



Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority

Minutes of the Board of Directors' Meeting

February 11, 2016

CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Directors' Meeting of the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority was held on February 11, 2016 at 5240 Knowledge Parkway; Erie, PA. Legal Notice of the meeting was given through an advertisement appearing in the Erie Times-News. The meeting was called to order by the Chair.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Bagnoni, Mr. Barney, Mr. Domino (arrives later), Mr. Paris, Mr. Peters, Mr. Sample, and Mr. Yaple. Mr. Wood, Mr. Breneman, and Mr. Wachter are also present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Paris makes a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Barney seconds. Motion carries 6-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Yaple makes a motion to approve the minutes of the January 2016 board meeting. Mr. Paris seconds. Motion carries 6-0.

COMMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN

No comments.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comment.

PRESENTATIONS

- a. Dr. Chris Taylor, The Upper Room, housing development. Thanks for having me. I'm Chris Taylor. When I came to The Upper Room two years ago, as a matter of fact you folks were instrumental in helping us a year ago buy new furniture, put a new roof on the building. I thank you very much for that, and I was here to talk to you about that at that time. I came out of retirement and looked at The Upper Room as an opportunity to exercise my influence in a laboratory, which is what it is. It represents the poorest, the

most impoverished people in the city of Erie. We really have poor people at The Upper Room and homeless people. But the definition of "homelessness" is so vague it's difficult to talk that way.

So what happened were three things:

1. We grew in numbers. As a matter of fact, we are so busy now, that we can't handle it in our facility. We're averaging upwards of 200 men and women a day. 16.9% of our clientele, which we call "members" is women now, which we didn't serve in the past – two years ago. That's a real concern, because women are so vulnerable on the street. So this is one of the things that we need to address as we move forward. I'm just letting you know, because you will probably hear from me again down the road in a year or two saying, "We need a new building." And we do. We need new facilities at some point.
2. I saw The Upper Room, at least from my perspective, and, of course, I answer to a board, and we all understand how fun that can be; from the perspective that there are two opportunities: One is social interaction. To me The Upper Room has become and is developing into the Maennerchor of poverty, into the Siebenbuerger, or the Erie Club for people that would never go to a club anywhere else. It's a membership where social interactions can occur and people can support each other. Now that's a dream. It doesn't mean it's happened yet.

About in April of 2014 Wells Fargo came to us, and we developed a second plan. They offered us a home on the east side of Erie on East 5th Street, right by the Barber Center, and they also offered us \$10,000 cash to take it. To me it was a no-brainer; take it. I guess I'd do it again, but it was really a challenge.

My original dream was to develop the home into a haven-type community where men could stay, because there were 11 rooms, 2 bathrooms, and 2 kitchens in the facility that we could develop into housing for people who were otherwise homeless. As you all know better than I do, the city of Erie has zoning codes which made that very difficult to accomplish. And, as a matter of fact, I was told it would take probably two years to accomplish that, to rezone that property.

So, it was kind of out, because we ran into all kinds of issues. The house had been on fire, and we didn't know it; it had been covered up. All the plumbing, all the electric needed done. But our goal was to work men and women (we didn't have any women that volunteered) on this project and develop skills in doing so, learning how to do electrical work, learning how to lay tile, learning how to do dry wall, and we accomplished that.

We spent \$38,000 on the house, and we sold the house last week for \$40,000. So, we didn't make any money. But, we put seven men to work, and we paid \$13,000 in wages in the process. And, we improved the city of Erie. The house is beautiful. It has all new electrical service, all new plumbing, all new wall-to-wall carpeting, dry walled ceilings, and all up to code with carbon monoxide and hard-wired fire alarms throughout the house, new railings, new porch, everything.

So the goal, although it started off as a fund-raiser, the benefit really became two-fold in that men worked, and there's a nice house in Erie now where there was a dump before. To carry future projects forward like this makes sense, but we have to learn how to do it better. The mission of The Upper Room is not to build houses. The mission is to provide

sanctuary for people that are on the street. But, I think, at least from my perspective, and I'm surprised my board still has me on because we had some interesting board meetings. I think that what happened in the process, we did a mission. We helped some men. Now, out of seven, one is working. One. One man that was living in his car is no longer living in his car. He has since gone home to Maryland, and reconciled with his parents, and is now working full-time. So, it's a not a great success rate, but it's a success rate nonetheless.

The men that we used – two were active heroin addicts. Good workers when they were straight. Two were alcoholics. Honestly, the problem, and this is a different subject, the problem with poverty in Erie is not the poverty itself or the homelessness, the problem is drugs and alcohol. It's real simple. About 95% of our clientele is addicted one way or the other, and it ruins lives. And then you combine that with lack of social support, growing up with maybe dad in jail, maybe mom was doing crack cocaine. So there's no support system to rely on, and that's what these people need, and that was the benefit of building this house.

Now the house has got two apartments in it. Both apartments are rented already at \$650 apiece. It's kind of a success. Would we do it again? Yes. But we'd do it with the knowledge of how to do it this time. We spent too much money, frankly. But it was a learning curve. We had a lot of great support from the Erie area. Jim Shriefer and Covenant Church were instrumental in helping us. Pennington Lines Real Estate gave us all their service free to sell the house. So it was good from that perspective.

Do you have questions?

Sample: You put a house back on the tax rolls that might have been otherwise demolished.

Taylor: That is correct, and it's assessed at \$58,000.

Sample: We tried to do that in Corry and I commend you on it. There are a lot of places like Father Peterson's and stuff, but the men really need a project. They really need to have a reason to show up and to be driven, because other than that, they are just lethargic, laying around and watching TV.

Taylor: That's exactly right. And whether it be a house, or whether it be picking up trash around the city, it doesn't matter. You're absolutely right – people need to have sense of worth. And you get worth not by sitting around, you get it by working. You get it by investing into something that you have ownership in.

Sample: Yes. The pride of ownership is immense.

Taylor: That's correct.

Sample: And pretty soon they'll be saying, "I did this."

Taylor: Well, and they already are.

Barney: I truly appreciate the effort and what it accomplishes in the individuals. My only concern is you put \$38,000, you sold it for \$40,000, it's assessed at \$58,000. Why couldn't you get closer to the assessed value?

Taylor: We could have, probably.

Barney: I'm saying for future endeavors.

Taylor: You are absolutely right. Actually, when I say \$38,000, that was the overall investment that includes the \$10,000 from Wells Fargo. So our money was \$28,000. But we looked at it, and my board was so sick of this project, and I had all my parts in a ringer, and you guys know what that means, so we felt before the winter hit, we had an offer. Take it and get out. And that's what we did. It wasn't a big fund raiser, but it accomplished wages on the street, it accomplished a house remodeled and on the tax rolls, and it made us a little bit of money.

Wood: So part of the impetus for the project was that Wells Fargo donated a home to you. Have they looked at donating another home to you?

Taylor: We could easily get another home. They have several homes in Erie.

Wood: And what is your obstacle to redeveloping the second home?

Taylor: Number one, we need to go in with more professionalism, in other words, we need to take a home-remodeling expert with us to look at the facility. We didn't do that. A couple of us, my treasurer on my board and myself, we kind of ran this project, and Jim Shriefer, who was a volunteer, we just went in and got excited is what we did. We thought, "Wow! What an opportunity! What a great deal this is!" Who's going to turn down a check for \$10,000 and a house, for crying out loud? And moneywise, Dale, we would have been better off tearing it down and just being done. But that wasn't the real purpose. The real purpose was to give the men an opportunity to learn skills and, hopefully, to develop. If I ever did this again, I would bring a real estate expert and a developer with me on the front end, even if we had to pay them. That way we would evaluate what we're getting into, the kind of project we could run into. By the way, this place has been on fire before or it hasn't; the roof is bad, or it's good. We lucked out on this project we had – the roof was good.

Peters: How was the city to work with?

Taylor: The city is code specific, and that's good for safety. It's good to have stringent electrical codes and building codes and plumbing codes. What the city is not very flexible on is zoning. I think some flexibility there would be very helpful in the city.

Peters: How did you manage through the code process in terms of needing a master electrician, and in needing a licensed plumber? You went and hired that?

Taylor: We did, because we had no choice. I thought at first it was county, but, no, the city has specific licensing for contractors, so we had to have an in-city licensed electrician. We got a very good guy, but it still cost us \$8,000 in electrical work, and we had to have George Winston on the plumbing, and George even wrote us back a check for \$1,000 at the end of it and said, "That's my donation." And that was great, but still it

was another \$7,000. Most of our expense, besides the labor, was in plumbing and electrical due to those codes. I agree with those, incidentally. I think they are there for safety, and this was old knob and pin wiring, and it all needed to be replaced. I think they're good. What I don't agree with, we had a chance to house guys. We had a chance to do something where people could have a roof over their heads, and the city made that difficult.

Peters: It would have become a group home.

Taylor: That's exactly what it would have become. We have the staff to put in there.

Sample: One of the things we found in some of the projects down in Corry is if you approach the unions, a lot of times, like union electricians, they will send people over to work with your guys, and they're licensed, and you can get through that, and they do it as community service.

Peters: From an education perspective within the city of Erie, that's also a benefit because there is something called "helper license", that if you were to get master electricians from the union that were willing to take some of the better more skilled folks that need to learn the business, they can get what's called a "helper license" and could help pull wire. There are lots of things they can't do, but it would raise the level of skill that they might have.

Taylor: Thank you. We wanted to pull wire. What's to pulling wire? Nothing. But, no, we couldn't do it. Our guys certainly were capable of pulling wire, but that was a no. So that's good to know, and these are the things we need to learn.

Sample: The dream, ultimately, even if you couldn't keep it would be, maybe you guys keep the unit and are able to spin off the income to help perpetuate your project. But then comes the problem of keeping them full and maintaining them. It's always a dream to own real estate because you have a constant balance. Yet we've been very successful in getting different banks, Northwest Savings is a good one we work with down in Corry, on donating properties to us.

Peters: They've written it down. The regulations require that when a debt has gone bad, they have a certain period of time they can carry it on their books, and then they have to write it down. And the reason they write a check for \$10,000 is because it's very expensive for them to continue to maintain that asset. A manager is on it; they are reporting to the Fed, not on an individual house but on packages of these things. So most banks are getting extremely creative in getting this stuff off of their books. Special servicers are a whole different thing. So, if you go look and find out that a special servicer is involved, I'd avoid that house. Jeremy Bloeser has learned that the hard way, because once the banks turn it over to a servicer, the servicer's whole goal is to hold onto that and collect fees from the bank as long as they possibly can. A local bank that's actually holding title to that house, is going to be much more likely to say, "Please! Take it! And here's a check!"

Sample: And credit unions, because a lot of banks have sold their mortgages. The other thing is that if you are a 501c3, they get the charitable contribution.

Peters: You had mentioned that maybe we might expect to see you in another year or two. So your current facility is where?

Taylor: We're on the third floor of the annex building to St. Paul's United Church of Christ on 11th and Peach.

Peters: And so you rent that, or they donate that?

Taylor: We give them a donation every year to cover all the utilities. It's cheap.

Peters: Have you started to think about...

Taylor: Oh, yah. I've been in communication now with the Catholic church, because they are redistricting on the 17th, as you probably know. And we have St. Peter's school right next to us. And the old building at St. Peter's school has a gymnasium, locker rooms and showers. I want that building. And Father Michael Kerig, told me that they were considering tearing that building down. So, there's a great opportunity there. I don't know how long it's going to take. Now the new school section which is on Sassafras and 11th – there's a waiting list for that building, because it's a beautiful building. And they are closing that school. And there are about 80 kids that go there right now.

Peters: Where's the old one?

Taylor: The old one is right next to it. It's the original school. They are two different buildings, but they are right next to each other.

Wood: Back to this project for a second. What is it that you want to ask ECGRA to support you on?

Taylor: On this project? Nothing. I'm not asking for anything today.

Sample: To your point, I had occasion to talk to a parole officer from Erie County. His comment to me was, there are a large number of women still in prison, who are due to be excused, but they have nowhere to go.

Taylor: That's correct.

Sample: We were looking for a facility for them down in Corry. And I knew where there was an old counseling services building that already had all of the safety issues taken care of, but it got sold for nothing. That was a big concern with me, because he told me that women spend 6 months past their time because they have nowhere to go.

Taylor: To address broadly the questions. I think we can use our men and our women, where applicable, if we should move forward. We've tripled our budget and our income at The Upper Room since I've been there. More than tripled – almost four times. And so our money is pretty good right now. The problem is, we looked at the Erie Turner Club, for instance, which is a huge available building. And it's too big for us. But we can work with a group, for instance, the Russian Orthodox Church, the Steiners, who is the minister there, wants to develop a women's shelter. Because, frankly, in Erie there are shelters all winter long when it goes below 25 degrees, but why don't we have them in the summertime? There's no place to stay.

Wachter: Have you ever thought of co-locating with other entities?

Taylor: That's exactly what I'm saying. The church or group of churches would provide facilities in which to stay, and we would continue to provide The Upper Room. So we would go together and do this. Also, we could provide the labor to remodel the place. So this is where the money comes in. Forget Wells Fargo, forget any bank giving you \$10,000. My goal now, and this might be an interesting pilot project for you guys down the road, is to look at a building that we could turn into something like that. Where we could house people – particularly women – and we could have an expanded Upper Room.

Sample: You think you had code issues on that house, wait until you get into sprinklers, and multi-family properties.

Taylor: The problem now is that we are not ADA compliant. We are walking up two sets of stairs. When we have people in wheel chairs, we can't accommodate them.

Wachter: Would you ever consider the Burton school on Buffalo Road?

Taylor: I'm not familiar with it. I would love to look. I think it's important that we recognize one thing, is that it seems important that we are downtown, because we have a relationship with the Mental Health Association of Northwest PA, who is right next to us. Our clients and the MHA clients seems to cross the road together. Most of our people are dual-diagnosis, and what I mean by dual-diagnosis for those who haven't heard the term, is that you have an addiction problem and you have a mental problem. You have both.

Barney: You spoke on how your budget had tripled – from revenue from the residents?

Taylor: That's correct. People believe in The Upper Room now. If you saw the Erie Times News, they were very supportive of us on this house. We had front-page articles twice this summer. We had multiple editorials from the Times, as well as others, about what we were doing. The way to raise money, and you guys know this better than I will ever know, is to be public – to be seen. If you're in public, and you're seen, and you're doing what people believe in, they send checks. We don't get any government money. You helped us with the Community Foundation. That's as public as we've ever been.

Sample: We're going to have to move on, but I thank you for coming. And I hate to say this, but I look forward to seeing you again. I have some very unusual circumstances, because I have a dual-diagnosis son.

Taylor: So you know what I'm talking about.

Sample: I know exactly what you're talking about.

- b. Dave Brennan & Jay Breneman, Eastside Opportunity Corridor. My name is Dave Brennan, with the city council, and this is Jay Breneman who works with the county council.

Brennan: Jay and I are here today to talk about the Eastside Opportunity Corridor. It's something we've been working on for a year and a half or so. It was Jay's idea that sparked interest, and myself being an architect, we got together and said, "This seems like a good idea. Let's keep on exploring it." So we've been working on and off meeting with people, walking the trail, talking about the possibilities that can happen here. So we want to present that to you today – where we're at. Of course, there's a lot of work to go, there are a lot of people to talk to, there is a lot of buy-in that we need to get from the community. We want to present today and talk about where we're at in time, talk about the idea, talk about the benefits, and talk about the challenges also. This is the agenda today. Jay is going to do an intro as to why it started and about collaborations, and then we'll talk about the existing neighborhood, show you exactly where it's at, describe some details about the pieces and parts of what we're proposing here. Then we'll have a quick Q & A if we have time.

Breneman: How we kicked this off was, when I took office two years ago, I remember a bus ride when I worked for the COG one summer. I took the bus from my house, which was up by Nunzie's, to the Renaissance Center downtown. It struck me how you could drive through Erie and see one thing, but go for a walk or take the bus, and you're going to see something entirely different. It blew my mind that there was so much garbage. I think that every time we walk through this, we are amazed at how much garbage there is in the area. It is a defacto inner-city landfill. There's been already several clean-ups, and they've only removed 12-18 tons in an area about the size of this room. And there is still garbage there. We're talking a huge expanse. It's such an obvious need.

Why would a county councilman approach a city councilman to do something about it? 1. It's in my district, 2. I took office because I really had an interest in doing some people-based and place-based initiatives. I felt that county government needed to have a renewed focus or a shift in focus towards people and community – not so much just about the programs – but also because our overall budget is largely towards human services. And if we don't do something on the front end, those expenses on the back end could continue to rise. Look at the prison that is just within walking distance from the proposed corridor. We spend over \$16,000,000 a year on that prison, and it doesn't get any cheaper. With all the programs that we have, the mental health professionals that are working, the probation, and those types of things, the costs are still rising. The county has a vested interest in just the cost of violence, the cost of community health impact, the cost of running our health department ensuring not just that there aren't rat feces in your burger when you go to a restaurant, but also to make sure that when you are walking in your neighborhood, you don't have to worry about the toxic leftovers from people just dumping.

Brennan: This is a map that I stole from the Erie comprehensive master plan. This map is showing the housing that is going downhill and the ratings of the residential housing in Erie. This is the existing Bayfront highway, the Bayfront Connector, and it is a greenway. You can see here this is where the tracks were on 19th Street, and they continue to go along the main line, but they went all the way across town and connected to this location. So they were removed in this area. This is the area of the proposed Eastside Opportunity Corridor. We are looking from State Street over to the Bayfront Connector. This is the Buffalo Road interchange. This green line is a connection I am trying to connect back up. With any greenway, with any bikeway, we're trying to make loops. We're not going to have a dead end and stop here, so we're looking to try and connect

that back up through State Street. And we will propose feature improvements for State Street possibly also. I will show you enlarged detail now.

Breneman: Going back to why a county councilman would seek out to work with a city councilman...I got to know Dave on the campaign trail. I knew that he used his knowledge as an architect to try to rethink how government operates in a community project. If the county can save some money by investing in our neighborhoods and our communities, it's going to be a win-win, not just for the taxpayers, but also make our jobs and our mission easier. Often we hear collaborations, and, really, the collaborations are nothing more than a few meetings, some money spent, and in the end, what do you have to show for it, except for some pictures of ribbon cuttings. What makes this a little bit different is that Dave and I have some shared values – letting people decide what they want in their own communities. This is not a cookie-cutter approach. Dave and I just didn't sit back and say, "You know what would really look good here...let's throw in some gazebos or this or that." A lot of people come to us and say, "Well, what's the plan?" We have the concept that the plan will be developed by the people in the community. We've already interacted with well over a dozen organizations and businesses – most of them mom-and-pop businesses that operate in the area, some more that are moving into the area as well. We've talked to teenagers; we've talked to senior citizens. A lot of people harken back to the days when Tulio went to Nixon and said, "Pull up this rail line." When for decades people in the community had sought to have this rail line removed, and when it was removed, it was just more of a whimper. Nothing really came of it. You'd think after 30-40 years of work to remove this rail line that there was ample opportunity to take advantage of revitalizing the neighborhood which the community had sought for so long. That's really where we are moving forward to in working with the church groups.

Most of the property, if you take a walk, you will find new garbage every day. For some reason people like to dump big things like hot tubs, couches, the big couches, the sectional ones. It's a never ending cleanup process. There's a playground there that people in the neighborhood remember going to, and now it's just a landfill. It's probably the worst part of the section. I just drove through there on my way here today, and you see homes that are well taken care of, and you know those people aren't getting their money back when they invest in this land, and that's unfortunate. We should ensure that they get a return on their investment, but also, their homes are next to empty lots, right next to boarded-up windows. What Dave is going to get into is talking about the cost of doing this and the cost of not doing it.

Brennan: These are some of the founding principles that we've been talking about throughout the project. We've always come back to these principles:

1. Place-making. We've talked about that before, but the concept here is to try to do something that has a small investment that can have a great value. By putting in a connection where people are already going through the area but more formalizing it – maybe it's asphalt or brick – start small and then build up amenities over time with community buy-in. Make the connection, put the basic structure in, put conduits in for future lighting, then over time people, neighborhood groups, churches, whatever, would make investments into this and contribute in some way. There would be fundraisers to build up capital. The basic structure is something to do very simply.
2. Sustainability. The whole principle of this as Jay alluded to is we have an area of the city that has been ignored; there is garbage that gets dumped there – every day you will see something new, it seems like – to try to put some type of small investment over time, people will invest more into their homes, people will invest more into their

businesses. E. E. Austin is on the trail. They are a good company, and there are other great companies on this pathway. If they are given some confidence that this area is going to be cleaned up, if the residents in the area are given some confidence that there is going to be clean-up in the area over time, there's more investment. That will hopefully trickle over and blossom into other areas nearby.

3. Community. This needs to be a community project. It isn't that we are going to come in here and say, "Here's the master plan. This is what we are going to build. We don't have the money, but we're going to try to do this eventually." The idea is to show the basic pathway, show how we get from point A to point B, then over time work with groups, work with churches, work with clubs along the way and see what they'd like to see built there, and then work with them to try to find funding over time. We're not going to lay out a plan and say, "We're going to put this here, put this here." It's a structure of making connections at this point.

(Pointing out on the map) – This is where Bill Pettit is working on the Buffalo Road interchange. We've had several meetings with Bill. They are looking at extending their project a little bit to make this connection to 19th Street, 20th Street, actually. This plan which is being engineered right now, he is going to look at bringing connections over the bridge and helping improvements to make this connection.

From French Street to Parade Street would be pedestrian and bicycle street-scape improvements. It's working within the street right-away to make a bike pathway and a walkway and improve the area with landscaping and whatever wants to go on there.

On Parade Street we need to connect, and there are some issues with the traffic here. We're looking to work with the city to see how to manage that. From Parade Street over to Ash Street and from Ash Street to Wayne, this is where we are going to have pedestrian and bicycle pathway installation so it's off the street and onto property – either the property owned here by a developer, or property starting from here all the way over to here, by the railroad company, by Norfolk Southern.

There's a business here, E. E. Austin, and we're going around that business and connecting back up here over Wayne Street, and then back over to 20th Street here. The tracks did go this way, but we're looking to connect over to the Buffalo Road interchange, which is an investment along there with PennDot in the next couple of years. It's being engineered right now.

The whole purpose of the map is to show the location, but also all the different organizations and groups in the area. We have Booker T. Washington Center, the St. Martin's Center, there's a playground here, another playground here, McKinley. There are homes, there are schools – McKinley, hopefully Trinity Church is here, there's another park over here, there are parks here – Roessler, and Kosciuszko, SNOOPS over here, St. Stan's church is over here – a lot of organizations in the area. I'm sure we're missing many that are within the area.

One of the big ____? ____ has been the north-south connections. If we make a connection from the Bayfront Connector over to State Street, what about north and south? How do we connect to this? We're looking at doing a study that wouldn't just encompass this area but expand out further possibly to 12th Street, and possibly to 26th Street. So, you're looking at the whole neighborhood, not just this one route. Even looking at Parade Street here, this connection here, we can't just look at the immediate neighborhood for how

traffic would be affected or how pedestrians could cross safely. We really need to look at a larger area to talk about these things.

The basic design we are looking to do initially is just putting the pathway in – either asphalt, concrete, or whatever we decide on and also provide a conduit for electrical service in the future. While we're digging a pathway – putting the base in and putting the ____? ____ in, we're going to put a conduit in also. So, if any future lighting wants to go in the area, any future electrical needs at all, we'll have that basic structure in place. And the other part about this, I keep coming back to this, is the project will be community owned. We want them to select the amenities they want out there, and we'll give them options and talk about those things. We want to hear from them – what do they want to see as far as historical markers? Is there something that happened there we need to recognize? Are there any activities that should go along this corridor that they would like to see?

These are some sketches we put together to show what it could look like. This sketch is from French Street looking back towards Spoons Court over here. This is on 19th Street. Here you're seeing that new housing development. Parade Street is down there. And this is showing a bikeway and also a path for walking on the side. So, improve the sidewalks here and have a bikeway in the street right-away.

This is Parade Street here. There is a developer that owns this property here. I'm not sure what they're going to plan here, but we've talked to them about possibly putting the pathway around the perimeter of the property.

Next steps. We want to have design charrettes for meeting with groups. We already have scheduled neighborhood clean-ups with Mercyhurst and Gannon students. They contacted us. They heard about the initiative and want to be a part of it. We've already had a clean-up of sorts. We've walked the neighborhood several times. The good thing about it is that when we were doing our walks we've seen other groups doing clean-ups also. Liberty Cornerstone Church has clean-ups there, and we've connected with them and want to involve them in the future of the project as it goes forward.

After we see that there is buy-in and there are people that want this to happen, we want to do more of a formal study which we would need for certain future grant opportunities and to actually do the surveying, for actually doing public meetings, and engineering of the project, which would be, of course, further on. But we really want to start with these design charrettes to make sure we have the community buy-in, to make sure this is actually what people want to see. So that's going to be a marketing effort, the neighborhood clean-up, and the studies.

We have a Facebook site that we post information on whenever there is a meeting, or whenever there is an interesting rails to trails initiative, we post that to try and keep people involved, asking questions, and talking about the project.

Peters: I have a comment and a question. Groups like the Urban Land Institute, Next City, Brookings weighs in on this, there is a real economic impact when you bring pedestrian and cycling traffic through a densely occupied area. There is study after study that shows that. I think this is fantastic and I hope you keep pushing forward on it.

The question part is for both of you with your city- and county-council hats on. Do your colleagues on the two councils understand the economic impact that can happen, and if they don't, which I suspect they don't, do they look at this myopically as Dave and Jay's pet project – do they get that this should be just the beginning? This goes back to Jane Jacobs in the 50s talking about the minute you take foot traffic and cycling traffic and get rid of the human scale, urban areas decline, period. This isn't some new thing. We're not cutting-edge here, we're just finally getting with it. Do they get it, and if not, are there advocacy groups beyond you two needed to get the rest of your colleagues on board?

Brennan: I've involved them and let them know what's going on with the project. I've given them all the information, talked about the map, about the focus area. I think there's been a general understanding, but I think you're right that there's a lot more discussion and education on the value this is. There are so many facets to this – the economics of it, what it can do for the neighborhood, what it can do for making connections, what it can do for the environment by having this in our backyard. It's just a start. We've been going and trying to educate as much as possible – educating ourselves and others about it. There is more discussion there and opportunity to make sure that buy-in is there, to make sure they understand. I think that discussion needs to continue.

Breneman: County Council has already invested \$5,000 this year into this project for clean-up and for some of the preliminary community-type outreach. That went to the Sisters of St. Joseph Eastside Neighborhood Network. This is right in the heart of where they are at. I know my colleagues are very well informed. They've seen the preliminary management plan, the preliminary ideas and concepts. I've kept them informed throughout the process. There is also this shift in focus by county council to focus on people and place. I think the moment you talk studies or research, their eyes are going to glaze over. I know that particularly for my colleagues in the city and some that represent some of the other county areas, they've seen the work done in Corry, they've seen the impact this has on our ability to collect taxes at the county. So I know that the general understanding is there, and the willingness to put into this type of project has already been demonstrated.

Probably since projects like this don't happen as much as they should in Erie, we don't have enough record to go back and say, "Look at this project, and this project, and this project," to demonstrate success. It is almost like trailblazing, in a way. I think they are comfortable taking a risk.

Brennan: We've had meetings with public works, and traffic engineering, and they said, "Here's what's a plus, here's what you need to do, here's the scope of what you need to address." So we've been slowly addressing that. In every meeting that I have I learn something more. This is not a full-time job. We're trying to do this and trying to get people on board, to get everything lined up, and then see where we need to go next. It's a project that involves so many people, and there are so many pieces involved in it. Trying to put it all together is challenging. I think everyone understands the benefits of it and wants to help.

Peters: My concern is that study after study shows that something like a round-about is a more efficient way to move traffic. And there is very little argument that can dispute that. There is study after study after study that shows it is an incredibly efficient way to move people. But politicians and local constituencies, and little sub-areas get so up in arms over this stuff. You go back to Waterford a year later and they say, "Oh yah, we get it."

We go to do the same thing in Millcreek and it's a huge deal again. The same is with pedestrian traffic and cycling traffic. Harborcreek Township is a prime example. You look at the density of the school right next to us, and you look at the density of this park, and then you go talk to Dean Pepicello, as I have done multiple times, and say, "Dean, when you are repaving Nagle Road, or when you are repaving Hannon Road, factor in, it doesn't have to be completely separated, but factor in the incremental cost to do it when you're already resurfacing, which is so much less than if you have to go build it from scratch. But they get up in arms, "Well, the neighbors aren't going to want people in their front yards." I own a building at 105 Poplar, and there are Bayview condos here, and the Bluffs Condos here, and at the time the city was looking at putting the bike path in front of Bayview and behind my building, every resident in that neighborhood fought it, because it was going to bring delinquents who were going to sit there and smoke crack and drop litter and be bums, wreak havoc, rape, pillage, and everything else. I would urge anybody here to go take a look at that path and what it's done for those properties. It's unbelievable. And on almost any Sunday morning, you can find west-siders, east-siders, county residents, city residents, riding their bikes, walking their dogs, pushing strollers. That whole neighborhood is cleaning up.

Breneman: People are using this right now. They walk their dogs. You'll see some well-worn pedestrian paths through this because there are some streets that dead-end into it. You'll see kids playing in it, which is very dangerous. We had some pictures of the garbage. It is seriously a defacto landfill. Right now you have a lot of overgrown brush, right? It's already a place for criminal activity. It's already a place that invites that – "Nobody cares about this area. Do what you want." We're not looking at tearing things down and building something in its place and shifting people out of the way. We're looking to enhance an object, an area that people have wanted for decades to be of more functional and healthy use. They are using it right now, and we'd like it to be safer. And at the same time, we'd like to get those criminal elements out of the area, but also to make it a place where when you go walk your dog, when your kids are playing hide and seek, you don't have to worry about them falling on the sharp objects that are laying there, the garbage that is there, the bums that might be smoking crack. If you go to where that one ballpark is, you'll see in the woods chairs, campfires, a sleeping area – people are living in that area. This would be getting people where they feel safe in their own backyard.

Brennan: It's important to talk to those people. It becomes a marketing effort. How do we make those connections, actually speak to them? You can't hold a meeting and expect them to show up. If they don't know about it, if they don't support it, then they're going to be against it. What can we do to make them understand what we're trying to do and then get their input on what they would like to see, so that it becomes theirs? It's not ours, it's this neighborhood's amenity to make the area better. That's the challenge – how to make those connections and get that buy-in.

Barney: What I was visualizing – I grew up in that area. It went from French Street all the way over, and we're talking on the south side, I would take it, as far as your path. But when you get to Ash Street, there are houses on both corners. And then you spoke of going up off of 19th Street around Austin, and you go in the back door of Austin and you're around the gravel. But then as you proceed on over, you hit Wayne, you're going to be up mighty high, because they have that bridge that goes there, and I'm wondering how that's going to pass...

Brennan: On Wayne Street there is no bridge there anymore. There are two buttresses there, and they would have to be leveled down.

Breneman: There's a section that's level, and there is also a hill where the bridge used to be.

Barney: So then as you cross Wayne and you go over, we're talking being up on the 20th Street area. Now it would have to be on the north side, because on the south side there are houses.

Brennan: Here are the houses, and here's the track right here. So we're going to be coming back down and connecting up to 20th right here.

Barney: Okay. So then if we proceed over we're going to hit Perry. Are we talking about going up to 21st Street on Perry?

Brennan: No, we're coming over to Buffalo Road and making that connection at the Buffalo interchange. Here's Ash Street, here's Perry that dead-ends here. We're on the street right from here to here connecting to the Buffalo interchange.

Barney: The only reason I'm saying this is because you said there would be no displacement, or whatever, so I take it you're talking about working with the neighbors, and I'm wondering how we're still going to have a street and sidewalk. I'm trying to visualize this.

Brennan: That's a whole engineering issue – looking at the street, looking at the right-of-way, looking at what could happen. Of course, we're not going to take anyone's property.

Barney: Because then when you get to Buffalo Road on 20th, you've got that automobile garage, whatever, I respect the guy's business, but you got that, and then when you go around you've got – I know who owns the property going straight to East Avenue, because they are going to build a church there. I was just trying to visualize. Don't get me wrong. I'm all for cleaning it up, I'm all for making it lighter and more attractive, but I do have concern, and I was wondering, like you say, it is a densely populated area. Even on the north side, there are only a few houses – I know a lot of those residents too – then you've got that A1 across from the old Greyhound Station. Are people willing to part with their land?

Brennan: Which land?

Barney: Where the people had a flower store, and there was a bus station on the south side, they were all together across the street from the old A1 Automotive place.

Brennan: This property is owned by Renaud Peck. The railroad owns the property from here...

Breneman: There are three property owners – one being the city, that's the right-of-way, mostly being on the street on the western part of the proposed corridor; another big chunk of the land is owned by Renaud Peck. There's a continental fiber optic line right where that rail line used to be, so they are very limited by what kind of development they

can do on that land. You can't move that fiber optic line. It would cost something like \$100,000 an hour to move it. So, I think they've been a little stymied about what they can put there. They wanted to put something there, and, of course, this facilitates their future endeavors there. From there it becomes Norfolk Southern land, and Dave had already talked to E.E. Austin about moving. They are leasing where their aggregate is at right now from Norfolk Southern, and they've already talked about moving their aggregate back to make space for the pedestrian crossing. Whenever you get to Wayne, etc., you're going from a wide rail property to where that basketball court is, and so you're staying on the rail line property. Then you would be going back onto the street on the eastern corner there. Dave, you can talk about PennDot and our discussions with them.

Brennan: We've talked to Bill Pettit several times about this project. It's under engineering right now. He was very open to expanding this project and going over the bridge, because they are going to stop the bridge. They're putting a light in and pedestrian improvements. He's looking to extend that project to make that connection and maybe do something about that sharp corner right there on Buffalo Road. That would, of course, help with the connectivity of what we're proposing and help with the approach to that whole intersection for pedestrians as they approach this new traffic light. I'm hoping this whole area gets improved street-wise so that it's safer and we can make this connection easier and people won't be intimidated by walking through there.

Domino: I am curious about how you are going to keep people from throwing trash there as that seems to be a really big problem.

Brennan: We've talked to several different groups, and that was always a question. That's why the community needs to buy into this. If you're living in one of these houses along the way, hopefully, if you saw something, you would tell them not to do that or help to keep it clean. We want to develop some kind of maintenance plan as to how that is managed. That's a big question that a lot of people have – what's going to prevent people from throwing garbage there? If we're going to invest in the area, improve it, light it, put some attention into the area, and if we get buy-in, that helps on all those fronts.

Barney: What about the weeds and things of that nature in the summertime? Owners don't keep that cut now. That is not the most well-kept and groomed area, which encourages people to throw stuff. So now we throw in a new sidewalk and put a few lights up, but who's going to groom the grass?

Brennan: Businesses like E.E. Austin have already said that they'll definitely help either take care of it and help possibly...and there are other landowners in the area – we don't have signed agreements saying they are going to do this – that own the property across the street and the property right on Parade Street, so they have an investment in the area. I would hope that they would help.

Peters: I also think that more traffic, crime, typically, does not happen out in the open, including minor crimes like throwing a couch out from the back of your truck. Additional traffic tends to cut down on that. The other thing I would note, the city seems to have changed their approach a little bit, even to the Bayfront Connector path. Yesterday morning we had a lot of snow, and I was shocked when on my way to work, I saw a little S10 or Ford Ranger plowing that path, because now it's become something that city residents use. The first few years that didn't happen. The city badly ignored it. Now I'm up and down that all the time, and you see people really actively using that path. I'm

shocked at the number of people I run into that now park either at McClelland or go up to Behrend and use the path. You open this up to a whole new group of people to use it, and the more activity, I think the less...now, there's always going to be litter. People are driving by and they're going to throw it, but maybe it's a McDonald's bag now instead of a bag of hypodermics.

Brennan: Another thing that goes along the same lines is McClelland Park. That area didn't have a road back there – it was a dirt road, and kids were back there shooting guns and riding bikes and creating trouble. Now the city has put the street in, there's a dog park back in there, there are plans to put in a playground. The more activity, the more people have access, the more police can get in there, it makes it more of a public space so that people aren't going to do those things...

Peters: It's sort of self-policing. I use that dog park with my dog, and it's interesting to watch the attitudes of people when someone brings their Pit Bull. There is always this concern about who is going to make sure that the violent breeds don't eat Miss Smith's Chihuahua. The fact is, and I've seen people who bring aggressive dogs into that park, and those people that don't have aggressive breeds, band together. It's a real social experience. You should go observe it sometime in the summer. Because almost every time I've been there, someone does try to bring their dog that's never been socialized, and they end up having to keep it on a leash, because people won't put up with it.

Wood: Mr. Chairman, we're running out of time. First of all, thank you for the presentation. If I could just summarize from an ECGRA standpoint what we've done so far and why we've asked Eastside Opportunity Corridor to come in and speak. It's because we have invested in several neighborhood renewal projects across Erie County, and it's been a learning experience. As we've invested in these projects, we have collected data. We've worked with various groups, and I think it's building toward something – building toward a greater vision of how we can play a role in supporting neighborhoods. We've helped with the Our West Bayfront Neighborhood plan; we've helped with SNOOPS Neighborhood and the mural project that we did there; we've helped in the Little Italy Neighborhood, Sisters of St. Joseph; we've done several main streets all across Erie County, which, of course, have an effect on the immediate neighborhoods that surround them. We did a neighborhood renewal project in Corry where we worked with an intermediary. Some houses were torn down. Housing revitalization coaching is a part of that project. And then most recently, we invested in a neighborhood center, which you could think of as a centrifugal force in a neighborhood. It's an anchor. It's someplace where the youth in that neighborhood can participate in their community. I really see this place-making initiative, with its charrette components, its street-scape components, its parks-and-recreation components as the next evolution in our learning process about how we can possibly support neighborhoods. Eastside Opportunity Corridor is uniquely positioned, because it's got the support of the Sisters of St. Joseph on the east side. It's got the support of the Holy Trinity Church and its congregation. It has the support of neighborhood watch groups around it. We just heard today it has the support of the city of Erie, and we know that we have a county councilman and a city councilman on board with it. That's a very interesting mix.

As far as pilot projects go, this is one of the projects that at the March board meeting I want to bring back to you with a formal proposal on how to move forward in the role that I think ECGRA could play from a funding standpoint.

Sample: Thank you, David and Jay. We're going to move on to committee reports.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Treasurer's Report: Peters: I haven't seen anything out of the ordinary in the reports. I've asked Perry to bring them up, because I think it's easier that way to keep us all on the same page. I have, candidly, not had a chance to talk to Perry or Diane. I didn't see anything unusual in them. Was there anything unusual? So, we'll just take a quick run-through as Perry puts them up. Remember, we're coming close to the end of our fiscal year. As you look at these things, remember we're not on a January 1 to December 31 calendar. We use an April 1 start to our year. The balance sheet is what we would typically start with. As you see, we continue to have a sizeable amount of cash on the assets side of things. We have, as you see, started to break out those funds that are committed to something already, because a lot of us look at this big number, and say, "Hey, wait! Why aren't we doing something?" Well, we have. The people we've committed to just haven't drawn down or it hasn't come up in the cycle yet.

Wood: That's a great point. I think keeping track of drawing down is important since we will have an increased balance sheet of notes receivable. Moving forward, we'll be labeling...like this Ignite Erie MRI doesn't really tell you what it is. That's the Bridgeway Capital loan that closed that Tim and I worked on which took three months. It took longer than we thought. But this will say BWC for Bridgeway Capital so that we know exactly what it is, just like this one says Enterprise Development Fund, or Corry Industrial Benefit Association. So we'll have the acronym up there so that you know exactly who it is that we've contracted with.

Peters: Any questions? So then we get to the P&L. Just remember that we are coming to the end of our year. So that's why we are at or beyond in some categories.

Wood: January is the first month of the final quarter of the year.

Peters: Then next we look at the statement of cash flows. Although we are looking at this through January, Perry did send out an email last week about our big check which always does come in the first part of the year. Perry, did you want to take some time to talk about that?

Wood: It's in the executive director's report on the revenue dashboard. I like to update you guys every time the revenue comes in so you can see how it's compared historically on a quarterly basis. As you can see for the final quarter of the year it picked up slightly, which means we only had about a \$30,000 decrease overall from last year, which is a sign – not a for-sure sign, but a trend – that the gaming revenue is probably going to stabilize around the \$5.5 million mark.

Peters: The practical consequence of that is that we, as you all know, take a big chunk right off the top and give it to the settlement municipalities. So it gives us a feel for the fact that we're probably typically going to be in the \$4.5 million range.

Okay, and then our budget versus actual. I think we finally have a format that I like, and we've obviously been looking at this for most of the last year so that we can see our over/under and percentage of budget. It helps as you go through it. I've

explained these before. Website design is because there were additional things we did that came up mid-way through the year. As you look at some of these categories and wonder why they are so high, there's an explanation. We are using a new online grant system. So, I've been through these in detail, and I don't see anything that I'm terribly concerned about. Now, as we talked about at last month's finance committee meeting, the finance committee is getting rocking on a budget for all of you to look at so that we're not coming at this last-minute.

Sample: One aside, and I was going to call for an executive session later, but I think it's kind of foolish and we can do it now. I was questioning Perry the other day about the education expense, because I knew through some encouragement from Dr. Garvey and the entire board, we thought it would be important for Perry if there was some type of continuing ed and that we would support that. He did sign up last year and is taking a course out of Pittsburgh, and when I talked to him initially he said that he wanted to make sure it was the right fit. The other day I called him and asked him if it is the right fit and if he is going to stay with it. I told him that pretty soon, if we don't pay him for last year, we might not pay him for next year. And I wanted to remind the board that it was voted on at the time, and if it's over a certain amount, we will vote on it again. I just want to be sure that we get it out this year rather than combining it with next year's. David and Jim, you guys weren't here when we voted on that. It's been in the budget for probably two years.

Peters: I think this would be our third year of having a training and education budget. Maybe we've touched on it in small amounts but we've not really utilized it.

Barney: So are you saying that we owe Perry some money?

Sample: Well, he hasn't give us a bill.

Peters: To clarify a couple of points, there's a policy on this.

Sample: I just didn't want a check coming out and someone feeling blind-sided.

Peters: Well I don't think there is a scenario where a check just comes out. I think the personnel committee has to review the policy and then determine that it is line with our policy or it isn't in line with our policy.

Wood: And if it's over \$5,000, the board has to vote on it.

Sample: I just wanted to bring up that I think it's important it comes to the forefront before the end of the fiscal year.

Peters: Do we have an active personnel committee?

Sample: Mr. Yapple. That's it.

Peters: Maybe we could request that Mr. Yapple review the policy and get back to us on it. We spent a lot of time on it. I think Tim wrote the policy.

Wood: Knox Law Firm wrote the policy. If anyone would like to join Mr. Yapple, all you have to do is ask.

Peters: And I would say the same thing about the budget as we go through it. Anybody that wants to participate in that, we'll let you know when the meetings are.

Wood: I think this budget versus actual is the most important document in looking at what the budget should reflect next year. If anybody has any questions about it, this is a great place to start. And keep in mind, too, that February is the meeting to start discussions, because March is the last month of the fiscal year. So, we will be looking at voting on the new budget, new officers, and all that in April, which is considered the re-organization meeting.

Peters: We'll be getting a draft budget out to you before the next meeting. Just to circle back to the Jay and Dave show, we're under 50% on special projects, which is what we use to fund pilot programs. What you just said is that you plan on coming back to us next month. Does that mean we are going to be asked to fund a \$50,000 or \$75,000 pilot for that?

Wood: There is a dollar amount being researched right now with an actual architectural engineering firm, who's going to give a quote on that. This one is a little more complex because it involves grants at the state level through DCNR. We're prepared to put a dollar figure to it today, but somewhere around that amount. And even though Dr. Taylor was really humble today about not asking for funds, that is a project that if you gentlemen want to, I think we should look at moving forward on as a small pilot project as well. It was a poorly prepared presentation, but he needs seed money in order to move forward to the next house, now that they've learned from the first one.

Peters: I'm not in a hurry to rush on that one until they have an actual plan.

Bagnoni: He didn't seem very enthused to do another house. I'm not sure whether he wants to.

Peters: It also didn't sound like he had the support of his board to do another house.

Sample: He said he would like to do another one, but one under the original constraints where they could use it for multi-dwelling housing.

Barney: He understands what he needs to pursue going further in the endeavor.

Peters: If we underspend on special projects, it's going to be my recommendation that we carry over funds instead of holding the line at \$150,000. If we end up only spending \$125,000, we take that extra \$25,000 and carry it forward. Every year we are going to be having more and more pilot projects that come our way that we've got to look at.

Wood: Just keep in mind that if you do carry it forward, it will make our budget look like it's growing.

Peters: Yah. We underspent this year. Right now we're at 50% on pilot programs. Now that's not our fault. If someone doesn't come prepared to ask us for money...My point is, I don't want to just spend...

Wachter: Keep in mind too, though, at a certain point, it's no longer a pilot project, and now it's just the gaming authority making a determination that we're going to willy-nilly spend money for whoever has a good idea that fits in this category.

Peters: My point exactly. I don't want to do that.

Wachter: We need to formalize this at some point to take applications, for people to come in and go through the due-diligence process.

Peters: Certainly on year two if Corry comes back and wants more money, it doesn't come out of special projects. It's got to fit into a program. But these are first-year things. I'm just saying that just because we're one month away from our year-end, I don't want to wire money to this guy, because it didn't sound to me like he had all his ducks in a row.

I like to say it out loud at every meeting that we do provide the actual check detail on every check that's being written, and also to clarify, when you see the Visa, those are checked either by me before signing the check, or Dave or Dave, who have signatory on the account, so we see what's being spent. That detail is available as well if anyone would want to see it.

Probably not really the treasurer's issue, but I suspect, as other authorities that I'm on have begun asking for statements of financial interest. Have we gotten those yet?

Wachter: No.

Peters: So they are due by May 1 for calendar year 2015. Those should be coming. There are a number of people over the years if you go back and look at GoErie that did not file those things and ended up getting themselves in hot water. It's probably not the treasurer's issue, but it does have to do with finances. Those of you who are newer are going to have to fill those out. They are public, by the way.

Sample: Is there a motion to accept the treasurer's report? Mr. Paris makes a motion to approve the reports as presented. Mr. Barney seconds the motion. Motion carries 7-0.

- b. Regional Assets Committee: Wood: Multi-Municipal Collaboration is technically open for grant application at this time. Special Events are due tonight at midnight. The MMC workshop Tom has scheduled for February 17. That's an opportunity for all these intergovernmental groups to come in and learn about how the program has been tweaked. We have done some initial surveying, so we have a general idea of what folks are interested in applying for this year. One of the interesting developments has been the reconfiguration of the county planning office to more of a proactive planning office, which is in the process right now. We had a meeting with the new director of that office, and they have some really interesting ideas on how to play more of a capacity-building role for local governments, which has been one of the sticking points with whether or not this program is going to be successful. Municipalities, when left on their own, tend, I don't want to over-generalize, but tend not to be as creative as maybe we would like them to be. So, two things have happened – a new director of the planning office, and a new director of the council of governments – both bringing new energy and ideas to the system, and they are both

going to be actively engaged in this new grant round. We'll see what they come up with.

- c. Strategic Planning Committee: Paris: Nothing new to report.
- d. Youth & Education Committee: No report.
- e. Update from County Council: No report.
- f. Update from County Executive's Office: No report.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I have a packet that I won't go over with you, but I will highlight a couple of things. I put the new revenue dashboard in there. The hockey-stick model is in full effect there with the final quarter of 2015 revenues coming in. There is an RFP process that's gone in place from the county's standpoint for the summer jobs program. We received two responses – one from GECAC and one from Venango Training. Mr. Lee was going to report on this today. The committee has met to initially discuss negotiations with those two entities. That's really all I have prepared to say other than if any of you wants to see the RFPS, I have copies and would be more than happy to send you one or both. I'll be representing ECGRA in the RFP committee, but if any member of the board would like to join us or has questions, simply let me know, and we can make that happen.

The next thing in the packet is the UECDL amendment to their inner-city small business development application, which was originally designed to bring a new CDFI to the city of Erie to specifically invest in inner-city companies in the city of Erie targeting an underserved or not-served population of small businesses within the city. UECDL has reconsidered that position and is asking us to amend their grant application significantly, which is why I'm bringing it back to the board, into an idea they call Invest Erie. The idea is to create a hope zone for the city of Erie for these small businesses in which they are better collaborating with the existing CDFIs rather than creating a CDFI of their own. We discussed this briefly in one of the committee meetings. It has been on the SharePoint site. It remains on the SharePoint site under Strategic Planning Committee. The documents are in the executive director's report at this time. The executive director's recommendation is that we move forward and support this amendment.

Peters: The hope zone?

Wood: The Invest Erie approach. Hope zone, which is part of a greater conversation that is going on right now. A gentleman in Los Angeles named John O'Bryant, started this movement to support inner-city small business development as a key strategy to revitalization.

Peters: And this is an outreach program to help those businesses interact with the existing CDFIs. So this is sort of similar maybe to what we did with Gannon's Small Business Development Center? Is it really a technical assistance program?

Wood: Good analogy. It is. The amendment fits the original spirit, intent, and guidelines of the Ignite Erie Inner-city Small Business program.

Peters: I love technical assistance when it comes to this economic development stuff. So many businesses get into it, and they get no support. The CDFIs are here to give out money, and some of them will help, but they're not really there to give advice in the same way that a group like this could be. It sounds interesting.

Sample: I was in a meeting just the other day where we were trying to figure out terms. It's my understanding now, if you are fulfilling someone's term, that does not count as part of your terms to follow. If you fulfilled somebody's term and there were four years left of that term, you've actually got four years plus two terms. Okay, and then the question that we ran into was, in the beginning when you have these staggered first terms, is that treated the same as fulfilling a term? I want to make sure that when we put the dates down that a person's term is over, we know what we're doing. Nobody has ever come close to riding their time out here.

Wood: That's true since ECGRA was established in 2008. It hasn't even been around for 10 years.

Sample: If we could find that answer out and communicate it to everyone. That is what we were told the other day. Not that terms have been an issue, but we were trying to fill a board with people that were willing to show up.

Wachter: I have looked at that. The county administrative code says that, "Membership on authorities shall not exceed two consecutive terms of office or a maximum of 10 years." The cases on this are such that if you are appointed to fill out the unexpired portion of someone else's term, that doesn't count against you in that two-term calculation. If you are appointed to fill out a staggered term, I wasn't able to find any cases on it, but the same analysis would hold true in that it is not a full term. So I believe that a "term" being specifically defined as five years doesn't start until you begin fulfilling your own five-year term, if that makes sense.

Sample: I want to make sure that we understand, because we are going to have to start with a nominating committee in figuring out the future of what's going to go on here. If we could research that and verify that all of our terms are correct.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

No report.

OLD BUSINESS

Amendment to the UECDC contract. Mr. Barney makes a motion to approve the amendment. Mr. Peters seconds the motion. Motion carries 7-0.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Paris moves to adjourn the meeting.