



East Palestine Community Improvement Corporation

July 28, 2026

Minutes

1. **Call to Order:** Ms. Herriott, Mr. Brittain, Ms. Smith, Mr. Blythe and Mr. Clark.
Others Present: Village Manager Antonio Diaz-Guy, Misti Martin, Courtney Stewart, Dave Powers and Ben Ratner.
2. **Minutes:** The minutes of the 6/23/26 meeting were approved on a motion by Ms. Smith seconded by Mr. Clark. Passed unanimously.
3. **Financial Report:** Total operating income as of the end of May totaled \$28,487.25, total operating expenses were \$ 2,731.40 for a net loss of \$23,244.15. Total liabilities/equities were at \$2,471,485.52.
4. **Old Business:**
 - a. **Project Updates**
 - i. **Depot:** There were two truck parking leases for the property, one has since retired, the other has been relocated. There is a third lease using the property who has signed a lease with NS however it was never executed; he is currently relocated to the Jasar property for six months until he develops his property in New Waterford to make use for parking. Dynamic broke ground last week on the project. All members of the board all welcome to check in on site periodically; bi-weekly meetings are also beginning to keep on pace. Project timeline is 180 days which puts completion at end of December.
 - ii. **Plaza:** The project will not be re-bid due to time constraints. Instead, members will work with the lowest bidder, Dynamic Structures, using change orders to lower costs following a discussion on potential project modifications. Additionally, Lake to River / JobsOhio received and nominated the grant application; a date for the pitch deck presentation is pending. Ben Ratner noted he is working on doing a short-term Full City Roastery pop-up at either the Dairy Mill or the American Legion. The Port Authority has opened downtown renovations grant and has asked if the CIC would be turning an app in for the Plaza project; the grant deadline is 8/31 and if they have no other apps from EP by 8/15, they are asking that the CIC does apply. The award is up to \$50,000.00. Utility applications for gas have been received for both the Plaza & Depot; we are still waiting for electricity. Ms. Herriott motioned to permit the CIC to apply for the Columbiana County Port Authority Downtown Vibrancy Grant. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brittain, passed unanimously.

iii. Jasar Property: The biggest burden in reference to the offers on the property is what is the actual environmental condition of the property and what the CIC is willing to do to secure one of the companies. We have gotten the okay for funding from the State of Ohio through the Targeted Brownfield Assessment Program, and we will be submitting an application to the federal EPA that is very promising; this would be for a detailed phase 1 and 2 of the property for an exact health status. The phase 2 that was performed in the early 2000's by Jasar is sufficient for a Brownfield clean up grant; the recommendation was if the CIC continues to own the property with a goal to market, the phase 2 should be up to date and application should be made for the clean up grant as those both take a lot of time. Platz Realty provided an update regarding a potential developer's offer. The company has pivoted to a new plan requiring a 40,000 sq. ft. warehouse (expandable to 100,000 sq. ft.) and identified an alternate site that currently lacks municipal water and sewer. Before proceeding elsewhere, the developer wanted to confirm that all options in East Palestine are fully exhausted. However, they indicated they cannot accommodate the Village's timeline for Phase 1 and Phase 2 environmental assessments, noting that insistence on these studies will end negotiations. Regarding the existing structure, the Village stated it will not demolish a portion of the building; in response, the developer requested clarification on the Village's specific roadblocks and asked whether the environmental assessments or the demolition present the greater issue. Discussion followed as to the demolition request with suggestions including discounting the purchase price and they would be required to take the burden of the remediation costs and lower purchase price, or the CIC can do the remediation/repairs and keep the purchase price higher.

iv. 94 N. Market St.-Lease Update: The tenants are moved in with the lease beginning 7/15/26; they do have an extra office available to sublet as well as a conference that is available to rent. It was noted the gas is shut off at 94 N. Market; 90 & 92 are still one; the electric would also have to be turned back on to 90. The Village could be saturated with eating establishments in comparison to population in the next 6 to 12 months; it could be a good idea to rehab the old Chinese restaurant into two retail locations as those could be more easily built out and take all of the needed renovations/inspections out of the budget as well as make the property more sellable.

5. New Business:

- a. Fundraising Ideas:** The suggestion was made about fundraising by selling personalized pavers and incorporating them into the design for the Plaza area. "The Giving Fund" sponsored by MacKenzie Scott was also mentioned however it is not something you can apply for they have to find the organization; the CIC would have to find a way to make themselves known. In reference to the Brighten Our Future campaign it was suggested to possibly reconsider lowering the tier amounts to draw in more donors. Additional discussion followed as to visibility of past projects, what could be used as incentives to encourage donations and if the campaign should be re-branded. Members were asked to bring thoughts on how to move forward with the BOF campaign to the next meeting.
- b. Village & Port Authority Economic Development Agreement:** Port Authority Director Brittany Smith has been directed to explore a joint development agreement between the Port, the Village and the CIC, that is directly related to the business park development on Rt. 14 North of Howell Rd. The Port is fully ready to purchase the option agreement for the land from the CIC (includes reimbursement of the initial option payment). Ms. Smith motioned for Ms. Herriott to

negotiate/accept the development agreement between the Village, the Port and CIC. The motion was seconded by Mr. Clark. Passed unanimously. The assignment agreement states the CIC will assign the option contract to the Port for \$100,000 reimbursement as well as a percentage of upside and include this parcel in the upcoming JEDD. Ms. Smith motioned for Ms. Herriott to review/negotiate/accept the assignment agreement, seconded by Mr. Blythe. Passed unanimously. At this this Mr. Brittain motioned to write a letter of support for the Project EP Class Pocket Park Project. The motion was seconded by Mr. Clark. Passed unanimously.

6. **Executive Session:** Ms. Herriott motioned to go into executive session to discuss the relocation, location, expansion, improvement or preservation of a business opportunity ORC 1724 e 11 inviting in Manager Diaz-Guy, Courtney Stewart, Misti Martin and Dave Powers. Seconded by Mr. Brittain. Passed unanimously. Ms. Herriott motioned to return to regular session seconded by Mr. Blythe. Passed unanimously.
7. **Next Meeting: 10 am Tuesday August 25, 2026**
8. **Adjourn:** Mr. Brittain motioned to adjourn seconded by Mr. Blythe. All in favor, meeting adjourned.

Melissa Smith-Secretary