

JO DAVIESS COUNTY
DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
JULY 28, 2026

I. Call to Order

Committee Chairperson Diane Gallagher called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM on Tuesday, July 28, 2026 in the Jo Daviess County Board Room, Jo Daviess County Courthouse in Galena, Illinois.

II. Roll Call

Roll Call was answered as follows: Present – Michael Dittmar, Diane Gallagher, Lynn Gallagher, John Lang, John Schultz, LaDon Trost. Present: 6. Present electronically: 0. Absent: 0.
Also present electronically - Daisha Boehm, Jacob Ambrosia.

III. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2026, Development & Planning Committee meeting was made by John Lang and seconded by John Schultz. The motion carried by voice vote.

IV. Citizens' Comments

There were no citizens' comments.

V. Unfinished Business

FY2025/FY2027 Strategic Goals were reviewed with no changes.

VI. New Business

A motion to recommend the approval of a First Time Homebuyer's Loan for Sofie Ann Burke, Apple River, in the amount of \$6,250 for a term of ten years was made by Michael Dittmar and seconded by John Schultz. The motion carried by voice vote.

A motion to recommend the approval of a First Time Homebuyer's Loan for Benjamin P. Francke, Hanover, in the amount of \$6,000 for a term of ten years was made by John Schultz and seconded by John Lang. The motion carried by voice vote.

Discussion and possible action regarding FY2027 Economic Development Programs: The committee held an extensive discussion on program priorities, cannabis-tax revenue projections, and potential uses of Fund 018. Topics introduced by Member Dittmar included reinstating the small business grant program, exploring a \$250,000 low-interest “target loan” for child care, housing, or industrial development, and reviewing statutory constraints. Members also discussed housing studies, child care needs, enterprise zone expansion, and NWILED’s role. After deliberation, the committee agreed to allocate \$400,000 in FY27 economic development expenses, with specific program allocations to be determined later.

VII. Reports

Building & Zoning Monthly Report: A written report was provided and Planning & Development Administrator William Meeker was available to answer questions. He also noted the upcoming August

public hearing on zoning text amendments.

Northwest Illinois Economic Development (NWILED) Monthly Report: A written report was provided and Executive Director David Schmit was present to answer questions. He spoke on NWILED's new AI resource tool, workforce initiatives, Highland Community College partnerships, enterprise zone discussions with Stockton, and upcoming job-shadow and HR-focused Build It Grow It programming.

Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) Monthly Report: No report provided.

Economic Development Fund (018) Financial Reports: The committee reviewed current loan balances, anticipated cannabis-tax revenue, and fund projections.

VIII. Citizens' Comments

Jacob Ambrosia, County Board Member District #15, commented that while the County frequently praises NWILED and Blackhawk Hills for their economic-development work, the board appears reluctant to invest its own resources or "put some sweat in the game" to advance similar efforts at the county level. He said this creates a perception that the County wants to retain young people and support entrepreneurs, but is unwilling to fund or seriously entertain programs that would help them get started.

IX. Committee Member Concerns

John Lang reported that East Dubuque's three TIF districts will begin expiring between 2030 and 2034, and the city is seeking support from other governmental entities, including the County, to secure extensions. He noted East Dubuque's strong TIF balance of over \$1 million and described a major housing project the city hopes to pursue, emphasizing that the County should be prepared to engage when the project becomes ready for formal consideration

X. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made at 8:13 PM by John Schultz and seconded by John Lang. Motion carried by voice vote.

Next committee meeting: Tuesday, August 25, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.