

**Minutes of the Economic Development Meeting
September 9, 2025 – 12:00pm
New Haven Public Works Facility**

Call to Order: Sarah Skeen called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM

Roll Call

Members Present: Dr. Hoener, Michelle Otten, Tara Steffens

Members Absent: Dave Engelbrecht, Mark Laune, Lydia Placht, two vacancies

City Staff Members Present: Sarah Skeen

Alderman Liaison Present: Steve Bertrand

Others Present: Terri Bell – Bee Creative

Motion to approve the minutes from August 12, 2025, meeting made by Michelle Otten, 2nd by Tara Steffens.

Ongoing efforts to find two replacements for Tim Otten and Stephanie Guterrez who have stepped down from the committee. Terri Bell and Matt Hinton were invited to the meeting. One of the new members needs to be a resident and the other member needs to be a business owner.

Vision and Mission Statement: The current mission statement from the 2007 Comprehensive Plan was provided to the committee to comment on. A new mission statement was not discussed. A vision statement was not discussed. These items will be tabled for a future discussion.

Action Plan: A discussion over how to entice industrial and commercial businesses to invest in New Haven. Tax incentives such as tax abatement and Tax Increment Financing were discussed as options. A representative from Gilmore and Bell is scheduled for September 23rd to come to New Haven to share the pros and cons of development incentives. It was noted in the conversation that some incentives can be a hardship on other taxing districts such as the school district. Dr. Hoener mentioned that the school district enrollment is down and there is approximately 40% of students that qualify for free and reduced lunch. These are concerns that should be taken into consideration.

Sarah had reached out to Dwayne James, the community development specialist with MU Extension about reviving the Show Me Community survey. While waiting on a response from him, it was agreed that the committee could develop their own survey to begin collecting data from residents and businesses about their experience living and running a business in New Haven. The survey questions will help guide the committee as to the best way to focus efforts to drive economic growth. It was suggested that the survey can go in the new community newsletter, the city website, on social media, at the library, and in local businesses. A QR code to access a digital survey would be preferable but a paper based copy would be available if necessary.

There is a concern that sales tax is dropping, and the committee is not sure why. There was a consensus that more people are shopping online and that the city should place the local use tax measure on the ballot for April to recoup lost revenue. This may help level the playing field for local businesses but doesn't fix the issue of a decline in foot traffic.

Miscellaneous: It was agreed that each member would bring data to the next meeting that represented their role in the community.

The next meeting was scheduled for October 14th at 12:00pm.

A motion to adjourn was made by Michelle Otten, 2nd by Tara Steffens. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 1:19 PM

Respectfully submitted by,

Sarah Skeen

Sarah Skeen
City Administrator