

**Minutes of Board Meeting
May 14, 2026
Perry County Economic Development Authority
Perry County Business and Tourism Center
New Bloomfield, PA.**

Attendees: Rich Pluta, Scott Fritz, Dee Anderson, Martha Roberts, Ed Barben, Scott Dunkelberger

Virtual participants:

Staff: Taira Little, Jasmine Colbert

Absent: Patti McLaughlin

Resigned:

Excused:

Visitor: Jason Finnerty

Public Comment: None

Call to order at 8:28 am

Tri-County report: Tri-County report is attached to the minutes supplied by Jason Finnerty.

Secretary's Report:

Dee Anderson presented the minutes of PCEDA's meeting on April 9, 2026, which had been distributed to all board members in advance of today's meeting. There was a motion to approve the secretary's report by Scott Dunkelberger, and Ed Barben seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a voice vote without dissent.

Treasurer's Report:

Ed Barben presented the treasure's report. Normal overhead and payroll expenses for the month. There was a motion to approve the treasures' report by Rich Pluta, and Scott Fritz seconded the motion.

The motion was approved by a voice vote without dissent.

- **Chair Report:**

- Discussion on why the EDA board members are being asked to participate in being askers for the fairground capital campaign.
- Fair Project: The younger group is very involved in pushing the improvement project ahead, and have been very vocal at all meetings that they want to see the fairgrounds be a better place for the community to use year-round.
- Discussions about the Lapin group campaign funding. Some of the board members are very disappointed in the lack of money being received at this point?

Staff Report: Taira Little presented the staff report which is attached to these minutes.

Main Street Coordinator Report: Jasmine's report attached.

Old Business: Still working on the possibility of the Eda office doing passports. The government has decided that only government facilities can issue passports. We discussed issuing passports at the EDA/Chamber office to generate dollars.

Frank Campbell was successful in creating the TPA for Perry County! It is now official! Thanks Frank!

New business: Pennian Bank will be the bank that will hold the accounts for the economic Development Alliance. This account will be a money market account.

Motion to adjourn was made by Ed Barben, and Rich Pluta seconded the motion, and the motion carried. It was approved without dissent at 10:32.

May 2026 PCEDA Office Administrator Report

GRANTS

Reimbursement requests were sent to DCED and awaiting approval for:

DCED 3 (81872) the reimbursement of **\$19,078.61** submitted on 5/14/26.

DCED 5 (87931) the reimbursement of **\$4,840.00** was submitted on 5/5/26.

Reimbursement received from DCED:

Main Street Matters (97848) reimbursement for \$75,000 was received May 28. The next reimbursement submission will happen on April 1, 2027.

Community Walkways:

We have received applications from:

Liverpool Borough - approved

Ferster's Meat Market - approved

Landisburg Borough - approved

King's Fitness - approved

Façade:

Grant applications are open and being accepted through June 15. We have received applications from:

Total Look Salon – approved

Grove Financial (Chaz Sheaffer) – approved

Annette Mullen - denied

Mike Hartley – awaiting additional quotes

Mike McNaughton – awaiting additional quotes

Orrstown Bank – awaiting additional quotes

Ferster's Meat Market - approved

County of Perry

Wayfinding:

County App – We have begun gathering business information provided by the 9 boroughs and the Chamber member list. Items to be determined as soon as possible:

App name – Explore Perry

App categories – Explore, Eat & Drink, Shop Local, Stay Overnight, Events, Community Info

ENGAGE/PREP:

Awaiting reimbursement: I have submitted a payment request on March 31 to CREDC for the four ENGAGE calls I have completed so far for the amount of \$3,200.

The remaining ENGAGE calls for the 2025/2026 year have been completed as of 5/29/26, and the payment request has been submitted.

AI for Small Businesses Seminar with SBDC scheduled for Monday, June 29 from 8:30 – 10 AM in the community room at UPMC in Newport.

I will be attending a PREP workshop with the Harrisburg Regional Chamber/CREDC on July 21 – 22 at DCED.

EDUCATION/WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Summer Intern, Teresa McNaughton, will begin working with us at the end of May/beginning of June.

MISCELLANEOUS

Working with Herring, Roll & Solomon, P.C. for the 2025 audit.

Jasmine and I attended Perry County Ag Day on May 18.

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 18-22 – Perry County Fair

Main Street Coordinator Updates – May 2026

Prepared by: Jasmine Colbert

Summary

In April, work centered on strengthening ambassador engagement, advancing façade and Main Street initiatives, and supporting borough-level projects across the county. I prepared and delivered the April 17 Ambassador Meeting with full materials and follow-up, scheduled multiple 1:1s, and provided targeted support to Duncannon, New Buffalo, Landisburg, Blain, and Newport, including business visits and resource sharing. Façade program activity remained steady with ongoing inquiries, social campaign feedback, contractor list updates, and the design of new façade signage. Main Street development progressed through legislative updates, advocacy day participation, updates to the Main Street Matters leave-behind, and coordination with PDC on survey and eligibility questions. Placemaking work moved forward through AT wayfinding coordination with DATC, vendor research, public art and mural planning, Picture Perry support, and park and walkway inquiries. Communications and digital infrastructure were strengthened through Mailchimp domain authentication, social media scheduling, newsletter development, and feedback on partner communications. I finalized the perception survey, created a rollout plan, shared updates with PDC, and ensured consistency between digital and paper versions. Additional work included event-support inquiries, cleanup coordination with Keep Perry County Beautiful, borough meeting participation, professional development workshops, workgroup support, and routine operational tasks such as timesheets, mileage, reporting, and general inquiries. Beach vacation May 29-June 5, 2026.

Transformation Strategies – per new Main Street Matters designation

1. Strengthen downtown connections to trails, parks and open spaces.
2. Enhance everyday and family-friendly use of downtowns.
3. Strengthen local food as a downtown economic driver.

Program & Project Updates

TS	Initiative/Project	Status	Milestones Achieved	Upcoming Goals/Actions
1	Public Art Installation- Blain, Marysville, Millerstown	In Progress	Marysville redesign out for review. Bid/samples received from Jeff Copus for Blain mural.	Advance Millerstown trail and ability to use/promote. Begin trail marketing project as remaining installations are finalized.
2	Event Support	Active	Reimbursement forms posted publicly with extended date.	Consider extending to organizations.
1	Community Walkways - Roads/streets	Application Round Open 2/1-5/15	Process created for reviewing applications regularly.	Connect with Millerstown to gauge plans. Application review ongoing.
2	Façade Improvements	Application Round Open 3/1-6/15	Process created for reviewing applications regularly. Ongoing social campaign.	PCEDA team and ambassadors generating leads. Work on ways to identify/remove barriers to participation.

1	Wayfinding	Active	Met with FastSigns to discuss sign design and fabrication.	Landisburg Lions Park location sign, Blain gateway sign, Hawk Rock sign.
1, 2	Main Street Clean-Ups	Active	Duncannon, Millerstown, Liverpool cleanups completed.	Continue to make borough cleanup connections to KPCB. Celebrate results.

Community Engagement, Outreach & Social – PCEDA invites residents, people who work in Perry County, business owners, property owners, volunteers, visitors, and families to take the Perry County Downtown Perception Survey. The survey will help establish a baseline understanding of how people experience Perry County’s downtowns at the beginning of the new Main Street Matters designation period. Results will help inform future downtown revitalization efforts and provide a point of comparison for future measurement. The survey will remain open through **June 1, 2026**.

Website engagement – In April 2026 (Apr 1–Apr 30), about **572 people** used the Perry County EDA website. They viewed pages **1,263 times** and triggered **3,294 total actions** on the site. People also interacted with the site by scrolling, clicking, and downloading files, showing steady interest in the information available.

Month	Year	Hits/Events	Page Views	Active Users
Jan	2026	4,168	1,511	735
Feb	2026	3,652	1,365	659
Mar	2026	3,688	1,465	613
Apr	2026	3,294	1,263	572

Facebook followers – 1,120 Instagram followers - 504

Ambassador Engagement

- Liverpool Main Street is a 2026 PDC Townie Award winner for their *Cornet Park Public Improvements | Connecting Park-to-Main* project which will be recognized at the Erie conference.
- Conducting 1:1 ambassador meetings.
- Sent April 28 Ambassador newsletter to ambassadors and boroughs.
- Scheduling June 18 evening cluster meeting with discussion topic to be determined.
- Ambassadors have been asked to share the [Perry County Downtown Perception Survey](#).

Challenges & Opportunities

- **Opportunity:** Explore using the Perry County Economic Alliance as a fiscal mechanism to support Perry County Hometowns by enabling tax-deductible contributions. This would remove a barrier for borough teams and create a more consistent, countywide fundraising pathway. Potentially procure Small Games of Chance licenses that could be extended to Hometowns/Main Street teams, especially those without nonprofit status. This would provide an additional, compliant fundraising option and reinforce the value of staying connected under the Hometowns umbrella. Both opportunities require legal and structural review to ensure compliance with state charitable law, gaming regulations, and organizational bylaws. Coordination with the PCEA board will be needed to determine feasibility, process, and timelines.

Coordinator Training & Networking

- 4/20/2026 – Rich and Jasmine attended the NAP Workshop - The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's (DCED) *Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP)* incentivizes private-sector investment in community revitalization through state tax credits. Eligible

businesses receive credits for contributions to approved projects that address economic distress, housing, blight, education, and public safety. Perry County qualifies as a distressed area due to its Main Street designation, positioning PCEDA to lead or support NAP applications.

- 4/21/2026 – Frank, Brenda, Marti, Ed, and Jasmine attended Main Street Advocacy Day at the Pennsylvania State Capitol to elevate awareness of Main and Elm Street efforts and advocate for maintaining \$20M in state program funding. A visit has been scheduled with Rep. Stambaugh at PCEDA on May 12 at 11 a.m.
- 4/11/2026 – Marti and Jasmine meet via zoom with Lehigh County's Department of Community and Economic Development for a regional Main Street discussion.
- 5/7/2026 – attended WalkWorks capacity-building program overview webinar.
- 6/28-7/1/2026 - **2026 PDC Statewide Revitalization Conference** - Bayfront Convention Center, Erie, PA. Includes my final Safe, Clean & Green training on June 28! (Jasmine must attend.)

April Ambassador Meeting — Board Debrief

Perry County Hometowns Ambassador Meeting Friday, April 17, 2026 — PCEDA Offices

Overview

The April All-Ambassador Meeting brought together representatives from **five of the nine** Perry County Hometowns boroughs. The session followed the agenda outlined in the meeting document, including updates on the renewed **Main Street Matters** designation, an overview of the **2026–2030 transformation strategies**, and a borough-level roundtable on opportunities, challenges, and priorities.

Represented boroughs included:

- **Blaine** – Leonard Wise
- **Duncannon** – Katie Martz & Mike Wolfersberger
- **New Bloomfield** – Jessica Grindle
- **Newport** – Gail Frank
- **Landisburg** – Doug Gust

Opening Activity

Ambassadors introduced themselves, named their borough, and highlighted something they appreciate about another community. Themes included:

- **New Bloomfield** – walkability and historic architecture
- **Duncannon** – history tied to the Clark's Ferry Tavern and Appalachian Trail
- **Newport** – strong business mix and vitality; memorable entry over the iron bridge

This exercise reinforced cross-borough awareness and strengthened shared identity.

Transformation Strategies & Local Alignment

Using the transformation strategies from the 2026–2030 plan as a framework, boroughs discussed how these tools can shape future workplans. Ambassadors expressed appreciation for the clarity and structure these strategies provide, helping them align local priorities with a broader countywide vision.

Opportunities & Projects Identified

Each borough shared projects they hope to advance:

- **Duncannon**
 - Sidewalk and streetscape improvements
 - Traffic calming
 - Signage, advertising, and marketing
 - Interest in a **borough summit** for collaboration
- **New Bloomfield**
 - Sidewalk improvements
 - Long-term priority: connecting the park to downtown
- **Blain**
 - Street banners featuring local history (potential countywide model)
 - Street lighting
 - Long-term priority: countywide bike trail connections
- **Landisburg**
 - Wayfinding to the covered bridge and nearby parks
 - Long-term priority: connecting the park to downtown
- **Newport**
 - Wayfinding locations under review
 - Planters in the town square (volunteer-supported)
 - Long-term priority: addressing absentee landlords and improving property stewardship mechanisms

Challenges & Barriers

Ambassadors identified several shared and borough-specific constraints:

- **Volunteer capacity** (multiple boroughs)
- **Food truck scheduling** (affecting event planning)
- **New Bloomfield** – sidewalk ownership/maintenance clarity
- **Blain** – limited funds; sewer plant needs
- **Landisburg** – lack of businesses in the downtown footprint; need for engineering support for sidewalks
- **Newport** – volunteer availability
- **Duncannon** – limited local buy-in; heavy reliance on grants

Fundraising & Organizational Support

A discussion on fundraising highlighted the value of **Perry County Hometowns (or the Perry County Economic Alliance)** serving as a 501(c)(3) backbone for boroughs lacking their own nonprofit structure.

Benefits include:

- Ability to accept tax-deductible donations
- Access to **Games of Chance** licensing for Main Street activities
- Administrative support for small-scale fundraising efforts

Ambassador Feedback on Coordination

Attendees expressed strong appreciation for:

- The **communication cadence** and support provided by the Regional Main Street Coordinator
- The **regional structure** of the transformation strategies
- The ability to see how their local work fits into a countywide revitalization approach

Next Steps

- Continue borough-specific follow-ups on sidewalks, wayfinding, and volunteer coordination
- Explore feasibility of a **borough summit** for shared learning or ways to connect with existing mechanisms
- Support boroughs in identifying funding pathways for priority projects
- Maintain alignment with the renewed **Main Street Matters** designation and 2026–2030 strategies