

ST. CLAIR COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes December 10, 2025

Members Present:

Ken Sharkey, Chairman
Scott Greenwald, Assistant Chairman
Robert Allen
Marty Crawford
Robert Trentman
Rick Vernier

Members Excused:

Matt Smallheer

Staff Present:

Rick Stubblefield, Executive Director
Becky Rose, Executive Assistant

Others Present:

Kimberly Huth, Military Affairs Director
Darren James, MidAmerica Airport Director

Call to Order:

Chairman Ken Sharkey called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment Regarding the Agenda:

Chairman Sharkey asked if anyone present had a question or comment regarding the agenda. There were none.

Approval of November 12, 2025, Committee Minutes (action required):

Chairman Sharkey called for action on the November 12, 2025, Committee minutes. Mr. Greenwald made the motion to approve the minutes which were seconded by Mr. Allen. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business (Director's Report):

Mr. Stubblefield reported on conversations with EquipmentShare. They discussed their upcoming plans and overall business model as a construction equipment rental company with a strong emphasis on technology integration. The company operates approximately 370 locations nationwide and differentiates itself by offering app-based equipment operation and monitoring, as well as geofencing capabilities that restrict equipment movement beyond defined parameters. EquipmentShare anticipates bringing between 45 and 55 full-time employees to the project and is also evaluating additional locations in Illinois and Missouri.

Mr. Stubblefield stated that he spoke to Terminal Railroad Association who provided an update on a proposed barge-to-rail project in East St. Louis that is currently in the early discussion phase. Due to

increasing congestion on the St. Louis riverfront, customers are seeking alternative solutions. Ameropa and ADM have expressed interest in working with the Terminal Railroad Association (TRRA) on the development of a port structure in East St. Louis to facilitate the onloading and offloading of fertilizer at the terminal site. Projected output for the barge-to-rail operation is estimated at 30 to 40 million tons.

Mr. Stubblefield stated that he had spoken with a group that presented plans for a printed circuit board manufacturing facility to be located in Dupo. The project involves relocating manufacturing operations from Asia with the group maintaining ownership interest. The facility is expected to employ between 200 and 400 workers. The group is currently coordinating with Ameren to ensure sufficient power capacity, and preliminary discussions indicate that adequate power is available.

Avina has executed a six-month extension; however, progress on the project has been paused due to the elimination of green energy tax credits. Similarly, Crystalis has experienced delays as the removal of biofuel tax credits has required the company to retool its plant operations.

Cerro Flow provided an update on its expansion project and reported that a meeting was held last week to further define and assess workforce requirements.

There were no further comments or questions.

Mr. Vernier made a motion to approve the Director's report and Mr. Crawford seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business (MidAmerica Airport Director's Report):

Mr. Darren James reported that airport statistics continue to show strong performance. Comparing November 2025 to November 2024, passenger traffic increased by 4 %. Overall, year-to-date 2025 compared to 2024 shows a 26% increase in passengers. Six of the eleven months so far have set new passenger records, and December is also expected to be a record-setting month.

Mr. James stated that he attended an airline conference last month and met with representatives from Avelo, Breeze Airways, Sun Country, and JSX Airlines. The most productive discussions were with Avelo, which operates under a business model similar to Allegiant Air. Avelo plans to purchase aircraft in 2027 and 2028 and is currently identifying locations to base them. They are considering 10 locations, and our airport is one of them. Avelo is planning to acquire 50 aircraft, with approximately five aircraft assigned to each location.

Mr. James also visited Boeing's production facility. He reported that tooling is beginning to be transferred, and some manufacturing activity had started at the facility. The first seven aircraft will be built primarily in St. Louis and then transported to MidAmerica for final assembly as tooling continues to be relocated. The first flight of the MQ-25 is currently projected for January 2026.

There were no further comments or questions.

Mr. Allen made a motion to approve the Director's report and Mr. Greenwald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business (Military Affairs Director Comments):

Ms. Kimberly Huth reported that the Scott Air Force Base (SAFB) Leadership has secured the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds to perform at the air show scheduled for June 2027.

McGhee Tyson Airfield in Tennessee has been named the preferred location to host the KC-46 aircraft; however, the final decision will not be made until 2027. SAFB Leadership invested significant effort in pursuing this opportunity. While SAFB was not selected as the preferred site at this time, it does not preclude future consideration.

Currently, approximately 600 personnel from SAFB are deployed, which is higher than initially anticipated. In support of deployed service members and their families, SAFB will host a Hearts Apart event on Friday, providing toys and gifts for families of deployed personnel.

There were no further comments or questions.

Mr. Allen made a motion to approve the Director's report and Mr. Greenwald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Other Comments:

There were no further comments or questions.

Adjournment:

Chairman Sharkey asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Vernier so moved, and it was seconded by Mr. Crawford. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously and the Committee adjourned at 5:28 p.m.