

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (JDPEDC)
MINUTES OF MEETING**

Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at Noon, First Guaranty Bank

The regular meeting of the Jeff Davis Economic Development Commission was called to order, and the following attendance was noted.

Name	Standing for	Present	Absent
Dr. Shane Fontenot	City of Jennings	X	
Ed Orgeron	City of Jennings	X	
Alexia Dubreuil	City of Jennings	X	
Ronnie Petree	Town of Welsh	X	
Skip Broussard	At Large	X	
Kendal Henry, Chairman	JDP Police Jury	X	
Will Hetzel, Vice Chairman	JDP Police Jury	X	
Tony Trahan	JDP Police Jury	X	
Beth Daigle, Secretary/Treasurer	Town of Lake Arthur	X	
Cesilee Oliver	EDC Director	X	
Linda LeBlanc	EDC Facilitator	X	
Richard Arceneaux	Attorney		X
Greg Marcantel	CPA	X	
Mayor Henry Guinn	City of Jennings		X
Mayor Poncho LeJeune	Town of Lake Arthur	X	
Mayor Karl Arceneaux	Town of Welsh		X
Ben Boudreaux	Parish Administrator	X	
Gerald Theunissen	Advisory Board Member	X	
Tony Hulsey	Advisory Board Member	X	
Nikki Trahan	CPA Office	X	
Jeanne Boudreaux	Jeff Davis Chamber of Commerce		X
Alex Guillory	Guest	X	
Zach Hager, Entergy	Guest	X	
D’Arcy Knight	Press	X	
Inna Noeske	Guest	X	
Steve Broussard	Guest	X	

Call to Order: Chairman Kendal Henry called the meeting to order.

Prayer and Pledge: Ronnie Petree led the prayer, and Cesilee Oliver led the pledge.

Chairman Kendal Henry introduced and welcomed new board members City of Jennings Representative Alexa

Dubreuil and Police Jury Representative Tony Trahan.

Approval of Agenda: A motion was made by Ronnie Petree, seconded by Ed Orgeron, and passed unanimously to approve the agenda of January 14, 2026, as presented.

Public Comments: D'Arcy Knight reported there would be a documentary film shown at the Strand Theatre on the forgotten prairie lands, "Louisiana Grass Roots" at 6:00pm on Wednesday, January 21, 2026. It was noted the date/time may change due to a conflict with a forum for candidates in the District 37 Representative race.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Dr. Shane Fontenot, seconded by Beth Daigle, and passed unanimously to approve the minutes of December 10, 2025, as presented.

Approval of Financials: A motion was made by Dr. Shane Fontenot, seconded by Reese "Skip" Broussard, and passed unanimously to approve the financial reports for October and November 2025 as presented.

Old Business: A motion was made by Ronnie Petree, seconded by Ed Orgeron, and passed unanimously to set the at-large board member Reese "Skip" Broussard's term to end on December 31, 2027. It was also discussed and agreed to have all board member terms to end December 31 of the staggered terms.

A motion was made by Ronnie Petree, seconded by Dr. Shane Fontenot, and passed unanimously to elect Kendal Henry as 2026 Jeff Davis Parish Economic Development Commission Chairman.

A motion was made by Dr. Shane Fontenot, seconded by Reese "Skip" Broussard, and passed unanimously to elect Will Hetzel as 2026 Vice-Chairman and Beth Daigle as 2026 Secretary/Treasurer of the Jeff Davis Parish Economic Development Commission.

New Business: EDC Director Cesilee Oliver reported she's had retail meetings and noted there is a potential new bakery locating in the area, Boyd's has opened where Darryll's was located, there was a new fast food chicken business, and Breaux's Cajun Kitchen has opened. She stated she is going to attend the DC Mardi Gras Events and handed out promotional beads to the board that will be distributed in DC. She stated she was currently working on setting up meetings with political leaders while in DC. Cesilee will attend the Policy Jury Convention in March at the Golden Nugget in Lake Charles and will share a table with Jeff Davis Tourist Commission to promote Jeff Davis Parish. The board agreed to allow for the purchase of DC Mardi Gras ball tickets and the purchase of promotional items for the Police Jury Convention. She stated she has met with the School Board to create a workforce development program where students will be able to serve as interns in local businesses.

Parish Administrator Ben Boudreaux reported that Police Juror Owen Cormier had recently passed away and that an appointment would be made at an upcoming meeting to fill the vacant position until the November election. Animal Shelter - The rededication of the jail tax to allow for a portion of the tax to be used to fund the animal shelter would be placed back on the ballot for either the June or November election. The current jail tax is still maintaining and repairing the jail and property as needed and has an excess of funds. The shelter was built with federal funds and the plan was to rededicate a portion of the jail tax, but it legally needs to be approved by an election. Better promotion of the tax is being planned so that the public knows and understands the importance of the rededication of the tax. Tax dollars cannot be used for advertising promoting the tax so it was suggested to use a simple bullet point presentation for social media.

Jeff Davis Parish Clerk of Court Richard Arceneaux stated the election for District 37 State Representative will be February 7 and the early voting would be January 24-31, 2026.

Announcements:

- Next Board meeting is scheduled for noon, Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at First Guaranty Bank.
- Ethics Disclosure Report Tier 2.1 due May 15, 2026.

A motion was made by Ronnie Petree, seconded by Ed Orgeron, and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

