



**Proceedings of the Economic Development Corporation Meeting  
Wednesday, January 7, 2026**

A Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) was held on Wednesday, January 7, 2026, at 10:00 A.M. in the Women's Club Room.

1. Ackerman-Behr called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
2. Recording of the Roll.

| MEMBER                 | Present  |          | EXCUSED       | NOT<br>EXCUSED | TERM<br>EXPIRATION |
|------------------------|----------|----------|---------------|----------------|--------------------|
|                        | YES      | NO       |               |                |                    |
| Vacant                 |          |          |               |                | 10/31/2026         |
| Simon Batu             | X        |          |               |                | 10/31/2026         |
| Vacant                 |          |          |               |                | 10/31/2027         |
| Corcoran, Kim          | X        |          |               |                | 10/31/2027         |
| Virshek, Danielle      | X        |          |               |                | 10/31/2027         |
| Ackerman-Behr,<br>Glen | X        |          |               |                | 10/31/2027         |
| Libby, Carolyn         | X        |          |               |                | 10/31/2027         |
| Lehto, Steve           | X        |          |               |                | 10/31/2028         |
| Raush, Ken             | X        |          |               |                | 10/31/2029         |
| <b>Quorum</b>          | <b>7</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>Quorum</b> |                |                    |

Also Present: Community Development Director Tom Bergman and Community Development Assistant Tim Erickson.

3. Approval of the December 3, 2025, Meeting Minutes: Ackerman-Behr asked for expiration dates to be included in the recording of the roll section. Item 7a was discussed.  
**Motion by Corcoran to accept the meeting minutes. Second by Raush. Motion Carried 7 to 0.**
4. Approval of the Agenda.  
**Motion by Corcoran to approve the agenda. Second by Lehto. Motion Carried 7 to 0.**
5. Citizens wishing to address the Corporation regarding Items on the Agenda (Three-minute limit): None.
6. Citizens wishing to address the Corporation regarding items not on the agenda (Three-minute limit):

7. Items for Discussion and Consideration: The EDC introduced themselves to Simon who is a new member on the board.

A. Discuss and consider adoption of 2026 Goals:

- Ambassador Program (PRIMARY)
- Chamber Director Succession Planning
- General Housing Needs
- Regional EDO
- Vacant Property Analysis and Policy

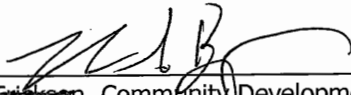
Rausch would like to see some to do items associated with each goal. Lehto talked about promoting the area for tourism or employment as a good goal. Libby talked about housing needs and why things aren't being built in Ironwood but are being built in Wisconsin. Virshek discussed the high taxes in the City of Ironwood. Ackerman-Behr would like to Quantify the effect of the tax rate in the city versus competing communities. The EDC should look at access to housing TIF and tax abatement tools for new construction. Attracting multifamily housing could be a goal too. Batu talked about the high cost of housing and low supply of contractors and laborers which increases housing cost. Focusing on availability of contractors or working with the youth in some way was discussed. Developing talent pipeline is important. Collaboration with UP Michigan Works, Ironwood Tourism Council, GCC Workforce Development Services and other regional partners was discussed. Having an entrepreneur bootcamp for Gogebic County was discussed. Promoting the Ironwood Economic Development Corporation as an entity and their projects was discussed. Getting someone from the high school to be on the EDC was discussed. Having something in the chamber newsletter for each quarter is an opportunity to get the word out. Rausch asked for timelines. Libby said that the entrance into the downtown on Douglas needs to be beautified. Bergman gave an update on the regional EDO.

8. Other Business: Lehto stated that 4 business in the City of Ironwood were awarded state funding. The Western UP Tri-county Small Business Hub Grant Program is open until January 16th. The new regional business development manager through the MEDC will be coming to Ironwood. GCC signed a letter of intent for a new jobs training program with a company in Iron River.
9. Next Meeting: February 4, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.
10. Adjournment.

**Motion by Corcoran to adjourn at 11:01 a.m. Second by Lehto. Motion Carried 7 to 0.**



Ackerman-Behr, President

  
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Tim Erickson, Community Development Assistant  
Tom Bergman