ST. CLAIR COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
June 10, 2026

Members Present:
Ken Sharkey, Chairman
Scott Greenwald, Assistant Chairman
Robert Allen
Robert Trentman
Rick Vernier

Members Excused:
Marty Crawford
Matt Smallheer

Staff Present:
Rick Stubblefield, Executive Director
Becky Rose

Others Present:
Darren James, MidAmerica Airport Director
Kimberly Huth, Military Affairs Director
May Brown

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 May 13, 2026, Committee Minutes *(action required):*
Chairman Sharkey called for action on the May 13, 2026, Committee minutes. Mr. Vernier made the motion to approve the minutes which were seconded by Mr. Greenwald. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business (Director's Report):
Mr. Stubblefield reported that a large company is evaluating an opportunity to expand its operations into a former manufacturing facility in Freeburg, Illinois. Discussions remain ongoing, and the project has the potential to contribute positively to the region's economic development efforts.

Mr. Stubblefield also reported that he attended the Southern Illinois Metropolitan and Regional Planning Commission (SIMPAC) Board meeting approximately two weeks ago. He commended Executive Director Wendy Pfeil for her leadership and noted that the organization continues to serve as a valuable economic development resource for the region. He highlighted SIMPAC's success in securing Economic Development Administration (EDA) funding and its ability to leverage grant opportunities through regional partnerships. He stated that the organization is making significant progress and continues to move forward with strategic initiatives.

Additionally, Mr. Stubblefield provided an update regarding discussions between the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) program and regional flood mitigation stakeholders. The parties are exploring opportunities to address flooding concerns in areas surrounding the base. However, he noted that REPI grant funding requires local matching funds and that eligible projects must be identified and approved before funding can be pursued. At this time, project development has not progressed quickly enough to meet those requirements.

Mr. Stubblefield further reported that an interested party is pursuing the purchase of the David Taylor dealership. In response to an inquiry from Mr. Vernier regarding the future of the business, Mr. Stubblefield confirmed that the facility is expected to remain an automobile dealership and continue offering the same product lines following the transaction.

There were no further comments or questions.

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

<u>New Business (MidAmerica Airport Director's Report):</u>
Mr. Darren James reported on recent meetings with members of the Illinois congressional delegation in Washington, D.C., where he discussed several priority projects and funding opportunities for the airport. Mr. James advised that Congressman Bost is supporting the extension of Air Service Road through a congressional earmark currently included in pending legislation. The project, estimated at approximately $2.4 million, is intended to enhance safety and operational efficiency and is awaiting consideration through a floor vote.

He further reported that Senator Durbin has expressed interest in assisting with funding for the proposed covered walkway connecting the Metrolink station to the terminal. In addition, the crossing improvement project currently under contract is approximately 90 percent complete, with final pavement markings remaining before project completion.

Mr. James noted that Senator Duckworth previously secured federal funding for the Federal Inspection Station and, while additional funding requests have not been pursued at this time, she remains supportive of the airport's ongoing initiatives and development efforts.

Mr. James also highlighted the airport's strong passenger traffic performance, reporting that May established a new record for passengers for the month, representing the highest May total in the airport's history. Year-to-date passenger traffic through May has increased by approximately 13.4 percent compared to the same period in the previous year. He added that passenger volumes continue to trend upward and that June and July are anticipated to be particularly strong travel months.

Mr. Allen inquired about the status of the Sun Country merger. Mr. James responded that the merger process is expected to take approximately one to two years to complete.

There were no further comments or questions.

Mr. Trentman 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. Huth reported that she attended the Association of Defense Communities (ADC) conference in Washington, D.C., last month in celebration of the organization's 50th anniversary.

She noted that there is a growing push to regulate grant funding, with concerns that grant monies could be withdrawn if recipients do not align with the current administration's priorities. She indicated that this issue is worth monitoring.

Ms. Huth also highlighted the opening of the Joint Mobility Operations Center on Scott Air Force Base (SAFB) this past Friday. The new facility provides 16,700 square feet of operational workspace and will support global command center functions.

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:

Adjournment:
Chairman Sharkey asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Vernier so moved, and it was seconded by Mr. Trentman. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously and the Committee adjourned at 5:21 p.m.