



**DRAFT Minutes  
EDC Regular Meeting  
January 29, 2026**

Present: Sarah Lansdale, Chair  
Kevin Harvey, Vice Chair (via Zoom)  
Sondra Cochran, Treasurer  
Cris Damianos, Secretary (via zoom)  
Josh Slaughter  
Brian Beedenbender

Excused Absence: Greg Casamento

Also Present: K. Kelly Murphy, Executive Director/CEO  
William Wexler, Esq. Agency Counsel

Ms. Sarah Lansdale, Chair who is presiding over the Meeting today indicated that the documents for this meeting can be accessed and are posted to the EDC's website at <https://www.suffolkeconomic.org/resources/> under the Board Meetings tab.

The Regular Meeting of the Suffolk County Economic Development Corporation held in Media Room #184 located on the lower level of the H. Lee Dennison Building, 100 Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge, NY11788 was called to order at 12:30 p.m. by Ms. Sarah Lansdale, Chair of the EDC.

**ROLL CALL**

This is the January 29, 2026 Regular Board Meeting of the Suffolk County Economic Development Corporation and for the record, we do have a quorum present. Members of the public may attend the meeting.

## SCIDA MINUTES

### I. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Lansdale asked if there were any public comments and Ms. Murphy indicated no comments were received.

### II. ANNUAL MEETING

KKM: You have before you the packet for the annual meeting. It includes the election of officers, committee assignments, the signatories of corporations, corporate counsel, Bond counsel staff, also the review and readoption of corporation policies, which include disposition of property guidelines and the investment policy, the schedule of meetings for year, and that is the complete packet before you. The slate of officers this year includes Sarah Lansdale as Chair, Kevin Harvey, Vice Chair, Josh Slaughter, Treasurer, and Cris Damianos, Secretary.

Billy. And I know we ask this question every year, can they make one motion?

WW: En mass? Yes, okay.

After further discussion and:

Upon a motion by Brian Beedenbender, seconded by Sondra Cochran, it was:

RESOLVED to adopt the Annual Business items for 2026 for the Suffolk County Economic Development Corporation.

Unanimously carried 6/0.

### III. NEW BUSINESS

At the last meeting a presentation was made by Lauren Wagner from the Long Island Arts Alliance requesting a grant in the amount of \$50,000 for the Long Island Grants Academy.

The minutes have been provided which detail her presentation from last month. She, unfortunately, can't be here with us today, but Jonathan Keys is with us in case there's any questions.

SL: I know that there was additional information that was raised which was reflected in the discussion from the December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting that was provided to members of EDC.

The last page of your packet is the detailed budget that was requested by the board and has been reviewed by staff. Any questions from the Board at this time?

Josh Slaughter: I have some questions as I was not at the last meeting, so I didn't get to see the presentation. Explain just briefly what exactly this is going to be showing.

Jonathan Keyes: Real quick history, my introduction to this, my interest and involvement in this is that I work in the Economic Development Planning Department, we have the Office of Cultural Affairs that administers, cultural competitive, emerging film festival programs, and just a lot with the arts. So, I attended a presentation that Lauren Wagner of the Long Island Arts Alliance gave in, late October.

I was kind of blown away just by some of the information and statistics that she was presenting. In a very quick nutshell, just kind of showing that the receipt of grant funds from NISCA, the New York State Council on the Arts, to Long Island was pretty deficient compared to our role in the arts community statewide. And the Long Island Arts Alliance has essentially proposed a technical assistance grants academy to help local artists develop the capacity to write these grants for themselves and, you know, kind of teach them how to fish type of thing.

JS: So, it specifically funds the ability to get additional grants, or is that basically...

JK: Yeah, it would... a program that would work one-on-one with artists to help them develop more competitive grant applications to the New York State Council on the Arts. There was sort of a test run last year in which Lauren herself worked closely with about 15 artists, and I think 9 were funded, so brought around \$100,000 of new money into the region, just as a result of those efforts, and she's hoping to scale that up, with large support.

JS: Okay, and more specifically, so the types of grants that these artists are applying for, what are those particular funding? What types of programs?

JK: Those are... it's for implementation of arts programs, development of arts. This is less where I'm an expert in the subject matter, but it's generally to support artists in a specific program that they propose, I'm familiar with, some of that programming, BACTA and Davilo. They use the money to put on art shows and bring people in, and it's really nice. They do a lot with it, not just, you know, drawing or painting and stuff like that, music, jazz.

JS: Yeah, I guess my question is, I mean, certainly a worthy cause, and you know I understand the value of the program, but, for the purposes of our board, you know, does it fall in line with the mission of what we're seeking to accomplish with economic development and job creation, and etc.? And I guess, I don't know if someone could explain how it kind of falls within line of what we're responsible for.

JK: Yeah, and I do wish Lauren was here. She did an excellent job of addressing this. When I saw the presentation, what jumped out to me were some statistics she had in terms of economic multipliers, the size of the arts industry on Long Island, and the number of people employed in the arts industry. And how that translates to the economic value. And, you know, sometimes you hear numbers like that, like, oh, there's 2,806 people, and it's hard to... I don't know what that means in the context of 150,000 people, but the rank of the arts industry and the overall compensation of the workforce on Long Island was impressive to me. It's much higher than I think you might think at first blush, and the way that that translates into wages and salaries that circulate locally. Again, I don't have the numbers at the tip of my tongue but that's what jumped out at me when I saw it in October. So, if you look at page 8, Josh, of the Long Island Arts Alliance proposal... It says that there is, you know, more than \$330 million in annual economic activity, from the arts and culture sector. And, you know, there are almost 5,000 local jobs, 4,905 with arts and cultural employment growing at 21.6% over the past 10 years, as compared to the job growth number of just 4.1%. So, we see that it's a growing population. We also see that Suffolk County, Long Island is, not being... not getting its fair share of funding. From New York State, Council on the Arts specifically, this would help prepare that industry and lead, ultimately, to greater economic growth and development which goes into our economy. There's a direct, indirect, you know, induced economic impact. So, in essence, it may be attracting more artists to the region or additional jobs. Helping artists stay in the region, as we all know, you know, costs are always an issue. And that supports vibrancy, downtown areas, people come out, they see an arts stroll, and then they stop and they dive into downtown, that sort of thing. So, it's, you know, it's got that multiplier vertical effect.

SL: Other questions from the board. This is great dialogue.

After further discussion and:

Upon a motion by Sondra Cochran. Second by Brian Beedenbender, it was:

RESOLVED to accept the request authorizing funding to the Long Island Grants Academy in the amount of \$50,000.

Unanimously carried 6/0.

IV. **OLD BUSINESS** – None

V. **OTHER BUSINESS**

The minutes of December 11, 2025, Board of Directors Meeting were presented.

After further discussion and:

Upon a motion by Brian Beedenbender, seconded by Sarah Lansdale, it was:

RESOLVED, to table the Minutes of the December 11, 2025 meeting of the Board of Directors, as a quorum was not present as Josh Slaughter and Sondra Cochran abstained.

The Meeting adjourned at 12:45 pm.