



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

AV EDGE drives economic growth and retention across the Antelope Valley region through collaboration, advocacy, and business engagement.

Date: Tuesday, July 21, 2026

Time: 8:30 a.m.

- ☒ Suzy Ghazarossian – President
(Arrived 9:20 a.m.)
- ☒ Art Minasyan – Vice President -
Led the meeting
- ☒ Dianne Knippel – Secretary
- ☒ Ben Gocke – Treasurer (Arrived
9:35)
- ☒ Martin Tompkins – Past President
- ☒ Mark Bozigian – Director at Large
- ☐ Theresa Howard – Director at
Large
- ☒ Zach Glynn– EC Member - Palm.
- ☒ Sydney Yeseta – EC Member - Lanc
- ☐ Monica Banken
- ☐ Bob Bowman
- ☒ Ashley Cortes
- ☐ Steven Derryberry
- ☒ Ryan Duke

- ☒ Rob Duchow
- ☒ Matthew Gaines
- ☒ Mark Hemstreet
- ☒ Ricky Jeffords
- ☒ Kathy MacLaren-Gomez
- ☒ Regina Rossall
- ☒ Michelle Royal
- ☒ Karen Sanders
- ☐ David Smith
- ☐ Seffi Toneman
- ☒ Jared Yoshiki
- ☒ Jennifer Zellet

Staff Roll Call

- ☒ Drew Mercy – Executive Director
- ☐ Eric Gamez
- ☒ Leidy Villarreal



1. **Call to Order** : 8:32 a.m. via zoom
2. **Approval of Minutes** : Kathy motioned and Jennifer seconded; approved as presented.
3. **Presentations** - None
4. **Reports**
 - President's Report - Art reported for Suzy thanking those that attended the Aerospace deep dive and the Broker Site Tour and Mixer.
 - Vice President's Report - none
 - Treasurer's Report (including review of financials). Dianne reported from the Exec Council meeting from Ben - revenue is above budget and managing expenses.
 - Executive Director's Report: Projects & MOU Deliverables

Type	MOU Description	Status/Notes
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MOU	1. Lead Generation	We received one new lead, a developer working on a 46-unit affordable and veteran housing project in Lancaster. He had infrastructure questions on the surrounding area. We were able to find the answers he was looking for. As he continues to work with the City, we are keeping in touch and available to assist further. We received support letters from the Cities of Palmdale and Lancaster outlining the type of support they can provide for Skilled Nursing Investors and provided it to the group we are working with. We continue working with our textile industry lead, and hosted introductory meetings with both cities and are following progress there on site identification.
MOU	2. Commercial & Industrial Vacancy Listings	• AV EDGE Region • Active: 327 • New: 26



		• Off Market: 26 • Lancaster • Active: 103 • New: 16 • Off Market: 14 • Palmdale • Active: 85 • New: 3 • Off Market: 8
MOU	3. Economic Development Forums	The Events Committee led an in-person meeting to discuss changes and ideas for the Spring Business Summit and Fall Forum, among other events. We will be including a portion of the day that will be convention style, with the opportunity for sponsors and organizations to purchase booths for information distribution.
MOU	4. Broker Site Events	This event was held July 16 in conjunction with our Broker Mixer. Agenda for the event is attached.
MOU	5. Annual Economic Roundtable Report	N/A
MOU	6. Broker Newsletter	Preparing next issue for release on 7/30.
MOU	7. Business Attraction Task Force (BATF)	We are continuing to work with SNF leads and advocating for healthcare industry incentives to attract investment. This includes medical office space which has limited availability and driven costs up.
MOU	8. Conferences (Industrial/Real Estate)	Upcoming: ICSC Western San Diego, September 14-16 Have not attended this particular event. Last year we determined that rather than the ICSC



		National, we would explore this regional event. Booth/Reception Sponsorship through TeamCal Air & Space Force Procurement Conference by the American Defense Alliance. Aug 3-5, Colorado Springs. Dr. Smith has arranged a speaking opportunity for me and the Conference provides for networking with aerospace contractors and vendors.
MOU	9. Marketing & Publications	N/A
MOU	10. Governance Representation	Lancaster: Sydney Yeseta Palmdale: Zach Glynn
MOU	11. Labor Market Study	Publication Date: Spring 2027 Next Action: Seek economics firm, October 2026
MOU	12. City Meeting Participation	July 7, 2026 – Palmdale City Council presentation was well received with positive feedback from city staff and council. Councilman Loa asked for AV EDGE's help in transitioning Palmdale Blvd ownership from Cal Trans to the City of Palmdale.
MOU	13. Industry Deep Dives	Aerospace Deep Dive held 7/8/2026. Developing report.
MOU	14. Regional Film Industry Engagement	Scheduled for July 30, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Agenda developed in coordination with cities staff and city film liaisons.



MOU	15. Startup & Small Business Support	Complete for this year.
MOU	16. Workforce Development	As part of the in-development report from the Aerospace Deep Dive, we will assign specific tasks to the Workforce Development and Education Committee, and. Next AI Task Force meeting is set for October 8, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. I've been in contact with "AI for Mainstreet" and they've agreed to join and discuss their work with small businesses.
MOU	17. Transportation Advocacy	In addition to following items on the MOU deliverables, we are working with the cities to support transportation grant funding and lobby L.A. County and Metro to refocus efforts on the Center for Transportation Technology Excellence, which is key for job growth opportunities.
MOU	18. Community Calendar	Reaching out to connect additional organizations.
MOU	19. Summary / Key Wins This Month	Successfully hosted the Aerospace Deep Dive, Broker Site Tour and on track to fully meet all MOU deliverables at the end of this month.
MOU	20. Challenges / Needs from MOU Partners	Requesting meeting with our staff, Board, Palmdale and Lancaster to discuss best practices for Lead Development follow-up and each organizations role and responsibilities.
Project	21. Chamber Coordination	Follow up meeting with Chamber staff for co-location discussions.
Fy 26-29 Draft MOU	22. Proposed 3-year draft MOUs	Drew has provided to both cities. This can always be changed. Art mentioned why not 2 or 4 years to coincide with the 2 year



		officers' rotation. Questions came up regarding a 3 year MOU.
	23.	

5. Committee Reports

- A. Healthcare – Chair Ben Gocke. EC Liaison: Mark Bozigian, BoD liaison: Sydney Yeseta. **There is a new Primary Care facility in Palmdale and a new care facility is planned for the old Antelope Valley University site.**
- B. Aerospace – Chair Dr. David Smith. EC Liaison Dianne Knippel, BoD liaison: Michelle Royal - **No report.**
- C. Workforce Development & Education – Co-Chairs Teresa Howard, Van Rider, EC: Liaison Suzy Ghazarossian, BoD liaison: Kathy MacLaren Gomez, Gina Rossall - **no report.**
- D. Legislative – Chair Mark Hemstreet. EC Liaison: Ben Gocke, BoD liaison: Ashley Cortes, Steven Derryberry - **no report**
- E. Infrastructure/Transportation – Chair Matt Gaines. EC Liaison Martin Tompkins
There is some progress on the High Desert Corridor. The Palmdale and Lancaster on and off ramps are almost complete. Cities need to press CalTrans on how soon they will fix roads due to the amount of traffic that had to be diverted on to sides streets based on the 14 construction over the last 3 years.
- F. Event Planning – Chair: Art Minasyan - proposed new committee
- G. Developer-Agency Working Group (Drew Mercy) - committee working with LA County Water Works regarding the fair share formula.

6. Old Business

- A. SWOT Review - see attached from the retreat. Here's a summary:
 - a. Membership has grown from 77 in 2025 to 98 in 2026.
 - b. Good MOU progress - meeting requirements. Initiative aligning with goals.
 - c. Deep Dives are showing gaps that can be addressed.
 - d. Updated committee mission statement to align with the MOUs.
 - e. Launching of the Partnership Program.



7. New Business

- A. Collection and Write off Policy (Ben Gocke) - for next meeting.
- B. Committee Organization (Suzy Ghazarossian) **Per bylaws there was a motion from Martin and a second by Dianne to create the below new committees. Approved as presented.**
1. Growth and Retention Committee - need chair and co-chair.
 2. Event Planning Committee - Art is chair and Jennifer volunteered to co-chair. Sept 10 from 12:00 to 2:30 we will be hosting Kathryn Barger. Invitation only event.
- C. Budget (Ben Gocke). Drew presented the budget for F26-27. **After a detailed review and discussion, Mark motioned and Michele seconded to approve with the following updates: Remove Look Up Communications line item and just call it Marketing and for Mission Bank, keep the \$4K and make a new line item called new banking investment for \$4K. All accepted as presented.**
- D. Policy Papers and Position System (Drew Mercy)

8. Action Items & Deadlines Tracking

- Review of Open Action Items:

Action Item Description	Person Assigned	Due Date	Status/Notes
Chamber Discussions AV EDGE and AV Chamber looked at each other's offices. Neither would accommodate a sharing arrangement. Drew will look to see what may be available for sharing as the lease ends in Nov. 2026. Art mentioned AV	Drew	Ongoing	H. Held first meeting, developed Growth and Retentioned two main ideas for projects.



EDGE can stay month to month if needed. Discussion centered around Ave. M area to be more accessible to Lancaster and Palmdale.			
Aerospace Deep Dive	Drew/Aerospace Committee	7/8/2026 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	Successfully held, developing report.
Film Industry Roundtable	Drew	July 30, 2026 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	Ready for event.

9. Announcements

- Open floor for announcements -None

10. Closed Session

- No closed session scheduled for today

11. Adjournment

- Adjourn the meeting if there are no objections - adjourned 9:52 a.m.

Dates to Remember

- **Spring Business Summit: April 1, 2027, Time TBD**
- **Fall Forum, October 29, 2026, Time TBD**
- Executive Committee Meeting: Second Tuesday, monthly, 8:30 a.m.
- Board of Directors Meeting: Third Tuesday, monthly, 8:30 a.m.
- Joint Legislative Committee Meeting: Second Monday, monthly, 3:00 p.m.
- Transportation & Infrastructure Committee: Fourth Thursday, monthly, 7:30 a.m.



- Healthcare Committee: First Thursday, every other month, 8:30 a.m. (Next: Aug 6, 2026)
- Aerospace Meeting: Second Thursday, every other month, even months, 10:00 a.m. (Next: August 13, 2026)
- Workforce Development & Education Committee: Second Thursday, every other month, odd months, 10:00 a.m. (Next: Resched: August 6, 2026, 10:00 a.m.)