



**SSCVA Regular Board of Directors Meeting  
7770 Corinne Dr. Hammond, IN  
January 15, 2026**

1. WELCOME

a. Roll Call

- i. In attendance: BLACKWELL, BONDS, CASH, EVANS, GRISOLIA, MALONEY, PATENA, QUNELL, ROBERTS, SCHUFFERT, SEGARRA, SPENCER, VELLIGAN, WIESER
- ii. Absent: BRASHIER, ESPINO, KLIDERIS, HOLMES, WHITE
- i. Staff in Attendance: PHIL TAILLON, STEPHANIE SMITH, HEATHER BECERRA, KRISTIN TAYLOR, NIKKI LOPEZ, NICOLE WOLVERTON

b. Pledge of Allegiance

2. REPORTS

a. CEO Report

- i. Discusses the positive press from the Chicago Bears challenge and the potential move of the Bears to Northwest Indiana.
- ii. Mentions the upcoming legislative dinner on February 4 and the tourism speaker series featuring Josiah Brown.
- iii. Discusses new partnership programs for new businesses is introduced, aiming to support startup businesses.
- iv. Monitoring various legislative sessions, including innkeepers tax legislation and tax incentives for tourism-related projects.

b. CFO Report

i. Innkeepers

- 1. Provided a financial recap for 2025, highlighting the reduction in innkeepers' tax and other financial metrics.

ii. Financial Update

- 1. Details the end-of-year financial summary, including a \$220,000 reduction in innkeepers' tax and a \$556,000 overspend.
- 2. Positive revenue highlights include increased rentals at the Indiana Welcome Center, higher interest income from

investments, and successful sponsorships for the Gary Air Show.

3. Expenditure highlights include significant legal fees, neutral marketing costs, and increased insurance and utility costs.
4. Suggested potential budget cuts for 2026 based on the overspend in 2025.
- c. Approval of Claims # #2904-2905,32069- 32119 in the amount of \$1,020,956.64.
  - i. Motion made by **PATENA** to approve claims, seconded by **SEGARRA**. Approved unanimously.
- d. Staff Reports – In BOD packet
- e. Committee Reports
3. OLD BUSINESS
  - a. None
4. NEW BUSINESS
  - a. Approval of Meeting Minutes December 18, 2025
    - i. Motion made by **WIESER** to approve minutes, seconded by **GRISOLIA**. Approved unanimously.
  - b. 2026 Legal Service Agreement: Rhame, Elwood & McClure
    - i. Motion made by **SCHUFFERT** to approve legal agreement, seconded by **VELLIGAN**. Approved unanimously.
  - c. Approval of 2025 Gateway Annual Financial Report
    - i. Motion made by **SEGARRA** to approve annual financial report, seconded by **SCHUFFERT**. Approved unanimously.
  - d. Approval of Great News Life 2026 Contract
    - i. Motion made by **BLACKWELL** to approve Great News Life Contract, seconded by **CASH**. Approved unanimously.
5. PRESENTATION
  - a. None
6. PUBLIC COMMENT
  - a. Two (2) minutes maximum per person or five (5) minutes for a group spokesperson. Please keep your comments civil and constructive to policy issues. The Chair, at his/her sole discretion, may recognize individuals wishing to speak on different topics.
  - b. New Regular Meeting- Date: February 19, 2026, at 12:00 pm at the Indiana Welcome Center.
7. ADJOURNMENT
  - a. Motion made by **VELLIGAN** to adjourn, seconded by **SCHUFFERT**.