City Of Bloomington - Bloomington Urban Enterprise Association Meeting Minutes

Meeting Information

Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026

Time: 12:11 pm

Location: City Hall, Bloomington, Indiana

Notice: The meeting was appropriately posted and noticed.

Additional Notes or Summary: Hybrid meeting (in-person and video conference). Felisa Spinelli participated remotely. The meeting was originally scheduled to take place in the Kelley Conference Room, but was moved to the McCloskey Conference Room to accommodate attendance. The room change was posted at the Kelley Conference Room, and the meeting agenda was posted outside of the McCloskey Conference Room

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:11 p.m. by Chair Heather Robinson. Quorum was initially delayed by a connectivity issue affecting a board member's remote connection; the meeting proceeded once quorum was confirmed.

Board Members Present:

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

Staff present:

- De la Rosa, Executive Director.

Guests present:

- Toby Foster & Ryan Woods (Friendly Beast)
- Kate Crum & Josh Brewer (Cicada Cinema)

2. Approval of Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes of the June 2026 regular meeting. A correction was noted to the spelling of Board Member Koch’s first name in the prior minutes.

Roll call:

- Virginia Githiri– Approved
- Heather Robinson – Approved
- Jane Kupersmith – Approved (second)
- Felisa Spinelli – Approved
- Kate Rosenbarger – Approved.

- Katarina Koch - Approved (motioned)

Result: Motion carried 6-0.

3. Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director reported that online banking access for the Association's primary account is pending; regular statements will be available once access is granted.

Budget update: the Association has disbursed $3,710 to date this fiscal year, with a remaining balance of $6,290 in the affected budget line following a $510 Business Enhancement Scholarship disbursement.

Strategic planning update: the Executive Director will meet in August with Michelle King of PhoneBox to plan next steps for the Association's mission, vision, and strategic planning work, tentatively convening a facilitated session in late September. The session will be conducted as training rather than as an official board meeting.

4. Banking Authorization — Third Signatory

The Board considered designating the Secretary as an additional (third) signatory on the Association's bank accounts, to enable the Executive Director to obtain financial-institution approval by letter and meeting minutes. The Executive Director recommended the Secretary, Michael Hover, in his capacity as an officer of the Board.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted to add the Secretary as a third signatory on the Association's bank accounts.

Roll call:

- Virginia Githiri– Approved (second)
- Heather Robinson – Approved
- Jane Kupersmith – Approved
- Felisa Spinelli – Approved
- Kate Rosenbarger – Approved
- Katarina Koch - Approved (motioned)

Result: Motion carried 6-0.

5. Banking Authorization — Online Account Access

The Board considered approving online banking access (view access, draft-payment creation, and payment release authority) for the ESD Director to facilitate ACH and wire transfers, subject to a $20 monthly subscription fee to be funded from the Subscriptions and Dues budget line (current balance approximately $2,800) for f1RSTNAVIGATOR™ Online Banking. Additionally, the Board considered read-only and draft payment online account access for the Executive Director.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted to approve additional full and read-only online account access as described, together with the associated monthly fee.

Roll call:

- Virginia Githiri–Approved (second)
- Heather Robinson –Approved
- Jane Kupersmith –Approved
- Felisa Spinelli –Approved
- Kate Rosenbarger –Approved
- Katarina Koch - Approved (motioned)

Result: Motion carried 6-0.

6. Grant Application — 812 Labs, "Builders Room" AI Training Program

The Executive Director presented a request from 812 Labs for $7,000 from the Business Enhancement Scholarship account to reserve ten seats (five per cohort) in the Builders Room program for businesses located within the Bloomington Urban Enterprise Zone, at approximately $700 per participant. The program is a hands-on AI implementation training initiative held at The Mill, developed in partnership with Amplify Bloomington and the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce, with 812 Labs serving as lead program designer and facilitator, and is principally funded through the IEDC Community Collaboration Fund. The Board discussed ensuring the program's benefit reaches businesses outside The Mill's existing membership base and directed that eligibility for Association-funded seats be limited to non-technology businesses not located at 642 N. Madison Street.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted to approve $7,000 from the Business Enhancement Scholarship account for the Builders Room program, funding ten Enterprise Zone participants at approximately $700 each, with a focus on non-technology businesses outside The Mill.

Roll call:

- Virginia Githiri–Approved (Motion)
- Heather Robinson –Approved
- Jane Kupersmith –Approved
- Felisa Spinelli –Approved
- Kate Rosenbarger –Approved
- Katarina Koch - Approved (second)

Result: Motion carried 6-0.

7. Grant Applications — Friendly Beast (Accessibility; Safety and Security)

The Executive Director presented two related grant requests from Friendly Beast in connection with its relocation, necessitated by displacement from its current location for the Convention Center host hotel development.

Accessibility Grant: total project cost $12,998, including construction of an ADA-compliant restroom, replacement of entry doors, an ADA-compliant ordering countertop, and a rear-exit landing to serve as a refuge point. Friendly Beast's proposed match was $3,249.50 (25%); the amount requested from the Association was $9,749.

Safety and Security Grant: total project cost $6,460, including a two-hour fire-rated barrier wall between tenant spaces, associated code review and architectural drawings, a panic bar and updated locks, and hard-wired exit signage and security lighting. Friendly Beast's proposed match was $1,615; the amount requested from the Association was $4,845.

The Board discussed waiving the local match requirement for both grants on the basis that Friendly Beast's landlord is not contributing to the cost of improvements to a leased space, and elected to fund each project at its full eligible cost: $10,000 for the Accessibility Grant (the program maximum) and $6,460 for the Safety and Security Grant, for a combined total of $16,460.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted to approve grant funding for Friendly Beast for the Safety and Security and Accessibility grants at full eligible project cost, waiving the local match requirement.

Roll call:

- Virginia Githiri–Approved
- Heather Robinson –Approved
- Jane Kupersmith –Approved (Motion)
- Felisa Spinelli –Approved
- Kate Rosenbarger –Approved
- Katarina Koch - Approved (second)

Result: Motion carried 6-0.

Board member Kate Rosenbarger offered remarks recognizing Friendly Beast's role in activating the B-Line Trail corridor and expressed regret over the business's displacement due to the host hotel redevelopment.

8. Grant Application — Cicada Cinema (ADA Compliance)

Kate Crum and a representative of Cicada Cinema presented a request regarding the renovation of a former warehouse into a community movie theater adjacent to Friendly Beast's new location. The renovation triggers Assembly Group A-1 occupancy classification under the Indiana building code, requiring construction of a second ADA-compliant restroom, modification of the existing restroom to ADA standards, and construction of a vestibule to block light and sound from the lobby into the auditorium.

Total project cost is $10,619. Cicada Cinema's confirmed committed funding is $2,654.95; the amount requested from the Association is $7,965.

The Board discussed waiving the match requirement on the same basis applied to the Friendly Beast grants (the tenant, not the landlord, bears the cost of required improvements), and, exercising the Board's discretion to fund above the standard program maximum, elected to fund the full project cost of $10,619.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted to approve $10,619 in grant funding for Cicada Cinema's ADA compliance project, waiving the local match requirement.

Roll call:

- Virginia Githiri–Approved (Motion)
- Heather Robinson –Approved
- Jane Kupersmith –Approved
- Felisa Spinelli –Approved
- Kate Rosenbarger –Approved
- Katarina Koch - Approved (second)

Result: Motion carried 6-0.

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9. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.