



MINUTES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025 – 4:00pm
Grand Marais City Hall – Council Chambers
15 North Broadway Ave, Grand Marais, MN 55604

Commissioners Present: Peter Clissold, Howard Hedstrom, Mark Shackleton, Tracy Benson, Alex Beebe-Guidice, Dave Mills, Siri Anderson

Commissioners Absent: none

Others Present: Wendy Thompson, Jeff Brand, Peter Mott, minute taker Maggie Barnard

1. Call to Order

Clissold called the Regular Meeting of the Cook County/Grand Marais Joint Economic Development Authority to order at 4:00 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

Clissold called for any additions or revisions to the agenda as presented. No additions or revisions.

Motion to approve agenda as presented. (Hedstrom/Mills) Vote: Passed (7-0)

3. Public Comments

Clissold opened public comments and asked any public members present to come forward. No comments. Public comments closed.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. August 26, 2025 EDA Regular Meeting ([Pages 1-4](#))

Motion to approve the August 26, 2025 EDA Regular Meeting minutes. (Hedstrom/Benson)

Vote: Passed (7-0)

5. Review of Financials

- a. Balance Sheet EDA, as of August 31, 2025 ([Pages 5-11](#))

Shackleton said expenses are pretty much in line, cash on hand is acceptable.

President and members accept and forward to audit.

- b. Bill Approval Status EDA, August 2025 Payments ([Page 12](#))

Motion to approve EDA August payments. (Mills/Shackleton) Vote: Passed (7-0)

- c. Balance Sheet Superior National Golf Course, as of August 31, 2025 ([Pages 13-17](#))

Shackleton noted that sales and revenue are close to last year but there is \$200,000 less in cash on hand but it has improved since May. **President and members accept and forward to audit.**

6. New Business

- a. **2025-37** RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT FUND GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE BEAVER HOUSE LLC FOR A TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$10,693 ([Pages 18-63](#))

Clissold shared that the grant request is to support renovation and conversion of the building interior and noted the original request was for \$25,000 but due to low Business Development Fund program balance, a partial award is recommended. Noted that Wendy Thompson is present for questions.

Discussion on using other fund sources to award \$25,000. There are other applicants pending or given reduced awards due to higher volume of grant requests this year. Levy is due in late October and

MINUTES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025 – 4:00pm
Grand Marais City Hall – Council Chambers
15 North Broadway Ave, Grand Marais, MN 55604

\$200,000 will be coming in from the Gunflint Vue project. Decision to remain consistent in award amounts.

Wendy Thompson said the priority is to replace the building doorway.

Motion to approve RESOLUTION 2025-37. (Hedstrom/Shackleton) Vote: Passed (7-0)

- b. **2025-38 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CLOSURE OF THE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT FUND GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE REMAINDER OF CALENDAR YEAR 2025** (Pages 64-66)

Clissold noted that a broader discussion on 2026 program guidelines and timeline will be discussed later in the agenda. **Motion to approve RESOLUTION 2025-38** (Benson/Anderson) Vote: Passed (7-0)

7. SBDC Report (Page 67)

Mott said the month of August was a bit slower in the office, but he did carry eight clients from July into August and there was one business started. Noted he is currently working with eleven clients, and two business starts for September. Noted there has also been some established businesses coming to discuss new tactics such as increased marketing or business plan adjustments and he is working diligently to maintain client privacy within the community.

8. Committee/Commissioner Reports

- a. Taconite Harbor Subcommittee – Strategic Plan Update (Pages 68-70)

Benson noted the Subcommittee met on Friday, September 5, 2025 and advertisements about joining the Advisory Committee were sent to local media outlets and an interview with WTIP was completed.

Anderson noted she will meet with the North Shore Journal and Benson spoke with the Mayor of Silver Bay.

Benson noted that the broadcast on social media channels has generated comments and noted the importance that members are participating as individuals and not representing an organization. Mentioned there are currently twenty-five applicants to join this Advisory Committee.

- b. Grant Review Committee – 2026 Business Development Fund (Pages 71-75)

Beebe-Guidice said the Grant Review Committee met Thursday, September 4, 2025 and the documents included in the agenda packet are for reference and discussion and not final guidelines. Noted the major changes being transitioning from rolling applications to three hard deadlines throughout the year, which allows for consolidation of applications and thoughtful comparison and review against program guidelines versus looking at one at a time. Noted these revisions should help the Committee be more consistent with every application and have a competitive review process.



MINUTES

Tuesday, September 16, 2025 – 4:00pm
Grand Marais City Hall – Council Chambers
15 North Broadway Ave, Grand Marais, MN 55604

Discussion on application process and requirements for communicating incomplete applications. Recommendations will be reviewed with the board in October. There is a need to change some language to consider sole proprietors and allow them to prove legitimacy versus having to be an LLC. Registering with the State may be enough to show this. They recommend adjusting match requirements as well with a detailed example in the guidelines.

Clissold thanked the Committee members for their tremendous work on a very busy grant year, reviewing many applications while also improving the process and documentation.

c. HR Committee- Executive Director Update ([Pages 76-83](#))

Benson noted the HR Committee met Friday, September 5, 2025 and revised the existing job description.

Discussion on physical requirement considerations. There is a concern about starting this process approaching the upcoming holiday season. Discussion. It is most important for the candidate to convey that they understand what is needed for Economic Development in this community. It was recommended to be specific about expectations of physical presence; the Director needs to be here to establish relationships and be community contact.

Jeff Brand said trying to find a single-family residence remains the biggest challenge as the County median price range is unique. He also feels it is necessary to have a face representing the Economic Community therefore think of how you make it easier for a candidate to transition.

The committee recommends the timeframe to start searching is January 1, 2026 with the current contracted support. Consider a more flexible vacation amount. The committee will review these revisions to the job description with the board again in October.

d. Golf Course Committee Sale Update

Hedstrom and Clissold reported that they are proceeding with 30 days of the buyers due diligence period. The offer has been presented to the County Commissioners. Hedstrom and Clissold will meet with Auditor Powers to review bond payoffs. Clissold noted that Poplar River Erosion work has been completed by Veit and that the purchase agreement will be forwarded to the Nelson family for first right of refusal and the latest closing would be March 15, 2026.

9. Adjourn

Clissold asked for a motion to adjourn the EDA September 16, 2025 Regular Meeting at 5:45 pm. (Hedstrom/Benson).

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 21, 2025