

ALMAGUIN COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ACED)

MINUTES September 28, 2023

A regular meeting of the ACED Board was held at the Township of Strong Office and virtually on September 28, 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
Luke Preston, RTO12

Regrets: 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
Charlie Hall
Joe Lumley, Township of Perry

Call to Order

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

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Thursday, August 24, 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 – 3 more surveys were completed. To date over 100 businesses contacted. This project should be completed by the end of 2023.
 - b) Municipal Support – Completed and submitted Housing Accelerator Fund application for the Township of Armour.
 - c) Long Term Housing – Housing Task Force – First meeting held on September 27, 2023. The DoED provided a verbal report on the meeting. The Task Force set the executive team and will submit the top 5 recommendations to help housing to the Province. A resolution was passed to approve the proposed members from Perry to be added to the Housing Task Force.
 - d) Transportation – Carpool Almaguin survey results have been finalized. More information has been requested by the public for this program. Need to spread the word about this program.

The first meeting of the community bus partnership was held on Tuesday September 12 @ 10:00 am at the Burk's Falls council chambers. Staff is preparing a Almaguin specific survey on the needs of residents.

- e) Brand Strategy Implementation – Four new content pieces have been written since the last report. These will help spread the word on the brand strategy. Finalizing photoshoots and waiting to receive the tourism and business videos for the RED Gala. One more business has signed on for the Brand Ambassador program. Focus is now to engage the existing Brand Ambassadors and keep the program running. To date 3 AMP projects have been completed and another 5 applications have been approved. 2 more applications have been received but not yet approved.
- f) FedNor CIINO Renewal – The new CIINO grant has been approved for 2024.
- g) RED Gala – A caterer has been chosen for this event and the business panel was finalized. Next, send out event invitations. Budget for this event was presented. This event will be held at the new Emsdale Community Centre.

- h) 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. In order to write a tourism article, the Communications Officer participated in an Almaguin Adventure weekend.
- i) October Meeting Status – Because of the RED Gala, staff is requesting that the Board consider the October meeting be called only if needed. The Board agreed to cancel the October 2023 meeting.

Roundtable Comments

There was a discussion concerning the South River Train Station. The Historical Society has started renovations to the building, but with the station now being put back into operation, an application was made to NOHFC & FedNor to update the train station. They are asking for letters of support to help with these applications. They have already been approved for \$189,000 from NOHFC.

Updates

FedNor

The new tourism funding program was released in October 2023. The program has \$5,000,000 in funds to allocate to non-profit and private sector for tourism projects.

Explorer's Edge

A summit was held on September 20, 2023 with 100 people registered and 75 attendees. Some awards were presented at the summit. They discussed housing and development projects. In partnership with ACED, creating stories of Almaguin to promote the area. Luke is enjoying his new role and connecting with operators.

Resolutions

1. 2023-29 – Moved by Tim Bryson; Seconded by Jennifer Farquhar;
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board approve the minutes of August 24, 2023, as circulated. Carried
2. 2023-30 – Moved by Margaret Ann MacPhail; Seconded by Dan Robertson;
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board accept the members recommended from the Township of Perry for the Almaguin Housing Task Force. (Joe Lumley and Paul Sowrey) Carried

Adjournment

3. 2023-31 – Moved by Chris Hope; Seconded by Justine Leveque;
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board adjourn the September 28, 2023, ACED meeting at 6:54 p.m. Carried

The next meeting will be Thursday, November 23, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. If this changes, members will be advised.