



Joint Meeting of
Experience Sioux Falls Board of Directors
and
Experience Sioux Falls
Business Improvement District (BID) Board of Directors

December 9, 2025
Experience Sioux Falls Boardroom

Presiding:	Tom Morris, ESF Chair	
ESF Board Voting Members Present:	Bryan Ahlers Bethany Buitenbos	Jan Grunewaldt Tom Morris
ESF Board Voting Members Absent:	Paul Hegg Shailesh Patel	Nancy Savage
ESF Non-Voting Members Present:	Shawn Pritchett Teri Schmidt	
ESF Non-Voting Members Absent:		
BID Board Voting Members Present:	Cody Breck Matt Brunick Jan Grunewaldt	Greg Jamison Tom Morris
BID Board Voting Members Absent:	Paul Hegg Tracey Stoneall	Sara Zura
BID Non-Voting Members Present:	Shawn Pritchett Teri Schmidt	
BID Non-Voting Members Absent:	Richard Thomason	
Others Present:	Lauren Gilbertson Brittany Hanson Rich Merkouris Bob Mundt	Brooke Penn Kathie Puthoff Mayor Paul TenHaken Erik Ustad

This was a joint meeting of ESF Board of Directors and BID Board of Directors.

Call to Order

ESF Chair Tom Morris called the meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda

Cody Breck moved to approve the agenda. Second by Matt Brunick. Teri Schmidt moved to amend the agenda requesting to add BID Discussion to point #7. Matt Brunick moved to approve the amended agenda. Second by Cody Breck. Unanimous

Approval of Minutes

BID - Cody Breck moved to approve the September 23, 2025 BID Minutes. Second by Jan Grunewaldt. Unanimous.

ESF- Bryan Ahlers moved to approve the September 23, 2025 ESF Minutes. Second by Bethany Buitenbos. Unanimous.

Financial Request

Mayor Paul TenHaken and Sioux Falls City Councilor Rich Merkouris distributed an information sheet and presented the idea of necessary collaboration to move a convention center forward to the next steps, including funding by the ESF BID, in the amount of \$250,000 over 2-years. Forward Sioux Falls is also being asked to match the \$250,000 funding. The Mayor and Councilor Merkouris plan to meet with Forward Sioux Falls on January 22, 2026 and request the matching amount from the joint venture committee at that time per information provided by Brittany Hanson, Forward Sioux Falls.

Tom Morris confirmed that the ask is for \$250,000 over a 2-year period. Tom stated that the board would not feel comfortable voting on this request today, and asked when they were hoping to have an answer from ESF. Rich Merkouris said they would need a yes or no answer from the ESF BID before they went to the Forward Sioux Falls meeting on January 22.

Greg Jamison asked when the deadline for the Riverline purchase agreement is. Rich stated it's five years...with the option of the seller to buy back the property. Greg also asked who is in charge of the project. Mayor TenHaken said that Steve Watson is someone we could look at hiring. Rich Merkouris clarified that they are not only looking for money from the BID, but they want Teri Schmidt as part of the committee/project too.

Teri Schmidt explained a bit about the previous convention center project from 20 years ago and the process, including multiple votes and the piggybacking of the Washington Pavilion project with the convention center to get both projects to pass a vote.

Mayor TenHaken discussed the possibility of attaching a "homeless" population project to the vote. Bundling could also include work to the viaducts as part of that project.

Mayor TenHaken, Rich Merkouris, Bob Mundt and Britany Hanson left the meeting at noon.

Matt Brunick asked how this issue fits in with the bylaws for the BID. Teri noted that nothing says it needs to all come from the BID side.

Greg Jamison reminded that the Mayor stated in his presentation that "we are losing money" per a certain study that was done and asked Teri if she could get a copy of that study and distribute it to the Boards.

Discussion followed. Teri stated that such a committee should be bigger and probably include hoteliers, restaurants, business community.

Tom Morris reminded that the financial ask is for \$250,000 over 2 years, however, we could do less.

Teri stated that we will need to have a special meeting the first week of January to take a position on this prior to the Forward Sioux Falls meeting on January 22nd.

Investment Report

Lauren Gilbertson and Eric Ustad, First National Bank in Sioux Falls, presented on Experience Sioux Falls Investment Review and Market Overview.

Lauren and Eric left the meeting at 12:29 pm.

Financial Report

ESF Accountant Brooke Penn reviewed the October 2025 BID financial report noting that there are no concerns. Noticeable changes include Digital Strategy which was due to Semcasting. Increase in salaries line item is showing that more of the employees are now taking benefits.

Brook reviewed the ESF Budget noting that expenses are running normal. She noted that computer services have moved to Workplace IT.

Board members requested statement balances be included with future financials. Teri said we will send that information to the board now and in the future.

Brooke reported that the 2022-2023 Audit is complete. Next is 2024 and then 2025.

Greg Jamison moved to approve the financial report. Second by Jan Grunewaldt. Unanimous.

Other Business

Teri Schmidt announced that the 2026 Visitor Guides will be arriving sooner than expected and we are excited with the results.

BID Discussion – Teri reported that Caleb Archeneaux, Liv Hospitality Group out of Rapid City along with the Rapid City CVB, want to bring back House Bill 1109 from the 2023 South Dakota Legislative Session. This would allow the BID to be changed to either a set amount (not to exceed \$6) or a percent (not to exceed 6%). Other groups across the state also want Local Control of the BID, partially to help with projects like the Liberty project in the Black Hills and a sports complex in Rapid City. Teri distributed the information Caleb has provided from the 2023 HB 1109, with some incomplete edits/updates, as he does not have a complete and updated draft of what he is proposing. When asked for her support by this group, Teri said she will not fight it as long as there remains local control, which they stated there would be. This group wants Sioux Falls' position now.

Discussion followed:

- Any changes in the BID for Sioux Falls would need to go to the City Council for approval.
- Hotels would need to approve.
- Shawn Pritchett commented that perhaps with other big issues being voted on in the Legislature, i.e. property taxes, etc...that this is not a good year to propose the increase in the BID. Perhaps we don't support this year, but tell them to come back again next year.
- Greg Jamison said HB 1109 was proposed in 2023. Governor Noem vetoed it. The Legislature is much different now than it was 3 years ago. The real question remains, is this the right time.
- Rapid City is allowed to use their BID for bricks and mortar. We are not.

Tom Morris asked for a motion regarding supporting the changes in the BID as follows:

1. Wait until we get an actual Draft of the proposed bill.
2. After that is received, we can review the timing. With property tax discussion in the legislature, and the TIF vote in Rapid City, we'll see if the timing is right or if we need to wait a year.

Matt Bruinck made the motion as shown above. Second by Bryan Ahlers. Unanimous approval.

Bryan Ahlers commented that Fargo is moving their BID from 3% to 6% to use for their convention center, however, this has not yet begun.

Additional business:

Teri Schmidt asked those present if they want to go back to having 2 separate back-to-back meetings for the 2 boards or do we want to hold the meetings together like we did today? It was agreed to hold the meetings together at 11:30am.

Teri recognized Immediate Past-Chair Jan Grunewaldt for her long-term participation and commitment to both of these boards of director over the past many years, and presented her with a token gift.

Public Comments

No public comments.

Adjournment

Bryan Ahlers moved to adjourn. Second by Cody Breck. Unanimous.

The next regularly scheduled joint meeting of the boards will be March 24, 2026 at 11:30am at the ESF office.

Respectfully submitted:

Kathie Puthoff
Name

December 9, 2025
Date