

**Borough of West Reading
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES**

May 11, 2026

Committee Members Present

Mayor Samantha Kaag

Justin Choate

Randall Miller, Borough Manager

Robin Horman

Nick Price, CRF Director

Visitors' Present

None

Call to Order

Mayor Kaag called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of the Minutes

Motion made by Mrs. Horman and seconded by Mr. Choate to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2026 meeting.

Nomination of Committee Chair and Secretary

Since only a limited number of committee members were in attendance, Mayor Kaag asked whether we should reorganize the Committee with the election of officers. Mr. Choate noted that he would text Ms. Gantz and find out her interest in serving in any capacity.

The members noted that it would be helpful if there were additional persons on the committee.

Having no objection, Mayor Kaag called for nominations of the Committee Chairman, and nominated Mr. Choate, indicating she would help him get an understanding of the role. Mrs. Horman seconded the nomination. All present were in favor, and Mr. Choate was named as the Chair.

The committee still awaits a reply from Ms. Gantz, and therefore, tabled the election of a secretary.

Residential Properties Update

There was no discussion of Residential Property changes. Mr. Price noted that the IA club was listed for Sheriff's sale. No further information was available. Additionally, the space previously occupied by Gem on Penn was discussed, and currently is not occupied. It is thought that a dental implant showroom is planned for that location.

Business & Commercial Property Updates

A list of all properties that have changed was submitted by Mr. Price. The Committee then discussed the following properties:

Recent openings, relocations, and ribbon cuttings

- 402 Penn Avenue - Winnie Tea Bar moved to this location.
- 610 Penn Avenue - Spoonful of Thai moved to this location.
- 615 Penn Avenue - SoFul opened at this location.
- 22 N. 6th Avenue - Deep Roots Cafe opened recently.
- 500A Penn Avenue - Link'd Permanent Jewelry ribbon cutting scheduled for June 12, 2026. The time for the ribbon-cutting has been announced as 6:00 p.m. Mrs. Horman said she would check to see if SoFul would like a ribbon-cutting the same evening.

Properties in transition, available, or under review

- 448 Penn Avenue - La Abuela closed; a new restaurant is anticipated for the space.
- 401 Penn Avenue - Aladin is listed for sale. It is believed to only be the business that is for sale.

- 510 Penn Avenue - Psychic space is available for lease, privately.
- 559 Penn Avenue - Cigar lounge space has been subdivided into three spaces; Manager Miller discussed the changes occurring here. There is speculation on who may be moving here.
- 605 Penn Avenue - Available for lease privately.
- 609 Penn Avenue - Available for lease privately.
- 634 Penn Avenue - Listed for lease; temporarily off the market.
- 725 Penn Avenue - Former Winnie Tea Bar space is available for lease; temporarily off the market.
- 635 Penn Avenue - Vacant; transferred in January and evaluating options.

Properties under agreement

- 215 S. 5th Avenue - Neo Pangia is under agreement at \$700,000; settlement scheduled for May 15, 2026.
- 612 Reading Avenue - Under agreement at \$299,900; settlement scheduled for June 15, 2026.

Strategic Planning and Committee Priorities

Mayor Kaag discussed what was discussed at the last meeting and what the role of EDC is in the community. A discussion of adding additional committee members was held. Having nothing further, the remainder of these items was tabled.

EDC will reach out to see if members are still interested in serving.

Old Business

Mayor Kaag gave an update on the current status of the West Reading Business Improvement District (WRBID). She has been asked to give an updated Q & A as a response to information being disseminated by others on social media.

The WRCRF has not been giving information to businesses. Mr. Price noted that he has been talking to local businesses and giving them updates. The difficulty is countering the false narrative getting out there. It was noted that the social media coverage we do have, has comments turned off due to the negative discussions occurring.

The committee members continued to discuss; but have no action items to be taken.

New Business

There was no new business discussed.

Election of Secretary

Chair Choate noted that he heard back from Ms. Gantz, who would be willing to serve as the Secretary. He nominated her for the Secretary position. This was then seconded by Mrs. Horman. With all members in favor, Ms. Gantz was elected as Secretary.

Public Comment

There was none.

Adjournment

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m. on a motion by Mr. Price, seconded by Mayor Kaag, with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Randall P. Miller
Borough Manager