quorum present.
2. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Commissioner Corey Allen motioned to accept the October 28, 2025 meeting minutes; Commissioner Kregg Soltow seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.
4. NEW BUSINESS:
 - A. *Software Licensing and Acquisition*
 1. Commissioners discussed using Google Workspace for email and file storage, and HubSpot for as a central database. Commissioner Kregg Soltow suggested starting email addresses for all users for the first year and paring them down if they are not used.
 2. Commissioners agreed that five users for the HubSpot platform would be sufficient, and that Sales and Marketing Hubs would both be beneficial in achieving EDC goals
 3. Primary Email Domain will be washingtonedc.com. The commission also bought choosewashingtonil.com as a future website domain for attracting business and residents
 4. Commissioner Kevin Beale will be the point person for these platforms and will work with the city to provide them with access (for business continuity and oversight).
 5. Commissioner Kevin Beale will be working several employees of the city to select a paid surveying platform in the next couple weeks
 6. Commissioner Kevin Beale also reported that sharing a HubSpot environment with the city does not make practical sense, after conducting a deeper analysis of need with the city marketing/communications lead
 - B. *Sub-Committee*
 1. Commissioners discussed creating a sub-committee focused on developing the CRM and database system – both new and existing businesses. Commissioner Mike Herzog agreed that this would expedite the upfront data work and planning.
 2. Mike Herzog motioned to form the committee with Bobby Martin, Corey Allen, and Kevin Beale as the members. Corey Allen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.
 3. Commissioner Kevin Beale discussed that the Sunnyland Development Feedback Group was recently notified that things were shaping up to start surveying them; and that the work is contingent on getting Google Workspace and a survey tool set up
 - C. *Communication Strategy*

1. Facebook Page: Commissioners discussed the need to build a social audience, and we need a strategy for growing it. Commissioner Corey Allen proposed the idea of leveraging a younger group to help with this, such as the high school or ICC.
2. Commissioner Kevin Beale expanded on this idea by introducing the concept of a Youth Engagement Program to tap into the younger generations for insights and support. This would ultimately involve partnering with the high school and/or ICC to connect marketing and entrepreneurial minded students with the EDC
3. Commissioners discussed the importance of using surveys soon, outlining two primary topics for these surveys: business attraction and resident retention
 - a. Chairman Bobby Martin expressed interest in cumulative surveys when polling residents for business attraction, rather than relying on reading through comments sections. The commissioners discussed other potential uses for surveys and online polls as a great way to get the pulse of the community and grow engagement
 - b. Commissioner Kevin Beale also mentioned the importance of capturing contact information into the database, especially for those who want to be more in tune with EDC

D. *Strategic Partnership Updates*

1. Commissioner Bobby Martin mentioned the importance of cultivating and supporting new entrepreneurs in tangible ways, such as providing business advice and professional networking. Commissioner Mike Herzog suggested setting up formal business mentorships and offered his interest in sharing his 30+ years of experience in business financing with younger entrepreneurs.
2. Commissioner Drew Hillman suggested creating a sign-up form for these business mentors via the new website. All the commissioners agreed that this would be an excellent area of focus. Commissioner Drew Hillman also mentioned the “One Stop Shop” concept (for business incubation) in Peoria and how effective it could be for Washington
3. Commissioners agreed that business incubation will be a core initiative and discussed several exciting business ideas that would be good pilots for this

E. *Lead Tracking System*

1. Commissioner Kevin Beale outlined the HubSpot system and the proposed use of Contacts, Companies and Deals as the first uses for the system. The city has been curating an ArcGIS database of all businesses, and the EDC will be partnering with them to keep the system updated, and to extend the data into areas such as capturing specific needs / interests expressed by managers/owners
2. The Business Liaison Committee will be hosting more meetings to tailor this new system once it becomes available.

F. *Budget*

1. Commissioners discussed requesting a yearly budget, and talked through several ideas for how that money could be spent to grow business in the area, with ideas ranging from helping sponsor local events for the community as well as hosting business acumen events and education events for commissioners

5. OTHER BUSINESS: None

6. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

- A. *Executive Summary of Data* – Commissioner Kregg Soltow shared a working document outlining an economic development plan and requested feedback from the team

7. ADJOURNMENT: At 7:58 p.m., Commissioner Kevin Beale moved to adjourn; Commissioner Corey Allen seconded. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Name, Title/Position