

# ALMAGUIN COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ACED)

## MINUTES February 22, 2024

A regular meeting of the ACED Board was held at the Township of Strong Office and virtually on February 22, 2024 at 6:00pm.

Present: Margaret Ann MacPhail, Township of Perry, Chair  
Wendy Whitwell, Township of Armour  
Sheri Norman, AHCC Representative  
Dan Robertson, Township of Ryerson  
Justine Leveque, Village of Sundridge  
Tim Bryson, Township of Strong  
Chris Nicholson, Township of Joly  
Brenda Scott, Village of South River  
Trista Porter, MND  
Ron Begin, FedNor

Regrets: Jennifer Farquhar, AHCC Representative  
Chris Hope, Village of Burk's Falls

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  
Vicky Roeder-Martin, Township of McMurrich/Monteith

### **Call to Order**

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

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of Thursday, January 25, 2024 meeting were adopted as presented.

### **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.

The Board had a discussion on the definition of “Red Flag” in the core tracking activities. Some board members felt it had a negative connotation. The Board decided to change the name to “High Priority”.

2. Some of the updates in the report included:

- a) AHCC Partnerships – Staff has attended two meetings and are contributing to the 2024/2025 Guide. Assisting with online and print maps.
- b) Regional Recreation & Municipal Support – Helping Heritage festival with grant application. Assisting Village of South River with a community engagement survey.
- c) Long Term Housing – Housing Task Force – Fourth meeting was held. Reviewed data provided by PSDSSAB and other data sets. Reviewed AI generated recommendations for rural communities. Will be establishing a preliminary set of priority recommendations.
- d) Transportation – Almaguin Community Bus survey has been completed and results are attached to agenda. Looking at instituting a pilot program and finding funding for it.
- e) Brand Strategy Implementation – This project is progressing with several actions taken on the website, social media, photography and videography, the Ambassador Program and the AMP program.
- f) Tourism Promotion – ACED will be attending the Cottage Life Show with the support of the Brand Ambassadors. Some businesses will join ACED at their booth.
- g) Shop in Almaguin Campaign – The 2023 Christmas Shop Local Campaign was a resounding success with 55 businesses participating and 5,927 ballots being filled by customers.
- h) Physical Brand Roll Out – Staff will complete the necessary pre-project planning in 2024 and apply for funding in 2025 to implement this program.
- i) 2024 EDCO Conference – Staff attended the conference and several sessions and technologies discussed created some possible opportunities which will be investigated.
- j) ACED Sustainability – ACED new fees and charges have been added to the Township of Armour’s Fee By-law. Copy of the fees will be added to the ACED website.

The Delegation team has visited five of the six non-ACED member municipalities and will receive a decision from each in the near future. A verbal report was given by a member of the delegation.

The Director advised the Board that he has been contacted by an organization which would like ACED to explore an “Algonquin West Experiences” concept for marketing to potential visitors. The Board discussed this proposal and its potential impact on ACED’s current workplan as well as its momentum with current branding efforts. The Board directed the Director to handle this proposal as he sees fit so long as it does not require significant time and/or resources.

### **2024 ACED Department Draft Work Plan**

The Board reviewed and discussed the ACED 2024 Work Plan and passed a resolution requesting that it be circulated to all partners for review and comment. The plan may be amended during 2024 depending on circumstances.

### **Roundtable Comments**

The Board was advised that the Village of South River has been awarded a \$400,000 grant to renovate the train station, a \$400,000 grant to renovate the arena, \$3,000,000 grant for water lines and a \$150,000 grant to build a walking trail.

The Burk’s Falls Health Team was awarded a \$250,000 primary care permanent grant and the Sundridge & District Medical Team was awarded a \$320,000 primary permanent care grant. There were only four of these grants allocated in the Province. We received these grants because they cover 10 municipalities who support the teams.

The Township of Armour also received two grants for the renovation of the Katrine Community Centre and the construction of a storage building the Watt Farm Century Heritage Centre.

### **Updates**

#### FedNor

Ron Begin will be away for a few months and he replacement met with ACED staff. FedNor is presently pushing for the year-end.

#### MND

No new programs at this time, but if anyone wishes to use the programs already in place please contact MND.

### **Resolutions**

1. 2024-04 – Moved by Tim Bryson; Seconded by Justine Leveque;  
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board approve the January 25, 2024 meeting minutes, as circulated. Carried

2. 2024-05 – Moved by Tim Bryson; Seconded by Sheri Norman;  
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board have received and reviewed the 2024 ACED Department Work Plan. Furthermore, the Board requests that all members circulate the plan to their respective councils/boards for their review. The Board recognizes that the plan may be amended due to the identification of new shared priorities related to new member on-boarding or other situational factors. Carried

#### Adjournment

3. 2024-06 – Moved by Justine Leveque; Seconded by Wendy Whitwell;  
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board adjourn the February 22, 2024, ACED meeting at 7:00 p.m. Carried

The next meeting will be Thursday, March 28, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. If this change, members will be advised.