

ALMAGUIN COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ACED)

MINUTES April 23, 2024

A regular meeting of the ACED Board was held at the Township of Strong Office and virtually on April 25, 2024 at 6:00pm.

Present: Wendy Whitwell, Township of Armour, Chair
Margaret Ann MacPhail, Township of Perry
Sheri Norman, AHCC Representative
Dan Robertson, Township of Ryerson
Justine Leveque, Village of Sundridge
Tim Bryson, Township of Strong
Chris Nicholson, Township of Joly
Jennifer Farquhar, AHCC Representative
Chris Hope, Village of Burk's Falls

Regrets: Brenda Scott, Village of South River
Trista Porter, MND
Ron Begin, FedNor

Staff: Dave Gray, Director of Economic Development
Courtney Metcalf, Economic Development Officer
Sarah Cooke, Communications Officer

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, February 22, 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.

2. Some of the updates in the report included:

- a) AHCC Partnerships – A draft regional map with public access points of interest was shown to the Board. The map will take up the centrefold advertising location in the 2024/2025 AHCC Visitor Guide. Writing articles to contribute to the guide. New Executive Director started, working out of the ACED office.
- b) Regional Recreation & Municipal Support – Assisted Village of South River with a community engagement survey and the promotion of expressions of interest for the Happy Landing facility. Revised a grant application for the Historical Society.
- c) Long Term Housing – Housing Task Force – A meeting was held on April 25, 2024. ACED staff prepared a draft initiative overview and recommendation summary. Recommendations and next steps were discussed. Staff suggested the creation of a housing needs and satisfaction survey targeting the Almaguin Region; the Board was in favour of the survey.
- d) Transportation – ACED staff have developed a draft community report which was circulated to the committee for review and comment. At this time, municipal support will be required before moving forward on this project.
- e) AHSS Student Engagement – A life skills workshop was created for Grade 12 students to learn some skills before graduation. The workshop was well received and there is interest in continuing it in the future. There will be no presentation this year about the Summer Company Program, but a survey will be circulated to have year to year comparable data.
- f) Brand Strategy Implementation – Reviewing the results for the “Spotlight Almaguin Project”. Results will be published. Both grants for the brand strategy implementation have been extended so that all of the money for this project can be allocated.

The Explore Almaguin website is being well used. Presently working on a web developer to get a pop-up sign-up form.

Still waiting for 2 finalized videos to promote our region. The spring/summer promotional video has been posted and has been well received.

Following the Spring Cottage Life Show, ACED staff will gather feedback from participating businesses and evaluate if there is interest in continued participation on this Show.

There are currently two outstanding approved projects for the Almaguin Marketing Partnership. Staff will be supporting the scheduling of this project in the near future.

A brand strategy media push will be run between March and September 2024.

- g) Tourism Promotion – The Cottage Life Show was held between March 21 and 24, 2024. A full report will be presented to the Board at the next meeting.

Roundtable Comments

It was requested that the email newsletter that went out to businesses also be sent to Councillors to keep them updated on ACED projects.

Resolutions

1. 2024-07 – Moved by Chris Nicholson; Seconded by Tim Bryson;
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board approve the February 22, 2024 meeting minutes, as circulated. Carried

Adjournment

2. 2024-08 – Moved by Tim Bryson Seconded by Jennifer Farquhar;
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board adjourn the April 25, 2024, ACED meeting at 7:15 p.m. Carried

The next meeting will be Thursday, May 23, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. If this change, members will be advised.