

ALMAGUIN COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ACED)

MINUTES February 23, 2023

A regular meeting of the ACED Board was held at the Township of Strong Office and virtually on February 23, 2023 at 6:00pm.

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

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

Staff: Dave Gray, Director of Economic Development
John Theriault, Township of Armour

Guest: Wesley Dyson, Township of McMurrich/Monteith
Rod Ward, Township of Armour

Call to Order

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

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Thursday January 26, 2023, meeting were adopted as amended.

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) 2022 BR&E Survey – This project is expected to resume in March 2023.
 - b) General Business Support – Aided in drafting a private sector funding application to create up to 3 new full-time job. Project estimated at \$150,000.
 - c) Business Support Events – Planning two business support events via partnerships.
 - d) AHCC Partnerships – Discussing AHCC Community Guide enhancements using Brand Strategy Implementation funds.
 - e) International Women's Day 2023 – Nominations opened February 13 until March 5th. Staff will announce nominees that have won prizes.
 - f) Municipal Support – Staff facilitated two municipal funding applications for recreation and culture for two projects totalling \$355,000.
 - g) Transportation – Staff has developed a draft Carpool Almaguin webpage. Project launch timeframe April/May 2023.
 - h) Regional Brand Strategy Implementation – Staff has requested a quote to make several additions to the business directory. Business video shoots are moving forward. Drafted an RFP to solicit consulting work to complete the work originally slated to be done by the Regional Brand Coordinator. The Board passed a resolution approving the RFP.
 - i) ACED Member recruitment & Awareness – Staff will be making presentations to Kearney and McMurrich/Monteith to join ACED. Council members have been invited to attend ACED meetings.

2023 Work Plan

The draft 2023 ACED budget has been circulated for review and comments. It includes the start of a Housing Strategy and a request for the hiring of an intern, which would be partially funded by a grant. Our share would be funded by our accumulated surplus. The Board passed a resolution approving the application for funding and the hiring of the intern. The Board also passed a resolution approving the 2023 workplan.

The Board discussed how housing is affecting economic development in our region. We can create jobs, but if we have no housing for the employees, employees will not come to our area. The Board discussed the possibility of creating a committee which could lead this project. DSSAB could also be invited to make a presentation on housing at a future meeting.

Creating one Official Plan and one Zoning By-law for the region would also help in making housing starts easier. The first step is to see if there is a political will to go forward. The Mayors are meeting every three months and this item will be discussed at their next meeting in April.

Round Table Comments from Board Members

The representative from the Township of McMurrich/Monteith advised the Board that his Township wishes to move forward in the future and they would like to bring forward strategies which would align them with what ACED is doing.

The Board also discussed the use of granny flats and second units in residences to increase the number of available housing. It would make sense to see if there are any owners in our region who would be willing to accommodate renters in their principal residence. Members were asked to check with their Clerks if their Zoning By-law permits granny flats and second units.

Updates

FedNor

Presently continuing visits to complete old projects. Executing amendments to projects to make sure that all of the grants are being used. Have not yet received a new budget, but money will be tighter so grants will be harder to get approved.

MND

Still meeting everyone, NOHFC is open for business, welcoming new applications for funding. On the road more and hopes to attend an ACED meeting in person soon.

Resolutions

1. 2023-04 – Moved by Justine Leveque; Seconded by Sheri Norman;
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board approve the minutes of January 26, 2023, as amended. Carried
2. 2023-05 – Moved by Chris Nicholson; Seconded by Dan Robertson;
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board approve the Spotlight Almaguin Support Project in RFP 2023-01. Furthermore, the Board directs staff to perform a review of the incoming proposals and provide a recommendation for a suitable Proponent at the March 2023 regular ACED meeting. Carried

3. 2023-06 – Moved by Margaret Ann McPhail; Seconded by Sherry Norman;
WHEREAS the Director of Economic Development has reported a need for administrative support within the department;
AND WHEREAS the ACED surplus is sufficient to cover the anticipated costs of obtaining administrative support;
NOW THEREFORE Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board accepts the Director of Economic Development's recommendation to apply to the NOHFC Workforce Development Program for financial support to hire a Communications Officer. Furthermore, the ACED Board requests that the Township of Armour Council proceed with the application and associated administration on ACED's behalf. Carried
4. 2023-07 – Moved by Justine Leveque; Seconded by Chris Nicholson;
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board have received and reviewed the 2023 ACED Department Workplan. The Board approves the 2023 Workplan as circulated. Furthermore, the Board requests that all members ensure that the workplan is added to their upcoming Council/Board meetings.

Adjournment

5. 2023-08 – Moved by Justine Leveque; Seconded by Chris Nicholson;
Be it resolved that the Almaguin Community Economic Development Board adjourn the February 23, 2023, ACED meeting at 7:24 p.m. Carried

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