



## Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 25, 2025

Witham Field, 2011 SE Airport Rd, Stuart, FL 34996

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- Present:** Susan Rabinowitz, Dan Romence, Eric Kiehn, Lauren Abbott, Angela Browning, PhD., Marshall Critchfield, Patrick Gleason, Ransom "Reed" Hartman, David Powers, Ron Rose, William 'David' Snyder, Tyson Waters, Ed Weinberg, Commissioner Laura Giobbi,
- Excused:** Brian Bauer, Steven Hartz, Tyson Waters
- Absent:** Mayor Carmone Dipaolo
- Staff:** William Corbin (Executive Director), Inez van Ravenzwaaij (Director, Programs & Partnerships), Troy McDonald (Director, Business Retention and Expansion), Brittany Truong (Office Administrator), Ken Norman (Counsel), George Stokus

1. **Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call:** Susan Rabinowitz called the meeting to order at 8:38 AM. A quorum was established by roll call.

### 2. Comments

- I. **Public Comments:** None
- II. **Partner Comments:** None
  - I. **Investor Presentation:** Inez van Ravenzwaaij thanked Richard Kolleda from Spherion Staffing & Recruiting and Bill West from Acquisition Experts for their new investments. Inez van Ravenzwaaij also thanked Brian Powers, Chairman of the Martin County Industrial Development Authority for their renewed investment.
- III. **Executive Director Report:** William Corbin went over the Executive Director Report.
  - **Legislative Update**
    - FEDC – the Florida Economic Development Council – sent an email to its members after the legislative session finally concluded last week, the evening of Monday, June 16. The email detailed several economic development-related pieces of legislation that were passed along with the state budget. Here are the highlights:





- **SelectFlorida received \$900,000 in non-recurring funds** to expand the department's trade show and mission grant program to small manufacturers, with the goal of enhancing their competitive edge in international trade markets.
- **HB 7031** - eliminates the 2% tax on commercial leases. Florida was the only state that levied that type of tax, putting Florida businesses at a competitive disadvantage, compared to businesses in other states. Per the Florida Chamber of Commerce, the removal of Business Rent Tax will save Florida businesses a total of \$900 million. HB 7031 also includes the extension of the data center tax exemption through June 30, 2037. This exemption is important because it incentivizes investment in the data center sector, which is experiencing explosive growth nationwide, and illustrates the opportunity for communities like Martin County to take advantage of – and capture – some of the benefits of this investment growth.
- **SB 1516** – creates the International Aerospace Innovation Fund, which will be administered by Space Florida. This fund is intended to drive global aerospace research, commercialization, and workforce development in the state. The goal of the fund is to foster strategic partnerships between Florida-based aerospace companies, international businesses, research institutions, and space agencies, positioning Florida to attract new projects, companies, and high-wage jobs.
- **Resilience Workshop**
  - On May 29, in conjunction with the start of hurricane season, the BDB hosted a Resilience Workshop for local businesses at IRSC's Martin County campus. The event featured a variety of subject matter experts who detailed the importance of preparing their business for disasters and significant business interruptions. Topics included business continuity planning, applying for low and no-interest loans, and supply chain contingency planning. Speakers and panelists from a variety of organizations participated as well, including SBDC, SBA, SFMA, FloridaMakes, Martin County Emergency Management, C3 Complete technology firm, the





National Association of Home Builders, CareerSource, the Solar Energy Loan Fund, FPL, West Advisory, and the Martin County Economic Council.

- **Martin County Emergency Management Partner Meeting**

- BDB staff attended the June 4 Martin County Emergency Management Partner Meeting, which coincided with the start of the 2025 hurricane season. The meeting, held in the Emergency Operations Center off Monterey Road, featured partner updates and highlights, including a preview of the 2025 hurricane season from the National Weather Service as well as details about meaningful resources, like the Martin County Long-Term Recovery Group. This group, led by the Martin Interagency Network for Disasters (MIND), unites local nonprofits, government agencies, and community organizations to support residents in the aftermath of a disaster.

- **Martin MPO FTAC Meeting**

- The Martin MPO's Freight Transportation Advisory Committee met on June 5. The BDB has a seat on this board, represented by Executive Director William Corbin. There were several notable updates at this meeting:
  - Martin County's Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) is scheduled to be adopted in June 2025
  - Roadway enhancements are a major part of the TIP (e.g. widening SR-710 to four lanes, from two lanes, out to Okeechobee).
  - Construction for the FEC Railroad Crossing grade separation is anticipated to start in 2029. A public open will happen sometime in Fall 2025.
  - Martin County's 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan anticipated to be adopted by the County Commission in October 2025. The next public Open House is scheduled for August 26<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 pm in the City of Stuart Commission Chambers.
  - Top concerns of the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan
    1. Traffic Congestion
    2. Safety





### 3. Limited public transportation

- **Boys & Girls Club – New Stuart Location**

- I had the opportunity to tour the new Stuart club location. It will be a great resource for our local community, in terms of workforce and talent pipeline development – it has a number of working labs with instructors teaching nationally-certified courses in a select variety of CTE skilled trades, ranging from electric to culinary as well as fashion.

- **St. Lucie EDC**

- BDB staff met with the St. Lucie EDC team. The goal was to start and engage in an open dialogue about economic development activities across the Treasure Coast and discuss challenges and best practices that relate to each of our organizations. Most importantly, we brainstormed about potential opportunities for partnership and collaboration with each other, on a regional level. Programming and event collaboration possibilities in the workforce development space appear to be the most promising. We will continue to communicate with each other moving forward, because strong partnerships are a priority and represent a key method whereby the BDB can maximize its impact on the local business and entrepreneur community.

- **Speaking Engagement (Jensen Beach Chamber)**

- On June 19th I spoke with the members of the Jensen Beach Chamber of Commerce at their monthly lunch meeting. I delivered an overview of the BDB's vision, mission and goals, and I detailed the importance of what the BDB does – and how that directly and positively impacts tax revenues for Martin County and the individuals and families who live there.

**3. Executive Committee Meeting June 20, 2025, Recap:** Susan Rabinowitz provided the recap of the Executive Committee Meeting on Friday June 20, 2025.

## 4. Approvals

### I. Minutes

- I. **Board of Directors Meeting—April 23, 2025:** Eric Kiehn moved to approve the Board of Directors Meeting minutes for April 23, 2025,







which was seconded by Marshall Critchfield. The motion passed unanimously.

- II. **Board of Directors Meeting – May 28, 2025:** Marshall Critchfield moved to approve the Board of Directors Meeting minutes for May 28, 2025, and was seconded by Eric Kiehn. The motion passed unanimously.

- II. **Financials:** William Corbin, Executive Director, presented and summarized the financials. Eric Kiehn moved to approve of the Financials, and it was seconded by Ranson “Reed” Hartman. The motion passed unanimously.

## 5. Reports & Presentations

- a. **Martin County IDA** – Brian Powers, MCIDA Chairman, presented the draft pitch deck. Discussion ensued regarding the pitch deck.
- b. **Business Attraction Update** – William Corbin, Executive Director, provided an update on attraction projects and leads for Martin County.
- c. **BRE Update** – Troy McDonald, Director of Business Retention and Expansion, provided an update.
- d. **Programming Update** – Inez van Ravenzwaaij, Director of Programs and Partnerships, provided an update.
- e. **Budget Update** – William Corbin, Executive Director, provided an updated on the FY 2026 budget.
- f. **Paris Air Show** – Troy McDonald, Director of Business Retention and Expansion, provided an updated on the Paris Air Show.

## 6. Board Member Items & Discussions

- I. **Award Selection Committee** – Any Board Member who wants to participate on the Selection Committee to let staff know by end of the week.

## 7. Comments

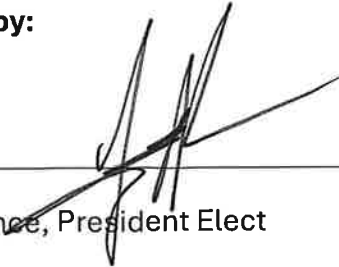
- a. **Public:** None
- b. **BDBMC Partners:** Ted Astolfi provided information on a bill that was just signed in Florida regarding permits. George Stokus provided additional information on the permit status with Martin County. Ted Astolfi also stated that the REACH Center should be open in the middle of August.

## 8. Adjourn: 10:06 am





**Approved by:**

  
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Dan Romence, President Elect

7/23/25  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Prepared by:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brittany Truong, Office Administrator

07/23/2025  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Minutes Approved on** 07/23/2025

