



ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
COLLABORATIVE

MINUTES

EDC-VC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

February 4, 2026

- Location:** 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd. Suite P, Camarillo, Ca 93012
- Attendance:** Dr. Cynthia Herrera, *Board Chair* — Community Colleges of Ventura County
Bob Engler – City of Thousand Oaks
Harold Edwards—Limoneira Company
Janice Parvin, *Vice Chair* —County of Ventura
Peter Zierhut, *Secretary/Treasurer* – Haas Automation
John Bandek—*Economic Development Roundtable Chair*, City of Moorpark
- Absent:** Dee Dee Cavanaugh—City of Simi Valley
Kristin Decas —Port of Hueneme/Oxnard Harbor
Renee Delgado—City of Moorpark
- Guests:** Jeannette Sanchez-Palacios—County of Ventura
- Staff:** Bruce Stenslie--EDC President/CEO
Alondra Gaytan—Director of Strategic Relations
- Call to Order:** 3:35 p.m. Chair Dr. Cynthia Herrera welcomed everyone and expressed thanks for attending.
- Amendment to the Agenda:** N/A
- Public Comment:** N/A

**Approval
of Executive
Committee
Minutes:**

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes, January 7, 2026

Chair Dr. Cynthia Herrera requested a motion to approve the minutes of January 7, 2026, Executive Committee meeting. Supervisor Janice Parvin moved to approve and file the minutes of January 7, 2026, Executive Committee meeting minutes. Harold Edwards seconded the motion. All members in attendance approved the motion.

Administration

A. Debrief, Annual Meeting 2026

Bruce Stenslie provided a debrief of the January event, including a financial overview and initial observations. The event secured **\$44,500 in sponsorships**, compared to \$73,500 for the 2025 event. Despite lower sponsorship revenue year-over-year, the event generated an estimated **net income of \$31,760**, reflecting an increase of approximately **\$2,300 in net revenue** due to reduced venue costs at the Moorpark location.

Board members were invited to provide feedback on all aspects of the event, including sponsorship strategy, venue, program, guest experience, and overall execution, to inform planning and improvements for next year and future events. This item was for information purposes no action to be taken.

B. Membership Recruitment Priorities

Staff reviewed board composition pursuant to Section 2.2 of the bylaws, which allows for up to 44 total members, including 28 private sector and 16 public sector representatives. The board expanded from 36 to 44 members in 2023 to accommodate representation from Santa Barbara County and better align governance with the organization's service territory.

All Ventura County public sector seats are currently filled. Recruitment efforts are underway to secure up to four public sector representatives from Santa Barbara County. On the private sector side, 23 of 28 seats are currently filled, including two in-kind members (Pacific Coast Business Times and Chambers of Commerce Alliance). VCEDA remains a full voting, non-paying member as outlined in the bylaws.

The Board may appoint up to five non-voting Board Liaisons; three currently serve: Naval Surface Warfare Center-Port Hueneme Division, Ventura County Coast, and Ventura County Transportation Commission. (We also have the VC Farm Bureau, though there is a conflict in our two organizations' meeting times.)

While no action was requested, staff expressed interest in recruiting additional private sector members, prioritizing representation in biotech and life sciences; autonomous systems technology; engineering and construction; finance and real estate; hospitality, arts and entertainment; transportation and warehousing; and

production sectors including manufacturing and agriculture/food systems. Vacancies are filled by majority vote of a quorum, with the Executive Committee serving as the Nominating Committee per Section 2.8 of the bylaws. This item was for information purposes no action to be taken.

C. Succession Planning, Update and Discussion

As stipulated in the President/CEO's 2026 board-approved work plan, staff will develop and submit a succession plan to the Executive Committee. The President/CEO is currently under contract through November 2027, with prior discussion this past December noting the possibility of potentially extending the contract timeline when the Committee conducts its next review in Autumn 2026.

Recent contract discussions have focused primarily on executive and organizational succession planning. A draft outline of proposed plan elements was shared with Committee members in advance of the February 4 Executive Committee meeting.

The initial discussion is intended to be broad and strategic, encompassing talent and leadership development, organizational structure and competencies, program design, sustainability and funding considerations, and related topics. This meeting serves as a first step in identifying priority components and gathering Committee input to inform development of the full plan. This item was for information purposes no action to be taken.

D. Consideration of Updates to the EDC Employee Handbook.

Staff recommended that the Executive Committee approve and forward to the full Board updates to the EDC Employee Handbook to align with 2026 regulatory changes.

The Board last approved Handbook updates in March 2025. In April 2025, the Board approved a contract with Platinum HR Consulting Group to provide ongoing HR support, including monitoring regulatory compliance. Platinum has identified several required updates, including revisions to: Section 4.10 (emergency contact information requirements); Section 6.7 (Witness Leave policy); Section 6.9 (Leave and Accommodation for Victims of Violence policy); and Section 6.14 (Basic Leave Entitlement policy). These amendments are administrative in nature and are intended solely to ensure compliance with state regulations.

Chair Dr. Cynthia Herrera requested a motion to approve the recommendation. Supervisor Janice Parvin moved to approve and Bob Engler seconded the motion. All members in attendance approved the motion.

E. Discussion, EDC Services Model, Developing/Investing in Industry Cluster Specialization & Capacity

Bruce Stenslie reviewed the organization's current service model, which focuses primarily on direct business engagement through advisory services, lending, and training across all sectors. While EDC continues to perform strongly under this model, staff noted that the organization is currently under-invested in capacity and leadership dedicated to deeper regional industry cluster strategy and organizing.

Industry clusters are defined as geographically linked groups of industries connected by shared markets, labor pools, technologies, and supply chains—more specific and targeted than broad sector designations. EDC's existing strengths, including advising, lending, global trade support, access to capital, and operational efficiency, position the organization well to serve as an intermediary supporting cluster development.

Staff discussed the need to concentrate efforts on priority growth clusters, including precision manufacturing and autonomous systems (advanced air/land/sea mobility), with potential expansion into biotech and life sciences. Effective cluster strategies include aligning workforce and business competitiveness, tailoring industry-specific solutions, strengthening employer competitiveness, supporting worker skill advancement, and creating long-term labor market improvements.

Moving forward, staff anticipates pursuing new resources and redeploying existing capacity to support expanded leadership and performance in these targeted industry clusters. This item was for information purposes no action to be taken.

F. Update, Uplift Central Coast Industry Concentration in Advanced Aircraft/Autonomous Systems, Business Attraction and Retention, Update

Bruce Stenslie provided an update on the State's CA Jobs First initiative (formerly CERF), a \$450 million program established to support regional economic diversification and the development of sustainable, high-quality jobs grounded in triple bottom line principles (economy, equity, environment). Our six-county region branded "Uplift Central Coast," received initial planning funds, with EDC serving as fiscal agent and co-convenor alongside Monterey Bay Economic Partnership, and REACH serving as lead convenor.

The initiative is currently in the "Catalyst" stage (through September 2026), which includes administration of \$9 million in regional predevelopment grants (42 projects funded) and development of industry activation strategies. EDC's work is focused on precision manufacturing (including workforce and skills gap analysis in partnership with BW Research and Arken Strategies) and autonomous systems/advanced aircraft, supported by collaboration with Brookings Institution

and the Honey Group to advance regional positioning, outreach, and firm attraction.

The final “Implementation” stage includes two competitive statewide funding rounds. While Ventura County was not successful in Round 1, regional partners secured funding. For Round 2, EDC, alongside the Navy, the County, and other stakeholders, submitted a proposal titled “Fathomwerx Proving Grounds,” seeking approximately \$1.5 million to strengthen the region’s Testing & Evaluation, R&D, and production ecosystem in autonomous systems. Although highly competitive, staff noted that the proposal development process itself has strengthened regional organizing and partnerships. This item was for information purposes no action to be taken.

G. Presidents Report

Bruce Stenslie provided an overview of the various local, regional, and other community meetings and partnerships. A few updates for board members included upcoming events, and grant opportunities. With interest in the partnership and leveraging of resources.

New and Unfinished Business: N/A

Executive Committee Comments: N/A

Adjournment: At 4:50 pm Board Chair Cynthia Herrera thanked everyone for attending and announced the meeting adjourned to March 4, 2026.