

ALMAGUIN COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ACED)

MINUTES June 29, 2023

A regular meeting of the ACED Board was held at the Township of Strong Office and virtually on June 29, 2023 at 6:00pm.

Present: Wendy Whitwell, Township of Armour, Chair
Joe Lumley, Township of Perry
Anthony Rizzo, AHCC Representative
Dan Robertson, Township of Ryerson
Chris Nicholson, Township of Joly
Justine Leveque, Village of Sundridge
Tim Bryson, Township of Strong
Brenda Scott, Village of South River
Luke Preston, RTO12

Regrets: Jennifer Farquhar, AHCC Representative
Margaret Ann MacPhail, Township of Perry
Chris Hope, Village of Burk's Falls
Ron Begin, FedNor
Trista Porter, MND

Staff: Dave Gray, Director of Economic Development
Courtney Metcalf, Economic Development Officer
Sarah Cooke, Communications Officer
John Theriault, Township of Armour

Guests: Rod Ward, Township of Armour
Martina Bezzoto

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Thursday May 25, 2023 meeting were adopted as amended.

Round Table Introductions

New members and guests at the table were introduced.

Director's Report

The Director covered the following items from the report:

1. An update on core activity tracking, which lists what the department has done over the past month. These included business assistance, marketing, ACED website updates, social media activities, and communications.
2. Some of the updates in the report included:
 - a) BR&E Survey – Three interviews completed. Working to develop a phone script for beginning a general business outreach initiative.
 - b) Business Support Events – Lack of registrations caused the cancellation of the scheduled employer workshop.
 - c) AHCC Partnerships – Staff attended the Community Guide launch party, which was well attended.
 - d) Municipal Support – Staff attended the May 29th, 2023 McMurrich/Monteith Strategic Planning Committee. The Committee forwarded a resolution to the McMurrich/Monteith Council recommending ACED membership. The Township of Armour requested support in applying for funding through the CMHC Housing Accelerator Fund.
 - e) Transportation – Carpool Almaguin Campaign has been launched. A webpage has been developed, a social media post was done and the Almaguin News will be doing an article on this program.

Staff has been gathering information of the use of the Village of Burk's Falls bus. ACED discussed the bussing issue.
 - f) Brand Strategy Implementation – Staff have developed a draft webpage specific to the Brand Ambassador program. Staff have been scheduling and attending various business interviews for business promotion videos. KJCO has created a brand Ambassador partnership framework and an MOU for formalize linkages between brand partners and ACED. Currently have 20 Brand Ambassadors signed up. KJCO has redesigned the Almaguin Marketing partnership (AMP) program. Three applications to this program are in the works.
 - g) Internship Application – Internship application has been approved and a new Communications Officer started with ACED.
 - h) Story-Telling Partnership – ACED, in partnership with Almaguin Libraries, aims to connect people with the land and history of the area.

The information will be collected and shared through story-telling nights and on the ACED website.

- i) Withdrawal from ACED – The Township of Ryerson has sent a resolution to ACED advising that they are withdrawing from ACED.

Housing Task Force

Since the creation of a Regional Task Force on housing has been supported by a majority of the ACED partners, ACED passed a resolution to create the task force and request members from different interested groups.

The Board had a discussion on the Terms of Reference presented by ACED staff for the creation of a Housing task Force. The Board requested that all partners review the Terms of Reference and forward any comments to staff for review and amendment(s), if necessary. The Terms of Reference will be brought back to the Board at their next meeting for discussion and approval.

FedNor CIINO Application

Phase 1 of the application for FedNor continued funding for ACED has been approved. Staff is preparing the Phase 2 application.

The Board had a discussion on what services should be provided to municipalities which do not contribute to ACED. At the present time, the CIINO grant is based on giving services to all of the municipalities whether they contribute or not. The discussion included the possibility of applying for a CIINO grant which would only apply to contributing partners. The Board was advised that if we forwarded an application which would only apply to contributing partners, there is a possibility that the grant would not be approved. The Board did not direct staff to change the way they are applying for the CIINO grant.

There was also a request that ACED publish which municipalities are serviced by ACED and which municipalities contribute to ACED. The Board did not give staff direction on this item.

Updates

Explorer's Edge

Explorers Edge will be doing a formal presentation on a Catalyst Housing Project at the next ACED meeting. Their partnership program still accepting applications. The Big Applause Award Program has wrapped up, it provided recognition to students nominated for their contributions in tourism. Members were invited to attend the Explorer's Edge annual general meeting to be held in Gravenhurst on Wednesday September 20, 2023.

Resolutions

1. 2023-18 – Moved by Justine Leveque; Seconded by Dan Robertson;

Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board approve the minutes of May 25, 2023, as amended Carried

2. 2023-19 – Moved by Anthony Rizzo; Seconded by Tim Bryson;
WHEREAS The Almaguin Community Economic Development Board forwarded a recommendation to Member Councils and the Almaguin Chamber of Commerce to consider the formation of a regional housing task force;
AND WHEREAS five members municipal councils have passed a resolution indicating their interest in the establishment of this task force, with others anticipated in doing the same;
NOW THEREFORE be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board form an ad-hoc Almaguin Regional Housing Task Force and call for supporting municipalities to appoint staff and/or council representatives. Furthermore, that the Board direct staff to reach out to relevant regional stakeholders, such as senior level government contacts, developers, PDSSAB, large employers and others to request their engagement in this initiative. It is also recommended that the Board set a date for an inaugural meeting, for which, staff will create an introductory agenda. Carried

Adjournment

3. 2023-20 – Moved by Justine Leveque; Seconded by Chris Nicholson;
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board adjourn the June 29 2023, ACED meeting at 7:32 p.m. Carried

The next meeting will be Thursday July 27, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. If these changes, members will be advised.