

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

## **MINUTES May 27, 2020**

A virtual meeting based at the Armour Municipal Office on May 27, 2020 at 6:00 pm.

Present: Tim Bryson, Township of Joly  
Wendy Whitwell, Township of Armour  
Kelly Elik, Township of Strong  
Jennifer Farquhar, AHCC Representative  
Brenda Scott, Village of South River  
Celia Finley, Township of Ryerson  
Margaret Ann MacPhail, Township of Perry  
Melanie Atkins, MENDM  
Tim Brunton, Township of Magnetawan  
Ron Begin, FedNor

Regrets: Barb Belrose, Village of Sundridge  
Lewis Hodgson, Village of Burk's Falls  
Peter McIsaac, Municipality of Powassan

Staff: Dave Gray, Director of Economic Development  
John Theriault, Township of Armour  
Courtney Metcalf, Economic Development Officer  
Nicky Kunkel, Village of Burk's Falls

### **Call to Order**

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

### **Point of Order**

A concern was raised by a Board member that there were three people together at the meeting which were barely six (6) feet apart and not wearing masks.

### **Minutes**

That the minutes of Monday April 20, 2020 meeting were adopted as circulated.

### **Director of Economic Development (DED) Report**

#### **Core Activity Tracking**

The DED updated the Board on the visits and contacts he has had over the past month. Tracked business interaction reflect initiatives focusing on the COVID-19 pandemic. The DED reported that there has been less interactions focused on expansion and start ups.

## **Director of Economic Development Report (DED) cont'd**

### Projects

The DED gave an update on the Almaguin Harvest Spin, the Almaguin Delivery Program and the enhancements for the ACED website.

### Upcoming CMO Projects

The CMO is presently working on the Almaguin Harvest Spin project, the Almaguin Highlands Tourism website, the COVID-19 Digital Pivot Business Support and the Almaguin Highlands Visitor Guide article.

### Business Retention and Expansion & Supply Chain mapping

The project is being shifted to a virtual meeting format. The next steps are forward the BR&E/Supply Chain Mapping exercise to operators and schedule meetings.

### Broadband Enhancement Advocacy

The need for broadband enhancement in the North has been communicated to senior governments.

### Accommodation Guide Publication

ACED is looking at creating 50 print copies of the Almaguin Accommodations guide for distribution.

### Asset Inventory Update

Uploading of commercial properties is complete. Reviewing new listings. Listings will be added as they are gathered.

### Business Support Events

ACED team will support the AHCC teleconference-based support forum with event marketing, digital pivoting and the delivery program, etc.

### Web Strategy & Enhancement

Creation of static community profiles to replace the Townfolio community profile and upgrading the theme for the AHT website to allow increased functionality.

### Digital Main Street Update

ACED is continuing this project and helping businesses get more online.

### Almaguin Harvest Spin Update

Next steps are creating an emergency management plan, revising the marketing plan, continuing with tentative booking and partnership development and ordering materials.

### Agricultural and Culinary Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

RFP is closed, we received 7 proposals, only one within budget. A recommendation will be coming forward at the Board's next meeting.

## **Director of Economic Development Report cont'd**

### **COVID-19 Response Activities**

Updating the COVID-19 resources page and weekly emails are being sent to businesses to provide updates. The Board reviewed the results of the Almaguin Business Outreach COVID-19 survey and passed a resolution to approve it.

### **Almaguin Delivery & Subsidy Project**

An update on the programs progress was given to the Board.

### **Digital Pivoting Cheat Sheet**

ACED is curating tools that support businesses in adopting technology to connect and transact with their clients and customers.

## **2020 ACED Budget**

The Board was advised that the 2020 draft budget approved by the Board was not approved by a majority of the municipalities. A revised budget with contributions of \$10,000 per share was presented. A report was also presented outlining the consequences of not funding ACED properly. The Board discussed the budget, many issues were raised. The Board passed a resolution recommending its approval by each partner. Some partners are willing to pay more than their \$10,000 share. If a partner wishes to pay more, the Administrating municipality will need a resolution from each of these partners agreeing to pay a larger share to enhance the bottom line of the budget.

## **Updates**

### **FedNor**

Ron Begin advised that \$24,000,000 has been added to their budget to help during COVID-19. This funding is to be directed to non-profit organizations which work for the betterment of businesses.

### **NOHFC**

NOHFC is trying to support businesses during these hard times. There are many resources online. NOHFC has halted the review of their programs they had started. There will be no changes tot heir programs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Other Business**

The Director of Economic Development advised the Board that NECO has some funds available to help businesses during the pandemic. He has submitted a draft proposal in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to request funds for projects including Digital Main Street and PPE micro grants for businesses and contributions for the current delivery program.

## **Resolutions**

1. 2020-013 - Moved by Kelly Elik; Seconded by Margaret Ann MacPhail;

Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board approve the minutes of April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, as circulated. Carried

**Resolutions cont'd**

- 2. 2020-014 - Moved by Wendy Whitwell; Seconded by Jennifer Farquhar;  
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board receive the Almaguin Highlands COVID-19 Business Outreach Survey report. The ACED Board recommends the creation of a Regional Economic Recovery Task Force that will encourage regional participation in the creation of a COVID-19 recovery plan. The Board recommends that Councils consider appointing representatives (municipal, business or community) to participate in the task force. Carried
  
- 3. 2020-014 - Moved by Wendy Whitwell; Seconded by Jennifer Farquhar;  
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board approve the amended 2020 ACED budget with a contribution of \$10,000 per partner except for one contribution of \$5,000. Furthermore, if a partner wishes to contribute more than \$10,000 to the budget in order to enhance it, that each of these partners provide a resolution to be forwarded to the administrating municipality advising of the amount they are willing to contribute.

Recorded vote:

Wendy Whitwell, Township of Armour	Yes
Kelly Elik, Township of Strong	Yes
Jennifer Farquhar, AHCC Representative	Yes
Brenda Scott, Village of South River	Yes
Celia Finley, Township of Ryerson	Yes
Margaret Ann MacPhail, Township of Perry	Yes
Tim Brunton, Municipality of Magnetawan	Yes
Tim Bryson, Township of Joly	Yes

Carried

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

The next meeting will be June 15, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. If this changes, members will be advised.