

James Gardner  
President  
Appointed by Mayor  
Jan. 1, 2024 to Dec. 31, 2027

Jeff Whisler  
Secretary  
Appointed by Mayor  
Jan. 1, 2024 to Dec. 31, 2027

Arvis Dawson  
Member  
Appointed by Mayor  
Jan. 1, 2024 to Dec. 31, 2027

Mike Huber  
Member  
Appointed by Mayor  
Jan. 1, 2024 to Dec. 31, 2027



## ELKHART URBAN ENTERPRISE ZONE

MANAGED BY ELKHART URBAN ENTERPRISE ASSOCIATION

Kristen Smole  
Member  
Appointed by Mayor  
Jan. 1, 2024 to Dec. 31, 2027

Therese Geise  
Vice President  
Appointed by Council  
Jan. 1, 2024 to Dec. 31, 2025

Bill Lavery  
Treasurer  
Appointed by Council  
Jan. 1, 2024 to Dec. 31, 2025

**Elkhart Urban Enterprise Association Board Meeting  
City Hall Annex Building (201 South Second) Conference Room  
Monday, August 18, 2025 @ 3:00 pm**

**THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD IN PERSON AND ELECTRONICALLY**

To join, go to

**<https://signin.webex.com/join>**

Enter **2317 955 2895** as the event number and "EUEA" as the password

To join by phone, call **1-415-655-0001** Access Code **2317 955 2895 ##**

### **AGENDA**

- Call to Order
- Approval of July 21, 2025, Regular Meeting minutes
- Financial
  - a) INOVA statement of 7/31/25
  - b) Community Foundation statement of 7/31/25
- Old Business
  - a) Black Expo Funding Request
  - b) Investment Deduction (EZ-2)
- New Business
- Adjournment

James Gardner  
President  
Appointed by Organized Laborer  
Jan. 1, 2024 to Dec. 31, 2027

Jeff Whisler  
Secretary  
Appointed by Board  
Development Committee  
Jan. 1, 2024 to Dec. 31, 2027

Arvis Dawson  
Member  
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Development Committee  
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### REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

July 21, 2025 at 3:00 pm – City Annex Building Conference Room

**Present:** James Gardner, Jeff Whisler, Therese Geise, Bill Lavery, Sherry Weber (Recording Secretary), Joshua Hofer, and Drew Wynes

**Present via Webex:** None

### **Call to Order**

This meeting was held in-person and via Webex. Mr. Garner called the meeting to order at 3:14 p.m.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Gardner asked for a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes for May 19, 2025. Moved by Mr. Lavery and seconded by Ms. Geise. Voice vote, all in favor. Minutes approved.

### **Old Business**

Mr. Hofer updated the board letting them know he is wrapping up the Tolson Center invoice for Lilly Match Phase 2 Grant in the amount of \$25,000. Funds will be paid from the EUEA Community Foundation account.

### **New Business**

Mr. Hofer and Mr. Gardner updated the Board on what the receivership workgroup has been working on and what the next steps should be.

Mr. Gardner made a motion for the EUEA Board to meet every 90 days rather than once a month. Seconded by Mr. Lavery. Voice vote, all in favor. Motion approved. Next EUEA meeting is scheduled for October 20, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. in the Annex Conference Room.

### **Financials:**

Mr. Lavery made a motion to approve May 31, 2025 & June 30, 2025, INOVA financial statements and May 31, 2025 & June 30, 2025, Community Foundation financial statements. Seconded by Ms. Geise. Voice vote, all in favor. Motion approved.

### **Adjournment:**

Mr. Gardner asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Moved by Mr. Lavery. Seconded by Ms. Geise. Voice vote, all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 4:03 p.m.

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James Gardner, President

July 21, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes



Thank you for allowing us to submit the proposal to the City of Elkhart to support the 2<sup>nd</sup> professional development cohort tailored specifically to the needs of small business owners in the Elkhart area. This initiative will equip participants with comprehensive knowledge in business operations to strengthen the local economy and foster entrepreneurial success.

### Program Overview

The *Elkhart Empowerment Cohort* will target all small business owners to enroll at least twenty-five (25), with a maximum of 35, to ensure a manageable classroom size. The enrollment sources will include the following databases: The Elkhart Chamber of Commerce, the SBA SBDC office of Elkhart, the State of Indiana (IDOA), the local SCORE database, the Latin American Chamber of Commerce, and the Elkhart chapter of the Indiana Black Expo.

The hired contractor and program director is Jean Poole, a certified leadership training instructor, who has trained over 400 small to medium-sized business owners in Indiana between 2023 – 2025. She received a CompTIA Certified Prompt Engineer in AI certificate in July 2025. We will deliver high-impact sessions facilitated by experts in business development, digital marketing, and financial strategy. Each week will blend user-friendly frameworks, collaborative learning, and strategic coaching. All sessions will incorporate AI generative and context engineering training to accelerate growth and improve operational resilience.  
([www.ecubedperformance.com](http://www.ecubedperformance.com) – bio upon request)

The program will be held at the public Library from 5:30 - 7:30. The detailed outline is below.

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### Curriculum Summary – September 17 – November 19th

Focus Area	Topics Covered	Duration
<b>Business Setup &amp; Customer Modeling</b>	Business Plan fundamentals, Value Proposition, Competitive Advantage, Customer Segmentation	2 weeks
<b>Processes &amp; Systems</b>	Scalability using AI technology and developing SOPs	2 weeks
<b>Financial Management</b>	Cost structure and Revenue generation, Direct/Indirect costs, Variable vs fixed costs, Forecasting, Cash Flow Management	2 weeks
<b>Marketing, Branding &amp; Sales</b>	Digital strategy, SMO & SEO, Buyer/seller dynamics, Lead generation, and Sales using a CRM	4 weeks

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We are requesting \$7500.00 from the city of Elkhart. The other costs outlined below have been presented to other partners of our corporate office of the central Indiana Black Expo office and its list of private donors.

This funding request reflects a collaborative opportunity to uplift Elkhart's entrepreneurial ecosystem and ensure that all business owners—regardless of background—receive the tools and support they need to thrive. We welcome the chance to partner with the city and make a measurable difference.

### Budget Request

Expense Category	Cost (USD)
Cohort Design/Management	\$7,500
Cohort Facilitators	\$5,500
Program Setup & Tracking	\$2,500
<b>Total Requested Funding</b>	<b>\$15,500</b>

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### Community Impact and Deliverables – see the Program deliverables document for details

This cohort is designed to:

- Strengthen Elkhart's small business community through education and peer support.
  - Close gaps that hinder small entrepreneurs from accessing traditional resources
  - Create a replicable, trackable model that could serve as a city-wide template for small business economic development.
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*Thank you for your consideration of this proposal. Please advise if you have any questions.*

*Rob Taylor, president of the Elkhart chapter of Indiana black Expo*

Rod Roberson  
Mayor

Michael Huber  
Director of Development Services



Development Services  
Community Development  
Economic Development  
Planning Services  
Redevelopment  
229 S. Second St.  
Elkhart, IN 46516  
574.294.5471  
Fax: 574.295.7501

## Investment Deduction (EZ-2) Brief—August 18, 2025

### I. Background

- a. The Investment Deduction (EZ-2) is a tax abatement based on the assessed value of real property improvements and/or personal property improvements. Companies who were located in the Enterprise Zone can claim a 100% deduction for ten years following the initial assessment of improvements.
- b. Despite the zone's expiration, Indiana Code 6-1.1-45-12 states that companies who made investments prior to December 31, 2024, are eligible to receive the full ten-year abatement. There are six companies actively applying for and receiving the deduction.

### II. Submission Requirements

- a. Companies submit form EZ-2 to apply for the deduction. The Auditor's Office certifies the deduction and sends the company a confirmation letter that includes the deduction amount. This process does not involve the EUEA Board. An EZ-BR is submitted the following year as a tax savings summary. This should include a check payable to EUEA with 25% of a company's tax savings. The 25% remittance is codified in Ordinance 447 (99-0-13).

### III. Active Projects

Company Name	Real Property and/or Personal Property	Final Year of Eligibility
Future Foam Inc.	Real Property and Personal Property	2030 (pay 2031)
Heavy Metal Scrap Inc.	Personal Property	2026 (pay 2027)
Michiana Wood Products	Personal Property	2034 (pay 2035)
Quad 4 Plastics	Personal Property	2029 (2030)
Recycling Works LLC	Personal Property	2034 (pay 2035)
Walerko Tool	Personal Property	2034 (pay 2035)