

# **ALMAGUIN COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ACED)**

## **MINUTES August 24, 2023**

A regular meeting of the ACED Board was held at the Township of Strong Office and virtually on August 24, 2023 at 6:00pm.

Present: Wendy Whitwell, Township of Armour, Chair  
Jennifer Farquhar, AHCC Representative  
Dan Robertson, Township of Ryerson  
Margaret Ann MacPhail, Township of Perry  
Justine Leveque, Village of Sundridge  
Chris Hope, Village of Burk's Falls  
Tim Bryson, Township of Strong  
Chris Nicholson, Township of Joly  
Brenda Scott, Village of South River  
Ron Begin, FedNor

Regrets: Trista Porter, MND  
Luke Preston, RTO12

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  
Sheri Norman, AHCC Director  
Joe Lumley, Township of Perry  
Lucie Perreault, FedNor  
Sarah Bissonette, Almaguin News

### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of Thursday, July 27, 2023 meeting were adopted as presented.

### **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 – Business outreach continues, to date 50 businesses have been contacted and 10 surveys have been sent out.
  - b) Municipal Support – Working with the Township of Armour on a Housing Accelerator Fund application and working with McMurrich/Monteith to identify funding opportunities.
  - c) Long Term Housing – Housing Task Force – A list of persons to be on the task force has been compiled and a resolution was passed by the Board to approve the nominations. The first meeting should be held the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> week of September.
  - d) Transportation – Carpool Almaguin Campaign continues. Staff have launched a survey to track the effectiveness of the program. So far 12 responses have been received. A report will be coming to the Board at the next ACED meeting.

The first meeting of the community bus partnership will be held on Tuesday September 12 @ 10:00 am at the Burk's Falls council chambers. All interested parties are encouraged to forward questions or comments to the Director of Economic Development by September 5.

- e) Brand Strategy Implementation – Three new articles have been written and posted on the ACED website. The Communications Officer is planning more content to increase traffic to the Explore Almaguin website. Videography and photography is continuing as per the contract. The Brand Ambassador Program is gaining support and has 38 ambassadors who have registered. To date we have received 6 applications to the Almaguin Marketing Partnership. Social media accounts are doing well in promoting the region.
- f) Story-Telling Partnership – Staff is helping the Powassan Library with their “Remembering and Recording History” event.
- g) FedNor CIINO Renewal – Phase 2 CIINO renewal has been sent to FedNor for review and comment. We have received 5 resolution of support from municipalities and 4 letters of support from organizations.

- h) RED Gala – Gala Planning Committee met in August. The new Perry Community Centre has been booked for this event. A speaker has also been booked. Presently looking at quotes for the catering. A discussion was held on the appropriateness of using public funds for an invite-only corporate event and the possibility of transitioning this event into an annual ACED trade show or similar event.
- i) Explorers Edge Marketing Partnership – Staff are currently working on developing a content marketing partnership through the Explorers Edge Partnership Program to promote opportunities for paddling and fishing in Almaguin.

Change of Federal & Provincial Riding Name – The Board had a discussion on the possibility of lobbying the Federal and Provincial Governments to change the name of the ridings to include Almaguin as a separate entity. No direction was given to staff to pursue this change.

### **Roundtable Comments**

Comments were made applauding the use of TikTok to promote our region.

The Board was advised that the Village of Burk's Falls is looking at creating a Theater Committee which would work to revitalize the village cinema hoping to increase its use and to have live performances held there.

### **Updates**

#### FedNor

Lucy Perreault, Director at FedNor attended the meeting with Ron Begin. Although money is tighter than last year, FedNor is still accepting applications for funding. If you have a project, contact FedNor to discuss it.

A new tourism funding program will be initiated in the near future.

#### Explorer's Edge

Fuel and Fun program is up and running. The program provides incentive vouchers to local businesses when a two-night stay is booked at participating accommodations.

The Explorer's Edge Tourism summit is coming up and will be held at the Muskoka Discovery Centre in Bracebridge on September 20, 2023.

### **Resolutions**

1. 2023-26 – Moved by Margaret Ann McPhail; Seconded by Sheri Norman;  
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board approve the minutes of July 27, 2023, as circulated. Carried
2. 2023-27 – Moved by Justine Leveque; Seconded by Margaret Ann McPhail;

Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board accept the members recommended from the Village of South River, Village of Sundridge and the Township of Armour for the Almaguin Housing task Force. Carried

Adjournment

3. 2023-28 – Moved by Tim Bryson; Seconded by Chris Nicholson;  
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board adjourn the August 24, 2023, ACED meeting at 7:21 p.m. Carried

The next meeting will be Thursday, September 28, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. If these changes, members will be advised.