Innovation Center Advisory Panel

Rm115 Whitewater Innovation Center, 1221 Innovation Dr, Whitewater, WI 53190

Monday, November 09, 2026 - 2:30 PM

Citizens are welcome (and encouraged) to join our webinar via computer, smart phone, or telephone. Citizen participation is welcome during topic discussion periods.

Please note that although every effort will be made to provide for virtual participation, unforeseen technical difficulties may prevent this, in which case the meeting may still proceed as long as there is a quorum. Should you wish to make a comment in this situation, you are welcome to call this number: (262) 473-0108.

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join: https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/219988878541168?p=s2VHPrdpnAPWJnGgLK

Meeting ID: 219 988 878 541 168

Passcode: JE2aX6JT

Need help? | System reference

Dial in by phone

+1 929-229-5663,,110549826# United States, New York City

Find a local number

Phone conference ID: 110 549 826#

For organizers: Meeting options | Reset dial-in PIN

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF AGENDA
A committee member can choose to remove an item from the agenda or rearrange its order; however, introducing new items to the agenda is not allowed. Any proposed changes require a motion, a second, and approval from the Committee to be implemented. The agenda shall be approved at each meeting even if no changes are being made at that meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA
Items on the Consent Agenda will be approved together unless any committee member requests that an item be removed for individual consideration.

1. July meeting minutes

HEARING OF CITIZEN COMMENTS

No formal Committee action will be taken during this meeting although issues raised may become a part of a future agenda. Participants are allotted a three minute speaking period. Specific items listed on the agenda may not be discussed at this time; however, citizens are invited to speak to those specific issues at the time the Committee discusses that particular item.

To make a comment during this period, or during any agenda item: On a computer or handheld device, locate the controls on your computer to raise your hand. You may need to move your mouse to see these controls. On a traditional telephone, dial *6 to unmute your phone and dial *9 to raise your hand.

CONSIDERATIONS / DISCUSSIONS / REPORTS

2. Introduction of new Innovation Center Advisory Panel member - Kelsey Price
3. City of Whitewater Update
4. University of Whitewater Update
5. Discussion and possible action: Expansion of the Innovation Center Advisory Panel

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

A quorum of the Common Council may be present. This notice is given to inform the public that no formal action will be taken at this meeting.

Anyone requiring special arrangements is asked to call the Office of the City Manager / City Clerk (262-473-0102) at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Innovation Center Advisory Panel

Meeting Date:	November 9, 2026
Agenda Item:	Memo re Advisory Panel
Staff Contact (name, email, phone):	Mason Becker, mbecker@whitewater-wi.gov, 262.443.4458

BACKGROUND
(Enter the who, what when, where, why)

At our April meeting, we discussed the idea of expanding the Innovation Center Advisory Panel. Expansion allows for inclusion of diverse skill sets—entrepreneurship, venture capital, higher education, industry, workforce development, and government. This diversity leads to more informed decision-making and stronger strategic guidance.

Including members from regional partners (universities, businesses, economic development organizations) strengthens collaboration and positions Whitewater more competitively within the broader innovation ecosystem. This larger group will be a sub-committee and meet after the quarterly advisory panel meetings.

The current MoU between the City of Whitewater and the UWW will need to be amended if the advisory panel expands.

PREVIOUS ACTIONS – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS
(Dates, committees, action taken)

- N/A

FINANCIAL IMPACT
(If none, state N/A)

-

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

- Discussion and recommendation to approve

ATTACHMENT(S) INCLUDED
(If none, state N/A)

Innovation Center Advisory Panel

November 9, 2026

WHITEWATER UNIVERSITY INNOVATION CENTER

Innovation Center Lease Update

- 88.4% occupancy, 11.6% vacancy (approx.)
  - This is lower than the last ICAP meeting
  - This includes a short-term lease in Room 115 which begins in December. Individual signed through Anderson Commercial Group
- Vacant suites:
  - 122, 124, 216, 223
- Blackthorne recently renewed in September
- One new Work Space tenant: Family First Life Insurance
- One additional inquiry on suite lease from a UWW grad received recently through web: Anderson Commercial is following up

Innovation Center Rental Update

- Rental inquiries were steady in Q3 2026. Group meetings, UW-Whitewater related events, etc
- WUSD recently held testing in Room 105. Will occur again in Q1 2027
- Referral through League of Wisconsin Municipalities looking to host larger event in next few months for Wisconsin Department of Revenue
- Generally charging $25.00/hr for rentals of single spaces, $75.00 for use of Conference Room 105 and Atrium

Innovation Center Miscellaneous Work

- Projector in Room 202 was recently replaced with a more modern projector (older one was starting to have issues)
- Would like to revisit having more tenant events in 2027. Tried to schedule one in Fall '26 but there was lack of interest…likely timing issues
- Lavelle will be temporarily using some of the parking in the south lot while completing work on their parking surface across the street

Innovation Advisory Panel – UWW Report: November 9, 2026

Elizabeth Thelen, M.S.

Senior Innovation and Strategy Director

Powered by the spirit of innovation!



Innovation Advisory Panel - Agenda

Agenda items:

- IAP Advisory Ambassadors
- Updates
  - Student connections
  - Resources
  - Events / Meetings / Programs
  - MOU
- UWW - Driving Innovation
- Community Impact
- What else?
- Next meeting – Q1 2027



Innovation Advisory Panel - Ambassadors

IAP Advisory Ambassadors

- Strategic Guidance: Stress-testing long-term plans, identifying blind spots, exploring new markets, and acting as a sounding board to navigate challenges.
- Networking: Opening doors to new investors, partners, or industry specialists.
- Advocacy: Promoting the organization to leverage credibility and shape its public image
- Who?
  - Student = Haley Kahl
  - Park Tenants = EWM, Kay Grahler; Summerset Marine, Jenny Krempien
  - Center Tenant = iButton, Jake Marshall; JH Group, Jhiehelle Kistle
  - Local Business = Sweet Spot, Elena Gildemeister
  - Business Resource = SBDC, Jason Schleip



Innovation Advisory Panel – UWW Pilot project

Driving innovation

- Pilot project: Race car, event, social media
- What's next?



Innovation Advisory Panel - Events

Resources

- SBDC: Fully staffed and very active
- Assistance any time of day: email thelene@uww.edu
- Referrals 24x7: email, text, call
- Executive in Residence – Strategy, AI



Programs / Events / Meetings - @ Innovation Center

- Meet-ups
  - Q1 = AI with Chamber
  - Q3 = Design Thinking
  - Q4 = Lightcast Report – date coming
- September 17: Founders Factory event
- Podcast: Driving Innovation
- Various UWW meetings
- Nov/Dec: combine Meet-up with Holidays (Thanksgiving/Christmas/New Years)

Memberships:

- Wisconsin Tech Council - shared
- Industry: BioForward, FaB, Water Council, WMC, Great Lakes Fusion Coalition, Wisconsin Games Alliance, WI IOT Alliance

Marketing

- Social Media – combine topics + news + tags
- Newsletter
- Digital Board
- Podcast – send ideas

Community Impact

- Connections
- Convening

What else?

- AI Ethics panel discussion
- AI in the Workforce (WTC and WCEDA)
- What type of businesses does Whitewater need/want more of?



UWW – *the spirit of innovation is alive!*





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