



eccvb.org

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ELKHART COUNTY INNKEEPERS TAX COMMISSION

Minutes of Public Meeting

Friday, November 14, 2025, at Elkhart County Visitors Center, 3421 Cassopolis Street, Elkhart, IN

PRESENT: Mr. Dan Shoup, Commission President and Board of Directors (via phone)
Ms. Gita Patel, Commission Vice President
Mr. Rick Jenkins, Commission Secretary/Treasurer (via Zoom)
Mr. Dan Boecher, Commission (via Zoom)
Mr. Anant Patel, Commission (via Zoom)
Mr. Doug Risser, Commission

ATTENDING: Mr. Levi King, Board of Directors President
Ms. Brittany Short, Board of Directors Vice President
Mr. Larry App, Board of Directors Secretary/Treasurer
Mr. Arvis Dawson, Board of Directors
Mr. Brian Hoffer, Board of Directors
Mr. Rochali Newbill, Board of Directors
Mr. Jon Hunsberger, Executive Director
Mr. Terry Mark, ECCVB Staff

ABSENT: Ms. Beth Ronzone, Commission

CALL TO ORDER

Called to order at 8 a.m. A quorum is present.

APPROVE MINUTES

On the minutes of the May 9, 2025, and September 12, 2025, meetings, motion by Mr. D. Risser to approve. Seconded by Mr. R. Jenkins. No discussion. Approved by all present.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. L. App reported:

- All balance sheet items are in order.

- Special expenditures, such as special Trolls exhibit that is getting started, allow ECCVB to fulfill mission.
- Additional benefit from the data that is collected and used to inform future projects.

Mr. J. Hunsberger reported:

- Celebration Under the Stars event helped test activation of Central Green and opens door to development opportunity. Discussion underway on a second Celebration Under the Stars. ECCVB's sole sponsorship helped get the project off the ground and served as proof of concept.

On the financial report, motion made by Mr. D. Risser to approve. Seconded by Mr. R. Jenkins. No discussion. Approved by all present.

2026 BUSINESS PLAN & BUDGET

Mr. J. Hunsberger presents the 2026 Business Plan & Budget:

- Elkhart County Council approved the 2026 budget request of \$2.9 million (up from \$2.6 million).
- Structure of ECCVB funding was a learning experience for the council and Elkhart County Auditor.
- Council supports investment in events.
- Expanding development opportunities in activation of communities through experiences and events.
- ECCVB is transition from Simpleview (website, customer relations management) to Tempest in August 2026.
- Strategic plan is being updated by Clarity of Place, kicking off in March with focus group meetings.
- ECCVB and stakeholders will be wrapping up experience development with Joe Veneto's Experience Collaboratory.
- ECCVB has increased support of aquatics center for swimming events.

Discussion on innkeeper tax:

- Reviewed the mechanics on innkeepers tax collection vs. disbursement.
- Collection in excess of budget happens when more visitors stay at lodging properties over what was projected.
- The excess is retained by the Elkhart County Treasurer. Currently that balance is \$700,000.
- The Elkhart County CVB can't legally receive more in innkeeper tax revenue than what was budgeted.
- ECCVB budgets a conservative amount for innkeepers tax.
- Consensus to make sure that the overage of tax collected should be in interest-bearing account, which is a choice for county officials to make.

On the 2026 Business Plan and Budget, motion by Mr. R. Jenkins to approve. Seconded by Mr. D. Risser. No further discussion. Approved by all present.

BUREAU UPDATE

Mr. J. Hunsberger reported:

- Moose Rugby Grounds master plan and budget has been created with work by Abonmarche. The next steps would be the creation of a formal agreement between Moose Rugby Grounds and Moose Lodge,

and Moose Rugby Grounds' formation of a non-profit. There was general discussion of potential of rugby.

- Vibrant Communities will continue through an ongoing grant focusing on technical assistance and marketing. The town of Millersburg was the first pilot community for technical assistance, which helped in implementing Action Agenda items such as park improvements. The next potential community is Wakarusa in 2026. Vibrant Communities will also work on housing through an effort of encouraging incremental developers. The next Speaker Series event is January 20 with Melissa and Chris Bruntlett.
- Elkhart County CVB staff will be evaluating the Area Guide for 2027 and beyond, as an opportunity has arisen to consider new design and execution of this product.
- Elkhart County CVB launched the Well Crafted Signature Sips campaign in October. It was a collaboration of the Elkhart County CVB and three local craft breweries to market and promote the craft food culture through unique limited-edition brews available only that month.
- Ms. Beth Ronzone will be leaving the Elkhart County Convention & Visitors Commission when her term expires at the end of 2025. Meetings are taking place to identify a new member.
- Exciting upcoming events include additional Lerner 100 Celebration and the Mistletoe Market in December.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. L. King reported that Alvin and Elsie Miller of Davis Mercantile in Shipshewana received the Will Koch Award.

Mr. D. Risser reported that the Goshen Theater is hiring a new executive director December 1. His name is Michael Stoddard.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be at 8 a.m. Friday, January 9, 2026

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Mark
Elkhart County CVB staff