

Lanesboro Economic Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 7, 2026 – 10:45 a.m.
City Council Meeting Chambers

Present Members:

Mindy Albrecht-Benson Michael Boho Tom Pursell Linda Tacke
 Kathryn Wade

Staff:

Mitchell Walbridge Darla Taylor Michelle Marotzke

Guests: Joe Goetzke

Call to Order: Member Wade called the regular meeting to order at 10:46 a.m.

- A. **Agenda Approval:** Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to approve the agenda; Member Tacke seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.
- B. **Public Comments:** No public comments were shared.
- C. **Consent Agenda:**
 - a. Minutes of the Regular Meeting, April 2, 2026
 - b. Minutes of the L.E.A.N. Sub-Committee, March 26, 2026
 - c. April EDA FinancialsMember Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to approve the agenda; Chair Wade seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

Department Reports

- A. **EDA Director Report:**
 - a. Director Marotzke shared highlights of her report, which was included in the packet, including the Main Street program and the work being done for business support related to the Highway 250 reconstruction project.
- B. **City Council/City Administration:** City Administrator Mitchell Walbridge was unavailable for this meeting and did not have an update.
- C. **Chamber of Commerce:** Executive Director Joe Goetzke shared an update about Chamber activities.
 - a. The bike shop is for sale. This is considered a critical business for Lanesboro with high trail use.
 - b. New maps are printed and have been received.
 - c. Active users on website are up 50% and page views are up 26% year over year.
 - d. Our ongoing digital marketing via search, web, social, and video ads is in full swing and performing well.
 - e. We recently revamped our membership tiers, adding a middle tier and expanding available options. More information to come.
 - f. May 14th is a big day with:
 - i. 9am Coffee w/ the City
 - ii. 3:45 Camp Venn ribbon cutting
 - iii. 4-5 Downtown biz open house
 - iv. 5-6 Start of season happy hour at High Court Pub
 - g. North Branch river issue
- D. **School Board:** School board member Sarah Peterson was not available for an update.

Revolving Loan Fund

- A. **Available Funds:** There is approximately \$30,443.19 available after the Bluffscape Amish Tours loan.
- B. **Loans in Repayment:** Presented in the financials. All accounts are current except for Sparrow Valley Properties, which has been turned over to the city's attorney for collection.
- C. **Pending Applications:** Marotzke presented the proposal for Bluffscape Amish Tours. This loan would provide \$22,000 of working capital to assist the new owners of the business, Shayla and Eric Gehrke, with startup costs including potential repairs to the busses, wages, and other costs. The terms are 2% for 5 years. Collateral will be in the form of liens on the two buses, a 2005 Ford E350SD and a 2017 Ford E350. After discussion, a motion to approve as presented was made by Member Boho; Member Albrecht-Benson seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor. This will be presented to the City Council at its June 1, 2026, meeting.

Continued Business

- A. **Business Promotion Group Proposal:** The Lanesboro Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors approved being the fiscal host for the Business Promotion Group. Once a structure is formalized, the EDA can consider a request to contribute. Chair Wade entered a motion to table indefinitely; Member Tacke seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.
- B. **Bluff Country Business Academy Update:** Graduation was held on April 27th, Mitchell attended, and there were 14 graduates and 11 businesses (mostly Lanesboro) represented. Member Boho presented two sessions to the class and was a hit. Benya Kraus, President and CEO of SMIF, was the keynote speaker.
- C. **SMIF Rural Entrepreneurial Venture Program Update:** The L.E.A.N. sub-committee asked that coaching opportunities be created to help Lanesboro business owners have one-on-one sessions for certain topics. Marotzke is working on developing that program.
- D. **Fillmore County Rural Child Care Innovation Program:** Marotzke reminded everyone about the Child Care Provider Appreciation Event on May 7, 2026, and the Town Hall on July 28, 2026.

New Business

- A. **Empowering Small Minnesota Cities program application:** Marotzke shared an overview of the application that was submitted. If awarded, the city will be provided with up to \$50,000 of in-kind labor support from the University of Minnesota Design Team to evaluate transportation options during and after the Highway 250 reconstruction project.
- B. **Professional Development and Training – EDAM Conference:** Marotzke requested approval of up to \$500 to attend the Economic Development Association of Minnesota Conference in June. The cost of the conference registration, hotel and travel will be cost-shared with the city of Preston. Motion made by Member Albrecht-Benson to approve up to \$500 in reimbursement for this conference; Chair Wade seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.
- C. **Discuss June Meeting:** Marotzke will be at the EDAM conference on June 4th, the date of the next scheduled EDA Board meeting. Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to cancel the meeting on June 4th and convene a special meeting on June 11th; Member Boho seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 11, 2025, at 10:45 a.m.

Member Tacke entered a motion to adjourn. Chair Wade adjourned the meeting at 11:26 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Marotzke
City of Lanesboro
Economic Development Director