



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Approved BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, September 16, 2026

5:00 PM

Virtual

The purpose of the Business and Economic Resources Committee is to promote a healthy economy in which businesses can locate, open, and expand, and in which all residents have access to living wage jobs and the ability to build generational wealth.

The City of Madison is holding the Business and Economic Resources Committee meeting in virtual format.

Written Comments: You can send comments on agenda items to berc@cityofmadison.com

Register for Public Comment:

- Register to speak at the meeting
- Register to answer questions
- Register in support or opposition of an agenda item (without speaking)

If you want to speak at this meeting you must register. You can register at <https://www.cityofmadison.com/MeetingRegistration>. When you register to speak, you will be sent an email with the information you will need to join the virtual meeting.

Watch the Meeting: If you would like to join the meeting as an observer, please visit <https://www.cityofmadison.com/watchmeetings>.

Listen by Phone: (877) 853-5257 (Toll Free) Webinar ID: 858 2505 2562

Interpretation and Accessibility

Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was Called to Order at 5:02pm. Chaired by Gombar. Staff present: Mikolajewski, Makinen, Rohlich, Ouk, Miller, Blake-Horst, Swanson, Post

Present: 9 - Ellen Zhang; Joann Pritchett; Dina Nina Martinez-Rutherford; Melissa Gombar; Wayne R. Harris; Susan M. Bulgrin; Seth W. Lentz; Jeffrey J. Liggon and Ashleigh M. Hacker

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Lentz, seconded by Martinez-Rutherford to Approve the

Minutes from the August 19th, 2026 meeting. The motion passed by voice vote. Zhang and Liggon were absent from that meeting so abstained from the vote.

Public Comment

1. [94698](#) Public Comment - BERC 9/16/26

Attachments: [BERCRegistrantsReport-9-16-26.xlsx](#)

None

Disclosures and Recusals

None

New Business

2. [94697](#) Meeting Procedures: Monthly Tip

Gombar gave a background on this new monthly item that will provide meeting tips. Mikolajewski provided a tip on meeting motions. Motions should recommend approval to the Council or to place on file. The motions should pattern the language of the item on the agenda.

3. [94576](#) Granting additional Special Vending Approvals under MGO 9.136(1)(k) as detailed on the accompanying special event resolution table.

Attachments: [2026 SE Resolution - table - September.pdf](#)

Blake-Horst and Post provided a background on items like this that will be on the agenda occasionally. Post explained that on 10/15 and 9/25-9/27 there will be events that will need Special Vending approvals. This was followed by questions from members.

A motion was made by Martinez-Rutherford and seconded by Lentz to Recommend to Council to Adopt. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Discussion Items

4. [93553](#) 2026/2027 Business and Economic Resources Committee Work Plan

Attachments: [Legistar 93553 Draft BERC Work Plan.pdf](#)
[2026-2027 BERC Work Plan.xlsx](#)
[BERC Work Plan Survey - Staff Responses - Legistar 93553 9-16-26](#)
[BERC Work Plan Survey - BERC Member Responses - Legistar 93553](#)
[Legistar 93553 BERC Work Plan Memo 8-19-26.pdf](#)

Mikolajewski shared the Work Plan focus item survey results and Gombar preseneted the Matrix comparing member results to staff results, followed by

comments from members. The top items for members and also mostly the top for staff are as follows:

1. Assist with Completion of Economic Development Plan and early implementation
2. Small Business Programs 2.0
3. Develop a funding forecast of available resources for economic development work
4. Review street vending and sidewalk cafe ordinances

Martinez-Rutherford discussed keeping the small business emergency fund as a priority even though it did not fall into the top 4 items. Zhang commented that there were concerns about the funding of the Willy Street Business Stabilization Program item that went before Common Council and did not pass. Martinez-Rutherford stated that the Business and Economic Resource Committee focusing on a small business emergency fund could alleviate some of these concerns by having a plan in place before the emergencies happen.

Mikolajewski stated the next steps are staff preparing a draft work plan based on the top four items from the survey and presenting the draft at the next meeting on 10/21/26, with the goal being to have the plan complete to present at the in-person meeting on 11/18/26.

Liggon left at 6:18, after item 4, the discussion of the work plan.

5. [81529](#) Economic Development Division Financial Assistance Dashboard

Attachments: [09-2026 EDD Financial Assistance Dashboard.pdf](#)

Rohlich presented the Dashboard and gave an update that Higher Ideal has closed and returned their grant funding to the City. This was followed by questions from members.

6. [94302](#) Discussion Regarding Future In-person BERC Meeting

Mikolajewski reminded members about the intent to meet in-person on 11/18 and asked for possible meeting places. Martinez-Rutherford recommended the Madison Public Market. Zhang recommended the MMB or CCB and also seconded the Madison Public Market. Mikolajewski will follow up with the Public Market staff.

7. [93554](#) Announcements and Future BERC Agenda Items

A discussion around street vendors and proper licenses and permissions to vend.

Mikolajewski sent an email to members about volunteering for the Business Walks on 10/6.

Blake-Horst thanked Chair Gombar for volunteering to be the BERC member on the Food Cart Review.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Martinez-Rutherford, seconded by Lentz, to adjourn at 6:25pm. The motion passed by voice vote.