



April 2025 LCEDC Annual Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Details: Wednesday, April 30, 2025

TIME: 10:00 am – 12:02 pm

Lincoln County Service Center, Room 156

801 N. Sales Street, Merrill, WI 54452

Board Members (11/13 total): Brian Arndorfer (Vice President/Chair), Jesse Boyd, Steve Daigle, Mike Fick, Renea Frederick, Gary Hartwig (President/Treasurer), Greg Hartwig, Steve Hass, Dave Johnson (Secretary), Val Mindak, Roger Schlegel, Jeff Schneider, Steve Taskay

Other Attendees (4): Rod Akey (City of Merrill), Sara Guild (EDC Director), Charis Lau (Tomahawk Chamber), Jennifer Turkiewicz (Tomahawk Main St)

1. Call to Order & Introductions – 10:00 am by Chair Arndorfer

Quorum = 11 Board members

VP Arndorfer called the meeting to order as Chair in President Hartwig's absence and led attendees in introductions around the room.

2. Approve Lincoln County EDC Board Meeting Minutes – February 26, 2025

Hass/Johnson motioned to approve the February 26, 2025 meeting minutes as presented; motion carried.

3. Consider Approval of 2025-26 LCEDC Board Members & Executive Committee Members

Arndorfer asked if there were any additional nominations for the open 2025-26 EDC Board member seats.

MOTION: Hartwig/Hass motioned to approve the proposed slate of 2025-26 LCEDC Board members for two-year terms ending in 2027, to include Brian Arndorfer, Steve Daigle, Gary Hartwig, Dave Johnson, and Roger Schlegel; motion carried.

Arndorfer asked if there were any additional nominations for the 2025-26 Executive Committee positions.

MOTION: Mindak/Hass motioned to approve the proposed 2025-26 LCEDC Executive Committee members as presented:

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|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ▪ President = Gary Hartwig | ▪ Secretary = Dave Johnson |
| ▪ Vice President = Brian Arndorfer | ▪ Treasurer = Renea Frederick |

Motion carried.

4. LCEDC Finance Report

a. February & March 2025 (final)

Guild and Arndorfer clarified differences between the various financial reports and addressed questions related to the formatting and utilization of the reports. Guild then reviewed each report, sharing details on income and expenditures from February & March 2025. She confirmed receipt of the City of Merrill's annual payment, three Build-level investor payments, and multiple Summit sponsorships, and clarified the Business Outreach expenses. Members discussed how financial activity to date compares to the 2025 budget estimates. Guild also noted that the LCEDC's accountant reported he is on track to complete the organization's 2024 990 tax form before the May 15 deadline. The Executive Director and Executive Committee will assist him as needed; the final 990 form will be shared at the June Board meeting.

MOTION: Johnson/Boyd motioned to approve February & March 2025 finance report; motion carried.

b. *April 2025 (preliminary review)*

Guild briefly reviewed the financial activities from the first three weeks of April. She noted that the \$823 charge under Event Registrations is for the WEDA Basic Economic Development program, which she is attending the first week of June. She successfully applied for a scholarship and will be reimbursed \$750 upon completion of the program; this is in part because the LCEDC paid over \$1200 to send 2 employees to this program in 2024; only one attended and then both left the organization. There were no questions.

c. *EDC Investors Recruitment Status*

Arndorfer provided a quick recap of the EDC's historical funding sources. Attendees discussed options to recruit additional investors during 2025. They agreed it would be more efficient to speak with multiple potential investors at a time, and Guild was directed to organize two "coffee talk"-style morning events to provide interested businesses/partners with an opportunity to learn more about the value of the EDC and to encourage them to financially invest in the organization. The events should be scheduled as soon as possible, with one in Merrill and one in Tomahawk. Guild was encouraged to collaborate with the Chambers/Main Street to promote and execute these events. Mindak and Daigle expressed interest in supporting/sponsoring the events in their respective communities. At the events, Guild will deliver a presentation outlining the role of the EDC, the benefits it provides to local businesses, and how it fits into the local business support ecosystem. Board members and partners will help promote the event, including inviting people in their networks to attend. Planning will begin immediately.

5. General Reports

a. *Executive Director*

Guild briefly reviewed the highlights from the top section of her written report. She provided additional information about the *Business in Focus* magazine article. She is being interviewed next week to discuss economic development in Lincoln County and the article will be part of a special July issue featuring stories about economic development from all across Wisconsin.

The County's IT Director also recently informed Guild that, due to County service contract changes, the EDC's printer will no longer be supported. Guild has requested the EDC be allowed to keep and continue using their printer without County support, with the understanding that if anything goes wrong, the EDC is responsible for printer servicing, disposal, and/or replacement. The Board supported this proposal.

b. *Strategic Plan Activities Update*

Guild referred attendees to the written report, noting that the County's HUBZone designation has been automatically extended to 2028 and that she is still working on the 501c3 application. There were no additional questions or comments.

c. *Lincoln County Broadband Commission*

The LCBC is currently waiting to find out if either of the internet service providers who applied for BEAD program funding to bring service into Lincoln County's un(der)served areas were approved in Round 1 or if they must reapply in Round 2. The LCBC has also decided to transition its focus towards identifying other opportunities to support internet service utilization throughout the County. It is currently working with UW-Madison Extension's Broadband Team to begin a digital asset mapping project, which will likely involve community outreach activities later this summer.

6. 2025 Economic Summit Recap

Attendees reviewed the event recap report and discussed the post-event survey results. Net income was approximately \$1200. Of the 93 attendees, more than half represented businesses. One-third of attendees completed the survey and gave the event an average rating of 4.48/5. Feedback was largely positive, especially on the content and event organization; cold temperatures in the main room and during lunch were the most common negative comments. Based on feedback, Guild proposed the 2026 Summit focus on supporting entrepreneurs,

building upon REV program activities. Attendees discussed this proposal, and also shared their thoughts related to having the EDC plan & host vs support/promote additional educational events in the future.

11:25 am – Mindak out

7. Future EDC Event Opportunities

Guild shared information about three different EDC event opportunities:

- *Economic Update with the Federal Reserve – Oct. 7*
Attendees provided feedback on the draft event promo flier and recommended offering two sponsorship levels at \$1000 and \$500 each. They also recommended Guild incorporate intentional networking time into the event schedule.
- *ExporTech Program Information Session – May/June*
UW-Stout's Manufacturing Outreach Center is seeking participants for their summer ExporTech program. Guild requested approval to work with them to schedule and promote a free online informational session so interested businesses can learn more about the program, possibly in collaboration with Grow North. Frederick shared her positive experiences going through the ExporTech program. Guild was approved to move forward with planning the informational session so long as it did not require significant staff time.
- *WI Procurement Institute (WPI) Info Session – September*
Guild has been speaking with WPI reps about doing another session to promote HUBZone designations and government contracting, similar to what the EDC did in March 2024, including partnering with Langlade County. If the Board approves, Guild will work with Langlade County EDC's Executive Director as well as WPI staff to develop an event that includes relevant feedback from businesses who have already gone through the designation process so it is more relatable and useful to prospective businesses. Board members authorized Guild to continue planning this event.

Attendees briefly discussed the EDC's options for promoting events. Guild noted that the EDC email list is her primary method at this time, but its reach is limited so she relies on the EDC's economic development partners to share the information with their networks, as well. She tries to limit press releases to large events.

8. Status of 501c3 Application

Guild has set up the EDC's online application account, completed some online IRS training webinars, and started researching the documents and addendums that may be required as part of the final submission. She will work with the Executive Committee to complete the application prior to the June 11 Board meeting. If it is completed in May, it will be shared via email for Board review prior to submission. If it is not done until June, the review will be incorporated into the Board meeting.

9. General Updates & Inquiries from Board Members & LCEDC Partners

Daigle shared information about his experience installing solar panels for use at his manufacturing business. He emphasized that current regulations regarding when solar-generated energy can be used in a home versus a business are very different. Homes have up to 30 days to use the energy they generate while businesses must use the energy immediately and cannot "bank" it for future use. Therefore, businesses cannot realize the financial benefits of solar like homes can. Guild will investigate if any other agencies have already identified this as a problematic business policy issue and follow up with the Board.

10. Future Meeting Dates & Topic Requests

The next LCEDC Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 11, at 10 am at the Lincoln County Service Center. Topics will include an update on the 501c3 application.

The following meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 27, at 10 am at Park City Credit Union in Tomahawk.

11. Meeting Adjournment – Johnson/Hartwig motioned to adjourn at 12:02 pm; motion carried.