Transportation Infrastructure Investment Fund Council

Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2026
10:30 a.m.
Virtual via Zoom and In-Person (Farmington-Felton Room, DelDOT Admin. Bldg.)

Members Present:

Joe Westcott (CHAIR)
Representative Bill Bush
Julia Geha
Senator Jack Walsh
Dr. Martin Nunlee
Mr. Bill Strickland
Larry Windley

Guests:

Susanne Laws	Delaware Department of Transportation
Jeff Van Horn	Delaware Department of Transportation
George T. Lees III	Delaware Department of Justice – DAG for DelDOT
Wendy Polasko	Delaware Department of Transportation
Lorie Walker	Delaware Department of Transportation
Jazmine Mathieu	Delaware Department of Transportation
EJ Lopez	Delaware Department of Transportation
Kristina Robinson	Delaware Division of Small Business
Jordan Seemans	Harvey Hanna and Associates
Thomas Harvey	Harvey Hanna and Associates
Steve Wooden	Harvey Hanna and Associates
Marc Cote	Rossi Group
Jim Smith	Barnes and Thornburg LLC
Shawn Tucker	Barnes and Thornburg LLC
Tom Ruszin	Royal Farms
James Taylor	Verdantas
Travis Martin	TD Ventures
Bret Davis	TD Ventures
Deb Chaney	TD Ventures
Kendall Lancaster	TD Ventures
Charles Anderson	City of Seaford
Daniel Bond	ASPIRA Georgetown OZ Property Management LLC

Agenda Item # 1: Welcome and Introductions

Discussion: Mr. Westcott welcomed everyone. He led the roll call for the Council.

Quorum was confirmed.

Mr. Westcott introduced the two new Council Members, Julia Gaha, Town Manager of Slaughter Beach and Larry Windley, Senior Fellow in the Institute for Public Administration within the Biden School at the University of Delaware. Mr. Westcott thanked departing members Mona Parikh and Robert Book for their service on the Council.

Agenda Item # 2: **Approval of November 18, 2025, Meeting Minutes**

Discussion: Mr. Westcott acknowledged that the meeting materials had previously been distributed for the Council's review. A motion to approve November 18, 2025, meeting minutes was made by Julia Geha. The motion was seconded by Bill Strickland.

Roll call vote was taken:
Mr. Westcott: Approve
Rep. Bush: Approve
Sen Jack Walsh: Approve
Dr. Nunlee: Approve
Mr. Strickland: Approve
Ms. Johnson: Approve
Ms. Geha: Approve
Mr. Windley: Approve
The motion to approve the minutes carried.

Agenda Item #3: Program Updates and Status of Previous Approvals

Discussion: Ms. Laws reviewed an update to the administrative code that added the assignment process. If a grantee sells a development project, the TIIF Grant does not automatically transfer to the new developer, however, the assignment process creates a path to transfer the grant under certain conditions. The code also updated the annual reporting requirement to match the TIIF Agreement terms. The annual reporting for a TIIF Grant is seven years post-grant award, which also aligns with the Division of Small Business' Site Readiness Grant.

Ms. Laws acknowledged that to date, the Council has recommended over $63.3 million in grant awards, with a total of over 12,500 jobs. The current amount available for awards is about $10.7 million. Currently there are 34 Active Grants.

Ms. Laws reported that due to a downturn in the commercial leasing, Round 2 Grantee 1313 Owner LLC has decided to let their grant expire and will not be moving forward with the rest of the improvements. They did have an interim progress payment that the Council had previously approved so there will be about $692,000 returned to the fund because of their withdrawal from the program.
Ms. Laws stated that Round 3 Grantees Light Action and Challenge Program has met with DelDOT recently, and they are proceeding with design of frontage improvements for each of these two development projects.

Mr. Westcott asked if the current amount available excluded the projects being considered today.

Ms. Laws confirmed the numbers she is reporting do not include today's applicants.

Ms. Laws further reported that Round 6 Grantee City of Milford Corporate Center's Airport Road roundabout is open to the traveling public. They are working through design of the off-site roundabout on Canterbury Road and Churchill Road. Round 8 Grantee PR-Stoltz Venture LLC is nearing completion of their transportation improvements and has inquired about a possible grant term extension. Round 9 Grantee Habitat for Humanity has obtained easements, and they are getting ready to start construction. Round 10 Grantee Georgetown Business Plaza LLC is still obtaining easements, so they are going to request an extension.

Ms. Laws mentioned that Round 13 Grantee REACH Riverside Development Corporation is working through DelDOT construction permitting. Round 13 Grantee RMG Harrington LLC's Starbucks was recently mentioned in the newspaper as longer coming to Harrington, however the Grantee has not yet reached out to the TIIF team. Round 13 Grantee WitSil Lincoln Associates LLC is still in the DelDOT plan approval process.

Ms. Laws reported that Round 14 Grantee Royal Farms Milton is underway, and Round 15 City of Harrington Industrial Park is still in the TIIF Agreement process.

Agenda Item #4: Review of McCormick and Associates of Middletown LLC (Round 7) Extension Request including Executive Session*, Public Comment and Council Vote

McCormick and Associates of Middletown LLC (Round 7)

Discussion: Ms. Laws provided a summary of the project approved in Round 7 for an award of $105,298.00, with a signed TIIF Agreement dated June 30, 2023, which expires on June 30, 2026. The Grantee has downsized their economic development project (mental health provider offices) from constructing a 3,600 square foot building to renovating the existing structure on site and adding a 1,000 square foot addition. This results in a revised TIIF Scope of Work which would consist of a small commercial entrance (construction plans provided by DelDOT) and no shared use path. The original TIIF scope of work was a right-in, right-out, consolidated entrance with the adjacent property which would have removed a conflict point on US 13. The original scope also included, bike lane striping, a 10-foot-wide shared use path across the frontage with a crosswalk and managing the associated drainage. Their employment standard in the original application was 14 jobs. In discussions with the Grantee, that number may decrease, although the exact number is unclear.

Ms. Laws pointed out that in the code, the improvements funded through the fund must occur within the public right-of-way, which part of an entrance would, and must directly benefit the traveling public. By downsizing their entrance, the Grantee unfortunately no longer proposes a public benefit in their transportation improvements.

Ms. Laws further stated that she did reach out to the grantee and explain the situation, based on what they're proposing now, as opposed to what they originally had, and that an extension might not be considered by the Council because they no longer have a direct benefit to the traveling public.

The Grantee did respond a few times but did not formally confirm whether they wanted to move forward with the extension or withdraw. Therefore, based on their formal extension request it was placed on the agenda for discussion and vote.

Mr. Westcott opened the discussion to the Council members regarding this extension request.

Ms. Geha asked if they had received any money already.

Ms. Laws stated that they have not received any money as the funds are dispersed as a reimbursement after the improvements are built.

Mr. Nunlee asked if the Council can reduce the amount awarded based on the lack of benefit to the public or is it an all or nothing situation.

Ms. Laws answered that this was an option but would like the Council's guidance on the public benefit.

Mr. Westcott questioned if this project was brought to the Council today for the first time with the current scope of work, would this application qualify for TIIF.

Ms. Laws responded with perhaps, but the Council has never had an application for just an entrance, so it is difficult to justify the public benefit with the current plan.

Sen. Walsh agreed that the new plan clearly has no direct benefit to the public, which is a requirement for TIIF Funds and as such he can no longer support it.

Mr. Westcott asked Ms. Laws if they have done enough work for this to be completed by the original expiration date of June 30, 2026.

Ms. Laws answered they have not done any work yet on this project.

Sen. Walsh asked if they had anyone attending the meeting to represent this project.

Ms. Laws responded that there was not anyone in attendance. She had expected a letter or some communication before the meeting. She noted the matter to consider today is to approve or deny the request for extension.

Public Comments: None

Executive Session: None

Mr. Westcott asked for a motion to decline the extension. Mr. Strickland Rep Bush made the motion, and Dr. Nunlee seconded the motion.

Roll call vote was taken:
Mr. Westcott: Decline

Rep. Bush: Decline
Sen. Walsh: Decline
Mr. Strickland: Decline
Dr. Nunlee: Decline
Ms. Johnson: Decline
Ms. Geha: Decline
Mr. Windley: Decline

The motion carried to not extend the grant term for McCormick and Associates of Middletown LLC.

Agenda Item #5: Review of Received TIIF Grant Applications, including Executive Session*, Public Comment and Council Vote

School Bell Crossing – Route 40 LLC

Discussion: Ms. Laws provided a description of the project which includes two warehousing/storage facilities totaling 119,031 square feet on a 10.54-acre site zoned Commercial Regional. Anticipate breaking ground in 2027, completed and fitted out within 12 to 18 months. Site is located within Level 1 State Strategies Investment Area.

Ms. Laws provided a summary of the TIIF Scope of Work based on the DelDOT-approved plans: portion of Vandyke Road at the intersection and within the public right of way; reconstruction of existing daycare entrance to rights-in only off US 40; mill and overlay and widening of shoulder on US 40 to create a bike lane along existing right turn lane; new curb and shared use path along US 40 along the frontage extending east of Vandyke Road; new transit stop with pull-off lane on US 40 east of Vandyke Road; complete signal re-construction at US 40 and School Bell Road including mast arms, signal controller cabinet, and Intelligent Transportation System equipment; drainage and stormwater management related to road widening; signalized pedestrian crossing at Vandyke Road along eastbound US 40; engineering design, contingency, inspection.

Ms. Laws stated that the public endorser for the project is Senator Marie Pinkney, Senate District 13.

Ms. Robinson provided an overview of the applicant's financial stability, noting that the applicant is proposing to hire 49 new full-time employees with an average salary of $45,759.18. When the project is successfully executed, it is projected to increase state and local tax revenue by approximately $243,505.97 annually. The applicant appears to be properly organized and in good standing within the state. A certificate of good standing was provided, along with a valid business license. Additionally, no compliance issues were identified during a review conducted with other state agencies.

Ms. Laws reviewed the performance measures. She stated in summary, the applicant has requested $1,430,000.00.

Mr. Westcott opened the discussion for Council members to ask questions.

Ms. Geha asked what these buildings would be used for.

Mr. Jordan Seemans, Harvey Hanna and Associates, explained that they currently have close to 4 million total square feet of space throughout Delaware and typically receive tenants who use these as manufacturing space, wholesale storage for clients in plumbing and lighting or other electrical fields. We have received a couple of bites from folks already interested in this space even though there is nothing currently on the site. Mr. Seemans introduced his director Thomas Harvey also in attendance to answer questions

Mr. Harvey described the plans for having two separate warehouses, for one or more tenants. With the intersection realignment and the proposed improvements onsite, they successfully leased the previously vacant daycare space, which is a beneficiary of the improvement to the intersection. Mr. Harvey stated that the convenience store pad has been sold. He mentioned that one of the biggest hurdles to securing an end user for the warehouse spaces has been the certainty of these improvements and the timing of them. Once the signal agreement is recorded, he believes this is the final step in providing those assurances to the market, with serious interest from some significant groups who would take all the space that can be delivered. A well-known nonprofit organization is also looking at this space.

Mr. Westcott explained that it's also not atypical that when the applicant comes to the Council, they are generally early in the process and would not have finalized leases in place for the properties.

Mr. Nunlee asked what they based their jobs numbers on, i.e., was this just for a standard warehousing operation, since there seems to be a lot of variability.

Ms. Robinson answered with the types of jobs they are basing their numbers on were shipping and receiving, inventory clerks, industrial truck and tractor operations, stackers, packers, and packagers.

Mr. Nunlee asked what the expected traffic load would be and how that would impact the community.

Ms. Laws explained that this was considered during the entrance plan approval process.

Mr. Westcott opened the discussion for Public Comments

Public Comment:

Dr. Keenan D. Dorsey spoke as the founder and owner of Innovative Kids Early Learning Academy, 614 Pulaski Highway, Bear. He expressed strong support for the School Bell Crossing project, stating that Harvey Hanna has been a great neighbor and communicated the vision and purpose of this project, and he is excited about the improvements that that will be brought to his school community. The current roadway infrastructure around the school is extremely busy and outdated. The traffic signals technology does not properly keep up with the volume of traffic, it causes delays. Unfortunately, this has also created an unsafe condition where frustrated drivers are running the traffic signal and putting his customers at risk. In addition, the congestion during drop-off and pick-

up times has become a major challenge and concern for daycare users, who struggle just to exit the parking lot safely, and parents frequently share that they are late for work, and they must leave much earlier in the morning because of the traffic conditions surrounding the school. Last month, one of my preschool teachers was involved in an accident while attempting to even exit our parking lot. Dr. Dorsey believes this project is more than a roadway improvement, it's an investment for safety, accessibility, and future growth of the school community. Improving the traffic flow, modernizing infrastructure, and creating safer travel conditions for children and their families should be a major priority. He respectfully asked the Council to strongly consider and support the School Bell Crossing project and thanked the Council for their time.

Mr. Wescott closed the Public Comment.

Executive Session: None

Mr. Westcott asked for a motion to approve recommendation of this application. Dr. Nunlee made the motion, and Ms. Johnson seconded the motion.

Roll call vote was taken:
Mr. Westcott: Approved
Rep. Bush: Approved
Sen. Walsh: Approved
Mr. Strickland: Approved
Dr. Nunlee: Approved
Ms. Johnson: Approved
Ms. Geha: Approved
Mr. Windley: Approved

The motion carried to recommend award to the School Bell Crossing – Route 40 LLC in the amount of $1,430,000.00.

Seaford Industrial, LLC

Discussion: Ms. Laws provided a description of the project which includes five warehouse shipping/distribution buildings totaling 204,750 square feet. Site concept indicates future phases to be served by City of Seaford public roads constructed in the first phase. Site is located within a Level 1 State Strategies Investment Area.

Ms. Laws provided a summary of the TIIF Scope of Work, some of which is outlined in the Final TIS Review Letter: new signalized site entrance, including mast arms, signal controller cabinet, and Intelligent Transportation System equipment as fourth leg of intersection with US 13 and Elm Street; widening of north- and southbound US 13 for turn lanes with bike lanes at new signalized entrance; shared use path, ADA-compliant curb ramps, and signalized pedestrian crossings at new signalized entrance; upgraded existing bus stops on US 13 north- and southbound; closure of two median crossovers on US 13 north and south of site; construction of new City-maintained roads, roundabout and pedestrian facilities; engineering design, contingency, inspection.

Ms. Laws stated that the public endorser for the project is Trisha Newcomer, Director of Economic Development, City of Seaford. Ms. Newcomer's letter indicated the city would accept the roads into their maintenance.

Ms. Robinson provided an overview of the applicant's financial stability. The applicant is proposing to hire 173 new full-time employees with an average salary of $57,379.97. When the project is successfully executed, it is projected to increase state and local tax revenue by approximately $1,078,056.90 annually. The applicant appears to be properly organized and in good standing within the state. A certificate of good standing was provided, along with a valid business license. Additionally, no compliance issues were identified during a review conducted with other state agencies.

Ms. Robinson also noted that the applicant was approved for a Site Readiness Grant in January 2025 for this project.

Ms. Robinson reviewed the types of jobs creation proposed by this applicant, which were based on other projects this applicant is doing within the state. These jobs included operations facility manager, process engineer, human resource manager, finance accounting of administration, computer and IT systems manager, sales and business development, warehouse lead, shift supervisor, equipment operator, industrial maintenance tech, shipping and receiving material handler, and facility support janitor.

Ms. Laws reviewed the performance measures. She stated in summary, the applicant has requested $4,101,834.32.

Mr. Westcott opened the discussion for Council members to ask questions.

Sen Walsh asked who the developer is for this project.

Ms. Laws answered Seaford Industrial LLC, which is Bret Davis and Travis Martin.

Sen. Walsh asked who the tenants for this facility would be.

Bret Davis stated that they have no signed leases but are in the process of negotiating on several deals, with the most recent is a possible veteran service center at this site. They are also in talks with a regional financial institution that may be planning to put their first location in Delaware at this site. Mr. Davis stated the primary use of the property will be as a warehouse.

Ms. Geha asked if DelDOT has considered the traffic flow and how the size may affect traffic.

Ms. Laws answered that a Traffic Impact Study was completed for this project and that study looked at how the proposed development is going to impact the existing levels of service at the intersections.

Mr. Nunlee asked if this location could be used as a data center.

Mr. Davis responded that there has been no discussion about a data center, they are focused on warehouse use.

Mr. Martin added that they have been focusing on job creation.

Executive Session: None

Mr. Wescott opened the meeting for Public Comments

Public Comment:

Mr. Charles Anderson, City Manager for the City of Seaford, stated the city has been working with the developer now for well over a year on this project. The city has given its initial preliminary plan approval for this. As stated, they have met all requirements. The north-south road that was referenced in the presentation is a corridor preservation road. With the addition of the signal, transportation improvements, and since the zoning of the property is commercial, the city believes this will fit into well, and the city supports this project.

Mr. Andrew Harton, Sussex County Office of Economic Development, voiced his office's support for this project. These types of developments are essential to be able to attract businesses and provide space for businesses to expand. In Sussex County, there is a common expression in economic development, which is "no product, no project," meaning if there is no place for a business to go, then probably not going to be successful in attracting them. Having completed developments like this is one of the best ways to get a project accomplished "at the speed of business," which is a governor's priority, and his office shares that priority. Mr. Harton also commented on the question regarding a data center, since his office fields those types of inquiries. Sussex County and Kent County do not have the required 500 kilovolt transmission line. The closest one is Delaware City, which is why that data center is probably proposed there.

Mr. Wescott closed the Public Comment.

Mr. Westcott asked for a motion to approve recommendation of this application. Mr. Windley made the motion, and Ms. Johnson seconded the motion.

Roll call vote was taken:
Mr. Westcott: Yes
Rep. Bush: Yes
Sen. Walsh: Yes
Mr. Strickland: Yes
Dr. Nunlee: Yes
Ms. Johnson: Yes
Ms. Geha: Yes
Mr. Windley: Yes

The motion carried to recommend an award to Seaford Industrial LLC in the amount of $4,101,834.32.

Due to time constraints, Ms. Laws asked the Council if they would be willing to change the agenda order and move to the fourth applicant on the agenda, ASPIRA Georgetown OZ Property Management LLC.

Mr. Westcott agreed to move forward on this matter.

ASPIRA Georgetown OZ Property Management LLC

Ms. Laws reminded the Council that this application was discussed at the November meeting and was tabled to seek a legal opinion on this application.

Ms. Laws asked Mr. Westcott and the Council if they felt they needed to review the application again or move forward with the opinion from Counsel.

DAG Lees suggested due to attorney client privilege the Council should go into executive session to discuss.

Executive Session was entered at 11:44 a.m.

Mr. Westcott asked for a motion to leave the Executive Session. Mr. Strickland made the motion, and Mr. Nunlee seconded the motion.

Roll call vote was taken:
Mr. Westcott: Yes
Rep. Bush: Yes
Sen. Walsh: Yes
Mr. Strickland: Yes
Dr. Nunlee: Yes
Ms. Johnson: Yes
Ms. Geha: Yes
Mr. Windley: Yes

Mr. Westcott reconvened the meeting after the Executive Session at 11:56 a.m. and confirmed by roll call that the Council Members were back in the public meeting.

Mr. Westcott opened the meeting for Public Comments.

Public Comments:

Ms. Laws noted that the applicant was in the room and would like to address the Council.

Mr. Daniel Bond, owner of the property, explained that the company that has applied for this grant is a private company and it is a real estate development company and not the school. He stated that a private company is rehabilitating the building for the school. The school will be leasing the property from his LLC. The charter school is unrelated to the applicant, i.e., they will be paying a lease to compensate the developer for the time and money put into the project like any other real estate

development.

Mr. Westcott asked if TIIF funding would be a capital infusion of state money into a charter school.

Ms. Geha commented that it looks like the TIIF money would go into the development of a building. The jobs numbers are based on a charter school, and the charter school could walk away.

DAG Lees pointed out if that were to happen, the job descriptions, payroll and salaries numbers would have to be re-evaluated based upon the new use proposed.

Mr. Westcott asked DAG Lees if this information altered the legal opinion discussed in the Executive Session.

DAG Lees replied that it did not alter the opinion. The employer identified by the applicant as creating jobs still must qualify as a "business or new business" under the TIIF statute, 29 *Del. C.* §8422(a). The purpose of TIIF is to provide economic assistance to attract new businesses or expand existing businesses, so the question becomes, is a charter school a business. And the legal opinion stated in the Executive Session has nothing to do with the merits of the application, but whether it is an appropriate use of the TIIF Funds. Title 14 of the Delaware Code defines a charter school as a public school, not a business.

Mr. Westcott thanked DAG Lees for the clarification.

Mr. Westcott asked for a motion, Ms. Geha made the motion to decline this application based on the entity proposing to create the jobs is not an eligible business, and Ms. Johnson seconded the motion.

Roll call vote was taken:
Mr. Westcott: Decline
Rep. Bush: Decline
Sen. Walsh: Decline
Mr. Strickland: Decline
Dr. Nunlee: Decline
Ms. Johnson: Decline
Ms. Geha: Decline
Mr. Windley: Decline

The motion carried; therefore, the application was not approved for recommendation due to the entity proposing to create jobs is not an eligible business.

Mr. Westcott suggested that we adjourn the meeting due to time constraints on both the Council chair and the legal counsel and asked for a motion to defer the last application to the next Council meeting or a date to be scheduled.

Public Comments:

Mr. Shawn Tucker, Barnes and Thornburg LLC, asked for consideration of another meeting prior to the scheduled August meeting since his client would be very close to construction by that date.

Ms. Laws responded she would try to find a date that the Council could hear this application in the coming weeks.

Agenda Item # 6. Future Meetings

Discussion: Ms. Laws stated that the next submission deadline for TIIF applications is Tuesday, May 26, 2026. The next Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 18, 2026, at 10:30 a.m.

Agenda Item # 7: Adjournment

Ms. Geha moved to adjourn the meeting, and Dr. Nunlee seconded.

Roll call vote was taken:
Mr. Westcott: Yes
Rep. Bush: Yes
Sen. Walsh: Yes
Mr. Strickland: Yes
Dr. Nunlee: Yes
Ms. Johnson: Yes
Ms. Geha: Yes
Mr. Windley: Yes

The meeting was adjourned at 12:24 p.m.

Minutes Prepared by: Lorie Walker, DelDOT Economic Development Coordination
Minutes Reviewed by: Susanne K. Laws, P.E., DelDOT Economic Development Coordination

Approved by TIIF Council on 8/18/2026