

ERIE COUNTY CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY
MINUTES
Thursday, March 19, 2026

Board Members Present: Deitrick, Glass, Hilbert, Nuber, Richards, Riley, Schmitt (Teams), White & Zaphiris

Board Members Excused: Dahlkemper, Johnson

Others Present: Gus Pine, Ed Snyder, Jim Walczak, Solicitor; TJ Hesch, Dave Gerber, Barry Copple, Steve Morvay, Neal Wurst, Ray Williams, Lisa DiLuzio

Ms. White called the meeting to order at 3:01 PM.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS: None.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MONTH:

Ms. White asked for approval of the minutes of the February 19, 2026, meeting.

Mr. Riley motioned to approve the February 19, 2026, minutes. Mr. Deitrick seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Mr. Hesch said we have two months of financials in our packets today. He said if you recall, back at our meeting last month, we presented a preliminary January because we had just finished implementing our new accounting system NetSuite, got all the data in it, and it was our first month of close. Mr. Hesch said we presented that as a preliminary measure just to give us a little more time to make sure that all the data in the new system was accurate and we had recorded everything properly. He said we did include January's Financial Report in the board packet and what you see is the final version. Mr. Hesch said the good news is it was a minimal change from what you saw initially. He said it was just under an \$8,000 improvement to the bottom line. Mr. Hesch said there were some small adjustments made to the revenues and expenses across some of the venues. He said the biggest one to call out was we just had some additional box office revenue that we recorded for the arena. Mr. Hesch said moving forward we should be good to have a smooth, monthly close process. He said, does anybody have any questions on the final version of the January financials. Mr. Richards said with this new version why are there so many more pages. Mr. Hesch said this month has two sets of financials in them. Mr. Hesch said Mr. Gerber and I were just on a call with our account representative at NetSuite today. He said we are aware of some of the formatting issues. He said we're trying to fine tune how those are going to look moving forward.

Mr. Hesch said moving on to the February financials, overall, the event activity was relatively in line with our budget. He said there were just a couple misses to talk through at the arena and the theatre, which ultimately drove our bottom-line miss of about \$95,000 across all venues.

Mr. Hesch said looking at the arena the event activity was pretty much in line with budget for the month even though they missed budget at the bottom line by about \$41,000. He said if we look at the revenue, there was a negative variance of about \$35,000 that was largely driven by some weaker than expected concession sales, specifically as it relates to bar sales, which missed budget by about \$20,000. He said if we look at our overall expenses, they were just over budget by about \$6,300. Mr. Hesch said that was driven by a negative variance in food and beverage costs. He said those were about \$16,000 over budget. Mr. Hesch said at the bottom line they missed by about \$41,000.

Mr. Hesch said at the theatre their activity in February was pretty much on par with budget. He said there were a couple things that happened that really drove their miss. Mr. Hesch said Larry the Cable Guy was budgeted for February. Mr. Hesch said the show was rescheduled to May so we will see that benefit in May, but we missed out on about \$42,000 of revenue for the month of February. He said also the Broadway show the Music Man happened in February and had some weaker than expected attendance. Mr. Hesch said as we look at the revenues, most of the event-related revenues fell

short of budget. He said the one shining star on the revenue side was concession sales. Mr. Hesch said, as I looked at that, it appears that the Brit Floyd concert held in February had some very strong concession sales and those sales helped beat budget. He said looking at the expense side, the expenses were well controlled and came in at about \$7,000 under budget. Mr. Hesch said so at the bottom line, the theatre missed their budget by \$59,000 for February.

Mr. Hesch said there is nothing major to note at the ballpark since there is no activity. He said at this point, in the year, they finished ahead of bottom line by about \$1,800.

Mr. Hesch said the convention center had another good month. He said their event activity was just about in line with budget. Mr. Hesch said total revenues exceeded budget a little over \$26,000. Mr. Hesch said this was largely driven by their food, beverage and concession sales that alone exceeded budget \$20,000. He said their expenses also exceeded budget by about \$24,000. He said their concession and food and beverage expense exceeded budget about \$15,000 but at the bottom line they just beat budget about \$2,500 for the month.

Mr. Hesch said at Liberty Park there was no event activity. He said that there are some expense allocations for personnel office and IT. He said they were just about \$1,300 ahead of budget for the month.

Mr. Hesch said as we look at our year-to-date through February, total revenues across all the authorities' venues were just shy of budget by about \$136,000. He said expenses are also under budget at about \$47,000. Mr. Hesch said year-to-date through February, our bottom line is missing budget by \$89,000.

Mr. Deitrick motioned to accept the final January 31, 2026, and February 28, 2026, Financial Reports as presented to the board. Mr. Hilbert seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

MANAGEMENT REPORT:

Mr. Pine said I want to remind everybody that we have our board retreat next Tuesday beginning at 7:30 a.m. at the Warner Theater Rehearsal Hall. He said the last time we had a board retreat was 2021 and since then there are six current board members who were not on the board at the time. Mr. Pine said we'll start the meeting with a brief review of the history since 1976 when the organization was originally created. He said we will talk about some of the things that were identified at the previous retreat that were looked at as top priorities. Mr. Pine said I will review several of those things we have been working on over the past five years. He said I will give a brief review of the progress we've made towards accomplishing some of those goals that were identified. Mr. Pine said and then we'll spend most of the time being led by Deb Thompson with Strategy Solutions. He said she will lead a discussion with the board mainly focused on what are the objectives and challenges over the next three to five years. Mr. Pine said I do have some items that I will throw in there as well that I think are going to be challenges that will be in front of us as we move forward over the next three to five years. He said that will be a full board discussion. Mr. Pine said we have invited Erie County Executive, Christina Vogel and Mayor Devlin. He said we will bring them in at the beginning, during the breakfast portion, and we'll have them sit in during the history portion. Mr. Pine said since both are new in their political positions it's important that they have a broad understanding of the organization, specifically our mission. He said they help assign board members to this board, so identifying what it is we're looking for and what makes a good quality board member from all your perspectives. Ms. White said as an additional note, they will each be attending with their chief of staff as well. She said it's almost like a tutorial education to help them catch up where we are. Ms. White said I have taken the liberty of retitling our retreat to "Breakfast with ECCCA". Ms. White said I've talked to both the county executive and the mayor and they're excited about the invitation and getting to know more about the organization. She said they may have a couple comments, but they know it's not a discussion planning meeting.

Mr. Pine said Mr. Hesch and I met with County Executive Vogel and Mr. Chris Groner, who stepped in from the city and is now the Director of Administration for Erie County, to discuss hotel bond refunding. Mr. Pine said in the meeting as well was the newly assigned Finance Director, Mr. Patrick Ryan. He said we had a really good conversation about the bond refunding. Mr. Pine said Erie County guarantees the bonds for the hotel, so they're going to need to vote on that. Mr. Pine said we had a good initial meeting. He said we determined that the next step would be to present that in front of the Erie County Finance Committee. He said that it is set for Tuesday, March 24th and Mr. Peter Filippi will be joining us. Mr. Pine said Mr. Filippi is our Piper Sandler representative and he will give a deep dive, not only into the history because he was attached when we originally did the bonds, but he'll run through the various scenarios that will be put in front of Erie County Council. He said, ultimately, it will need to go to county council for vote and approval, and it will need to be read at two separate meetings. Mr. Pine said we are pushing for that to happen as soon as possible, because even after that happens, it's going to take some time to put together the refunding. He said the sooner that happens the sooner we're going to save on our debt service.

Mr. Pine said our press and media announcement of the official signing of the Management Agreement between the City of Erie, Zoological Society and the Erie County Convention Center Authority is being planned for next Monday,

March 23rd, at 10:00 a.m. He said Mayor Devlin as well as County Executive Vogel will be attending and they both will say a few words. Mr. Pine said I will speak, as well as Ms. Roo Kojancie and then we'll have a brief reception afterwards. Mr. Pine said it will be a great opportunity to get to know some of the board members. He said most of the zoo board members will be there and it will be a good opportunity, not only to put a period on this process with the community and let them know that this is now official, but it will also be a great way for you all to start getting to know some of the zoo board members. Mr. Pine said one of the things that all of you will need to contemplate as a board is that we receive four seats on that board. He said we have the flexibility to nominate and appoint our board members or members of the community that we see fit. Mr. Pine said we must figure out the process internally of how we make those decisions. Mr. Pine said we are discussing that currently with the executive committee and once there are some options determined we'll present them to the full board. He said it's going to be important to have a process because these are five-year terms, so we want to make sure that we have an internal process that's consistent and does a good job of identifying the people that we want representing our interests on that zoo board.

Mr. Pine said the new lighting project at the ballpark is complete. He said we did a press event last week and got some good media coverage. Mr. Pine said they tested the lights so everything's set and ready to go for opening day on April 3rd.

Mr. Pine said we had sustained winds of at least 30 miles an hour this past weekend. He said it did delaminate the roof at the convention center. Mr. Pine said it was identified on Sunday and McCreary Roofing was here early Monday morning to make temporary repairs. He said they got it temporarily fixed and they're continuing to look to make sure they identify all the damage. Mr. Pine said that Neal Wurst has contacted our insurance company, so the claim has been submitted. He said our exposures will be the \$25,000 deductible. He said the damage is over the exhibit hall so there isn't a lot of internal exposure to damage. He said we have not seen any water damage as of yesterday. Mr. Pine said we'll keep monitoring and update as appropriate.

Mr. Snyder said I want to highlight that Erie Events will be announcing the 8 Great Tuesday summer concert lineup on March 31st in conjunction with our new primary series sponsor. He said it is the first time we've had a sponsor of the series since 2024. Mr. Snyder said that we're going to start selling tents coming up here soon. Mr. Snyder said currently, in 2026 we have three ticketed concerts announced and another one that is confirmed but not announced yet. He said we also have about five or six confirmed annual events as well.

Mr. Snyder said this weekend is the Erie Home Show at the convention center. He said it is our largest consumer show of the year.

Mr. Snyder said the convention sales team has done a fantastic job of chasing in year for the year business. He said they've clawed back over \$300,000 of business for in the year just since mid-January and are continuing to chase some great pieces of business. He said I feel confident about where we are with our budget. Mr. Snyder said our sales association manager is at an event this week and is going to Kentucky in May. He said those events have really generated leads for us at the convention center.

Mr. Snyder said we had another business meeting yesterday with all the business owners here on the Bayfront talking about how we can market together through the construction season. He said members of the media were there including iHeartRadio and Lilly Broadcasting. Mr. Snyder said there were multiple representatives, including Nick Scott, Jr. from Scott's Enterprise. Mr. Snyder said everybody's united in their message that during construction the Bayfront is open and the construction is a good thing for Erie and the Bayfront.

Mr. Glass motioned to accept the Management Reports as presented. Mr. Riley seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Glass, Construction Committee Chairperson, said the Courtyard Renovations Project is moving along well. He said they've completed the 5th floor and they're in the process of completing the 4th floor. Mr. Glass said the north side will be turned over tomorrow, and the west side of the fourth floor will be turned over on the 24th. Mr. Glass said and then they'll start down on the third floor, which is the last floor. He said the only hiccup may be a shortage of vinyl wall covering. He said they have reordered it and they've been told it'll take four weeks to come in. Mr. Glass said if that happens, it's going to delay this project. He said they have 90% vinyl for the 3rd floor, north side, and then they're out. Mr. Glass said they will have to stop at that point. He said we'll see what will happen over the next two weeks. Mr. Glass said the vinyl order itself can delay the project, push the completion into the end of May, and that will just cause all kinds of problems. A brief discussion followed.

Mr. Glass said we have gotten approval from the Waterfront Design Review Committee as well as the Planning Commission for the Market House Project. He said our drawings should go to BIU next week. Mr. Glass said the interior designs moving along very well. He said they're probably 90% complete. Mr. Glass said by the time we get BIU approval we will be submitting it back again for the interior design.

Mr. Glass said we did bid out the foundation piles and we have a Resolution 2026-004 to approve this afternoon as Phase 1 bids. He said the low bidder for the piles was Douglas Piles at \$473,000. He said the estimate that EE Austin had that was done two years ago was \$450,000. He said the increase is probably in labor and steel prices. Mr. Glass said the marquee demolition was awarded to Konzel Construction for \$98,000. He said the initial estimate was \$100,000 so we picked up \$2,000. Mr. Glass said that will enable us to get the marquee down and get it out of the way and order the steel for the piles because that will take probably a month or two and break ground in April. Mr. Richards said BIU, are they moving any faster than they have historically. Mr. Glass said it will take them 30 days.

Mr. Glass said all the materials are on site for the Parking Ramp Expansion Project. He said we had challenges with the submittals from the contractor to the engineers. He said they were supposed to take two weeks and took four weeks. He said I think we've got that resolved. Mr. Glass said the contractors, when they had to chip down the existing columns in order to tie the steel to continue to go up in the air, found different conditions than what the drawings had indicated. He said the drawings were from the original project. Mr. Glass said they had to go back to the engineers to get sorted out. He said all the form work is here and now with the weather starting to improve we ought to see some elevations going up in the air.

Mr. Deitrick said I have a question about the Marriott project. He said for the third-floor west vinyl shortage, I think that's the only area that can't be finished, is there enough to do everything else. A brief discussion followed.

The Construction Committee motioned to adopt Resolution 2026-004 as presented to the Board. Mr. Richards seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Hesch said we have Resolution 2026-003 to present to the board. He said with the addition of Mr. Dave Gerber to the team, we would like to go through all our banking accounts, which are listed in Exhibit A of Resolution 2026-003, and make sure we have Mr. Gus Pine, Mr. Dave Gerber and myself listed as authorized signers on those accounts.

Mr. Riley motioned to adopt Resolution 2026-003 as presented to the Board. Mr. Deitrick seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS: None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Glass motioned to adjourn. The motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3:29 PM.