

CITY OF WARREN TAX INCREMENT FINANCE AUTHORITY MINUTES OF THE BOARD

Meeting held on January 8, 2026

A regular meeting of the City of Warren Tax Increment Finance Authority was called for 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 8, 2026 held at the Burnette Branch Library, located at 23345 Van Dyke, Warren, MI 48089.

Present:

Hassen Charara, Chairman
Eric Hunter, Vice Chair
Ronald Gerst
Joseph Toupin
Helen Hicks
Kabir Ahmed

Late Arrival:

Sue McHugh-Cilia (arrived at 9:14 a.m. during Item 8A)

Absent:

Jim Hensley

1. Call to Order

The meeting was then called to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

A motion was made by Mr. Toupin, supported by Mr. Gerst, to excuse absent members.

No opposition, the motion passed.

4. Adoption of Agenda

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Gerst, supported by Ms. Hicks, to adopt the agenda for January 8, 2026.

No opposition, the motion passed.

5. Approval of Minutes (December 11, 2025)

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Gerst, supported by Mr. Toupin, to approve the December 11, 2025 meeting minutes.

No opposition, the motion passed.

6. Audience Participation

None

7. Old Business

None

8. New Business

A. 2026 TIFA Goals & Budget Priorities

The Board held a discussion regarding preliminary 2026 TIFA goals and budget priorities. It was noted that no formal action was required at this time, as the item was intended for discussion purposes only.

Mr. Bommarito explained that a proposed 2026 TIFA budget will be prepared and distributed to the Board via email for review. Board members were encouraged to review the draft and provide feedback regarding any items that should be adjusted, added, or reconsidered. It was noted that the proposed budget is expected to be largely consistent with the prior year's budget, including allocations for public art, parking improvements, and related infrastructure needs.

Discussion included potential parking lot improvements and engineering studies for sidewalks and other infrastructure within the district, as well as the possibility of acquiring certain properties to support long-term redevelopment goals. It was noted that some parking improvements may proceed this year, while others may be deferred to future budget cycles.

Mr. Bommarito revisited the previously discussed business and property owner survey as a first step toward updating long-range planning efforts. The survey would be used to better understand business needs, improve communication within the district, and develop a more comprehensive and accurate database of both business owners and property owners. This effort would also help inform future development priorities and event coordination.

It was reported that two representatives from the TIFA Board (Mr. Charara and Ms. Hicks) and two representatives from the DDA Board (Mr. Wiegand and Mr. Petzold) have been appointed to sit on a subcommittee and partake in the RFP review process related to the business and property owner survey initiative. The survey process may include separate question sets for existing businesses and vacant property owners to ensure relevant information is collected.

Additional discussion emphasized the importance of having a general directional plan to guide future spending decisions, including parking improvements, streetscape enhancements, security measures, and other infrastructure investments. The Board expressed support for receiving a forecast-style budget outlining anticipated allocations to assist with long-term planning and coordination with the DDA and City Council.

Mr. Bommarito indicated that the Board would be kept informed as the proposed budget and survey process move forward.

9. Approval of the List of Bills

None

10. Good of the Order

Louie's Property Update:

Mr. Bommarito provided an update regarding the previously discussed request for redevelopment plans/renderings for the Louie's Bar property. He reported that he spoke with Scott Zemens, TIFA Realtor, who indicated that his consultant continues to work on the plans. Mr. Bommarito noted that delays were related in part to the holiday period and a misunderstanding regarding the meeting date; however, Mr. Zemens confirmed that interest in the project remains.

Stephens Road Property Discussion:

Mr. Bommarito reported that follow-up efforts with the Stephens Road property owner have not yet resulted in a response. He noted that while there was initial interest, discussions have since stalled. Board discussion reflected general support for pursuing acquisition of the property to address existing blight and improve the appearance of the corridor. Potential future uses discussed included removal of fencing, streetscape improvements, picnic tables, and enhanced visibility of the adjacent mural.

Stephens Road Greenway Project:

Mr. Bommarito also shared information regarding an ongoing multi-community corridor planning effort along Stephens Road, extending from Van Dyke east toward St. Clair Shores. The initiative involves collaboration with Center Line, Eastpointe, and St. Clair Shores and is supported by a SEMCOG grant to fund planning services. The study will explore potential enhancements such as bike lanes, connectivity improvements, and corridor amenities. Mr. Bommarito noted that acquisition of the Stephens Road property (corner of Stephens and Van Dyke) could further support these efforts through features such as bicycle repair stations or corridor signage.

Additionally, Mr. Bommarito stated that staff is exploring another grant opportunity to support signage and corridor improvements, with an application anticipated later this month.

John B. Avenue Grant Update & Women’s Luncheon:

Ms. Hicks reported that **Habitat for Humanity** recently received a third grant for improvements along John B. Avenue, designated specifically for an additional roof replacement. She noted that these investments continue to support efforts to stabilize and improve the corridor. Ms. Hicks also shared that Mayor Stone has accepted the invitation to serve as the guest speaker at the upcoming Women’s Luncheon. It was noted that the Mayor will be provided extended speaking time and may reference community and redevelopment efforts, particularly in southern Warren, where much of the current work is focused.

Next TIFA Regular Meeting is Thursday, February 12, 2026, at 9:00 AM, in the Burnette Branch Library

11. Adjournment

Motion:

A motion was made by Mr. Hunter, supported by Mr. Ahmed, to adjourn, all were in favor.

The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:22 a.m.

Minutes prepared by: Tiffany Nawrocki
DDA/TIFA Assistant
Phone: (586) 574-4676
E-mail: tnawrocki@cityofwarren.org

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Hassen Charara
TIFA Chariperson

X Signed by:
Tom Bommarito
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Thomas Bommarito
TIFA Director