

# City of Bloomington - Bloomington Urban Enterprise Association - Meeting Minutes

## Meeting Information

**Date:** Wednesday, May 13, 2026

**Time:** 12:00 PM

**Location:** City Hall, Bloomington, Indiana

**Notice:** Meeting was appropriately posted and noticed.

**Additional Notes:** Hybrid meeting (in-person and video conference).

## Attendance

### Board Members Present:

- Virginia Githiri (remote)
- Felisa Spinelli (remote)
- Michael Hover
- Katarina Koch
- Heather Robinson
- Jane Kupersmith
- Kate Rosenberger
- Brad Wisler

### Staff Present:

- De de la Rosa, Economic & Sustainable Development (Staff Liaison)
- Taegan Garner, Administrative Assistant

### Guests:

- None noted.

## 1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 12:00 PM. A quorum was present. Virginia Githiri and Felisa Spinelli participated remotely via video conference.

## 2. Approval of Minutes – March 2026

Minutes from March 2026 were reviewed (no April meeting was held). Katarina Koch noted her first name was misspelled in two places; the correction was acknowledged.

**Motion:** To approve March 2026 minutes as corrected. (Hover)

**Second:** Seconded. (Kupersmith)

### Roll Call Vote:

- Felisa Spinelli – Yes
- Virginia Githiri – Yes
- Michael Hover – Yes
- Heather Robinson – Yes

- Jane Kupersmith – Yes
- Kate Rosenberger – Yes

**Result:** Minutes approved.

### 3. Director's Report

- **Legal Counsel:** Dana Kerr will cover for Alex Pratt during leave. Legal questions should be directed to the Director.
- **New EZID Participants:** Two new potential participants identified. (1) TradeWiz Contractor Accelerator (West Kirkwood, behind Clinton Hurst)—an accelerator supporting tradespeople in business ownership via networking, legal, and accounting resources. (2) A second applicant is under review pending resolution of prior paperwork.
- **Business Economic Enhancement Scholarship:** Three scholarships approved in Q1—the most to date for this period. Grant line expected to be fully expended soon.

### 4. Financial Report

The director presented the grant expenditure summary as of May 2026 via a shared spreadsheet.

#### Education Grants:

- MCCSC: Check hand-delivered.
- Lemonade Day (Boys and Girls Club): Grant distributed; program teaches youth entrepreneurship.
- Total expended: \$77,500; remaining balance: \$15,000 (Resident Economic Independence Scholarships).

**Entrepreneurship – Cook SBDC Grant:** \$45,000 budgeted; no expenditures to date. Contract pending.

**Business Economic Enhancement Scholarships:** Three approved, totaling \$3,200; remaining balance: \$68,000.

**Amplify Day Passes (formerly Mill Zone):** No expenditures. Director promoting usage at the resource desk.

**Arts Grants:** No expenditures recorded. Payments in process; full update pending due to Arts Director search and consultant transition.

**Zone Improvement – Minor Repair Grants:** Two approved; ~\$8,100 remaining. Third application recently received.

**SEAL Grants:** Director and Assistant Director of Sustainability Sean Mia discussed expending two potential SEAL grants from the BUEA line, as the city budget line is expected to be fully utilized.

**Historic Facade Grant:** Increased by \$40,000 to \$90,000 to accommodate First Christian Church grant. Payment processing initiated.

**Small Business Safety and Security Grant:** \$5,000 expended for Fox Capital (carried over from prior year). No new applications this year.

**Business Building Improvement:** Two grants approved: The Rub (approved in December, now posting to the current year) and WonderLab (approved last month).

**Business Accessibility Modification:** No requests or expenditures.

**Spreadsheet Correction:** A board member identified three cells that used addition instead of subtraction. Corrected total balance: \$152,536.

**Quarterly Financial Statements:** Statements from German American Bank were not received in time for the quarterly report. The full financial report will be presented in June. A board member requested that the Director work with the Controller's Office to expedite access to statements.

**Resident Economic Independence Scholarships:** Maximum award is \$1,250, paid directly to the institution. Director to send the grant packet to a newer board member.

## 5. New Business

### Election of Secretary:

The secretary position has been vacant since Mary Morgan's term ended in January. The chair nominated Michael Hover to fill the role.

**Motion:** To approve Michael Hover as Secretary.

**Second:** Seconded.

### Roll Call Vote:

- Felisa Spinelli – Yes
- Kate Rosenberger – Yes
- Virginia Githiri – Yes
- Jane Kupersmith – Yes
- Heather Robinson – Yes
- Katarina Koch – Yes
- Brad Wisler – Yes
- Michael Hover – Yes

**Result:** Michael Hover elected as Secretary.

## 6. General Discussion

### Grant Language Revisions – Version 1.0:

Taegan Garner presented draft options for revising grant eligibility language, stemming from the WonderLab grant discussion at the prior meeting:

- Option 1 – No Change: Retain current language; use Minor Repair Grant's "routine maintenance" ineligible expense clause as interpretive guidance.
- Option 2 – Define Eligible/Ineligible Labor Costs: Add explicit language to guidelines with application examples for budgeting.
- Option 3 – In-Kind Matching: Allow in-kind contributions (including volunteer labor) to count toward the required match. Noted as administratively complex without existing staff follow-up capacity.

### Discussion highlights:

- The board favored Option 2, preferring affirmative language identifying eligible costs.
- In-kind matching (Option 3) drew significant discussion. Supporters cited benefits for cash-limited organizations; concerns centered on tracking and verification without the current administrative infrastructure.

- Felisa Spinelli noted that the board previously moved away from matching requirements to make grants accessible to businesses that cannot afford to match funds. She expressed concern about the burden that match requirements place on small business owners who often do not draw regular salaries.
- Staff clarified current match requirements: Minor Repair Grant – no match; Safety and Security – 50%; Building Improvement – 50%; Accessibility Modification – 25%.
- One board member noted that in-kind without administrative follow-up is functionally equivalent to no match, and proposed adding a no-match option to Version 2.0.
- Board reached consensus to request Version 2.0, including: explicit eligible labor cost language; in-kind matching with administrative guidance and percentage options; a no-match option; and updated eligibility language per bylaw criteria.
- Eligibility language update needed: the first line of the criteria must reflect that grants are available to businesses/nonprofits in the zone or to those primarily serving zone residents (per bylaws). Three bylaw criteria (proximity, economic impact, service to zone residents) to be incorporated.

**Action Item:** Staff to prepare Version 2.0 of grant language revisions for the June 2026 meeting, including eligible labor options, in-kind matching with percentage guidance, a no-match option, and updated bylaw-based eligibility language.

#### **Arts and Culture Grants – Approval Process:**

The board member asked about the arts grant approval. Staff clarified that arts grants go through the BAC's committee process and that BUEA provides final fiduciary approval via an omnibus review at the end of each cycle.

#### **Historic Facade Grant – Pending Application:**

Application tabled pending contractor estimates again. Expected to be presented at the June meeting.

## **7. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at approximately 1:02 PM.

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, June 10, 2026.