

ALMAGUIN COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ACED)

MINUTES December 7, 2020

A regular meeting of the ACED Board was held at the Township of Strong Municipal Office on December 7, 2020 at 6:00 pm.

Present: Tim Bryson, Township of Joly, Chair
Wendy Whitwell, Township of Armour
Kelly Elik, Township of Strong
Jennifer Farquhar, AHCC Representative
Barb Belrose, Village of Sundridge
Margaret Ann MacPhail, Township of Perry
Melanie Alkins, MENDM
Delynne Patterson, Township of Ryerson
Brenda Scott, Village of South River
Ron Begin, FedNor
Tim Brunton, Municipality of Magnetawan
John Wilson, Village of Burk's Falls

Regrets: Peter McIsaac, Municipality of Powassan

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

Call to Order

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

Minutes

That the minutes of Monday, October 19, 2020 meeting were adopted as circulated.

Director of Economic Development (DED) Report

The ACED Board reviewed the November report from the Director of Economic Development.

The Director covered the following items from the report;

1. The Director spoke to the recent announcements regarding the Universal Broadband Fund. Blue Sky Net has made an application for funding which was supported by the Board.

2. Employment North, in collaboration with The Labour Market and ACED, has hosted a series of virtual job fairs to help connect job seekers with employers.
3. The consultant for the Regional Brand Strategy project has provided a Phase 1 report which was discussed by the Board. ACED was asked to reach out to the partners to request existing municipal reports. The project is now in phase 3.
4. Digital Main Street 2.0 has reached out to businesses to see who can make use of the program. The deadline for grant applications was amended from November 30 to December 15, 2020.
5. The Board received the final report for the Agriculture and Culinary Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.
6. An update was given on the Great Taste of Ontario Road Trip project.
7. The Board reviewed a report of the 2021 revised draft budget for the ACED Department. The budget was discussed by the board and a resolution was passed recommending approval by the partners.
8. The Board discussed the possibility of having a surplus for 2020 and passed a resolution approving that the 2020 surplus remain in the ACED books to fund future initiatives.
9. The Director pointed out that ACED seeking updates regarding the status of Carpool Almaguin locations and looking at transportation options.
10. The Director clarified the partnership with Explorer's Edge on the snowmobile article promotion. The Director is currently working to establish an agreement for 2020/2021 article promotion.
11. The Board reviewed a report from the Director of Economic Development on the hiring process which was used to fill the position of Economic Development Officer. The position was offered and accepted by the chosen candidate. The Director discussed the hiring of an Administrative Assistant to cover a one year leave of absence for the Economic Development Officer.
12. The Board reviewed and discussed the 2021 draft work plan for the Economic Development Department. The Board requested some amendments to the plan. Amendments will be completed, and the plan will be sent to board members. The Director requested that all municipalities review the plan with council as well as present any municipally specific economic development projects for consideration.

Updates

FedNor

FedNor was awarded another 2.6 million in funding from the Federal Government, but they already have enough applications to award this funding. FedNor may get more funds in the near future so if anyone is thinking about applying for funds please do so.

NOHFC

NOHFC is presently evaluating the applications they have received, but programs are on pause waiting for more funding. Because employees are working from home it takes more time to secure decisions.

Other Business

It is recommended to Board members that, not only the minutes of the ACED Board meetings be presented to each partner, but that the Director's report be presented and, if necessary, explained to each partner. This will enhance the communication with each partner and make everyone aware of what the Economic Development Department is doing for the area.

Resolutions

1. 2020-039 – Moved by Margaret Ann MacPhail; Seconded by Wendy Whitwell;
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board approve the minutes of October 19, 2020, as circulated. Carried
2. 2020-040 – Moved by Barb Belrose; Seconded by Wendy Whitwell;
WHEREAS the adjustment of the claimed expenses noted in the November 9th Staff Report in addition to projected savings in staff wages and benefits in 2020 have created a budget surplus;
AND WHEREAS when the CIINO funding is depleted the contribution of each partner will have to increase to cover the funds we no longer receive;
AND WHEREAS putting funds aside now will decrease the effect of receiving less funding or not receiving any funding in the future;
NOW THEREFORE the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board approves that any 2020 surplus funds remain as a surplus in the ACED books to be used to support future strategic initiatives or to subsidize contributions from the partners when the CIINO grant is depleted. Carried
3. 2020-41 – Moved by Kelly Elik; Seconded by Barb Belrose;
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board recommends that all member councils and the Almaguin Highlands Chamber of Commerce Board approve the 2021 ACED budget as circulated. Carried

Adjournment

4. 2020-042 – Moved by Kelly Elik;
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board adjourn the January 18, 2020 ACED meeting at 7:21 p.m. Carried

The next meeting will be January 18, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. If this changes, members will be advised.