

B & I Divisional Meeting Notes

Date: January 8, 2026

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.

Location: Teams

Recorded by: Melanie Wiseman

Attendees

Sharmila Kakac, Laurel Taylor, Michelle Brooks, Jody White, KaRissa Miller, Melanie Wiseman

1. Call to Order

Sharmila Kakac opened the first monthly B&I divisional meeting for 2026.

Sharmila reported that a proposed **Mission & Vision Statement** has been submitted to Dr. Gower for approval. Once approved, the statement will be distributed to all attendees for review.

The purpose of the monthly divisional meeting was reaffirmed:

- Cross-division reporting and collaboration
 - Strategic use of shared resources
 - Emphasis on sustainability and revenue generation
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2. Business & Industry Update

Report by: KaRissa Miller and Sharmila Kakac

Updates on current and upcoming events and trainings included:

- **Economic Development Blueprint Class** at the TLB Workforce Resource Center, covering TIFs, Business Districts, and Strategic Planning for rural communities (25 students currently registered)
- **2026 Non-Credit Grant Award** received by IECC; covered trainings include Lean, Leadership, OSHA, and related topics
- **Mt. Carmel Stabilization** (new client): Excel and Leadership classes launching soon
- **City of Clay City** (new client): Development of OSHA compliance policies and

OSHA training

- **Wabash General Hospital:** Lean/OSHA training scheduled for February
- **Fairfield Memorial Hospital:** Healthcare Lean training scheduled to begin in February
- **Summer Pre-Apprenticeship Program:** An 8-week healthcare pre-apprenticeship in partnership with Fairfield Memorial Hospital, including classroom instruction and departmental rotations
- **Early Childhood Apprenticeship Opportunity** in collaboration with WADI
- **Gas Utility 10-Week Course:** Currently underway and running through March

Additional discussion included:

- Coordination with Laurel Taylor regarding IWT funding eligibility for new mining employees
- Use of Lean training as an upskilling opportunity for employees with approximately six months of tenure

Action Items:

- Sharmila will email IWT criteria and the SkillForge trifold to Laurel Taylor
 - Sharmila will email the résumé of a Lean training instructor to Laurel Taylor
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3. SkillForge Manufacturing Update

Report by: Jody White

Key updates included:

- Purchase of Skill Boss equipment to introduce students to factory floor operations and foundational AC/DC concepts
 - Outreach to Mike Davis regarding engagement with individuals in addiction recovery, probation, and related populations
 - Continued outreach to Criminal Justice and Adult Education students
 - Exploration of future offerings, including Flagger Training and Rigging Training
 - Contact planned with Union (Evansville, IN) for potential student referrals
 - Welding student registration scheduled for January 12, 2026
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4. Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Update

Report by: Michelle Brooks

- Awaiting grant approval for 2026
 - Upon approval, SBDC will offer introductory AI training opportunities
 - Advanced-level AI training opportunities will follow
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5. Workforce Education Update

Report by: Laurel Taylor

- Annual Retraining (ART) underway for coal and aggregate mining sectors
 - Sand & Gravel safety training ongoing
 - Fire and First Aid training for mines scheduled for the current semester
 - Promotion of the Aggregate Mining Certificate with senior graduates
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6. Additional Partnerships

Sharmila reported ongoing coordination with Indiana Oil & Gas and IPRB

- Training dates are being explored for a Safety Day event in April
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7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 a.m.