

**SOUTH ALMAGUIN HIGHLANDS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER COMMITTEE**

**JOINT MEETING MINUTES      September 14, 2015**

The regular meeting of the South Almaguin Highlands Economic Development Committee (SAHEDC) and the Community Economic Development Officer Committee (CDO) was held at the Burk's Falls Municipal Office on Monday September 14, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

In attendance: Councillor Rod Blakelock, Dave Gray, Willy Hollett, Randy Cox, Denis Sabourin, Nicky Kunkel, Wendy Whitwell, Andrew Farnsworth.

Absent: Councillor Rosalind Hall, Councillor Lewis Hodgson, Tom Tota

Guests: Gerry Spooner – FedNor; Carole Mantha – Ministry of Northern Development and Mines

**Introductions**

The Committee members made introductions for the benefit of guests.

**Minutes**

Moved by Denis Sabourin, seconded by Councillor Blakelock, be it resolved that SAHEDC accept the minutes from the regular meeting of August 10, 2015. Carried

**CDO Update**

Dave provided SAHEDC with an overview of his monthly report:

**Almaguin Highlands Chamber of Commerce (AHCC) Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E):**

There are three launch nights organized for the BR&E project, one each for Burk's Falls, Sundridge, and Powassan to maximize attendance. Invitations will be sent to business owners from the business directory. Project Consultant Karen Jones is asking for representatives from each business sector and from the municipalities to attend.

**Support / Funders Forum:**

Dave has lined up several participant organizations for the seminar. Instead of a keynote speaker, the Business Centre will provide a presentation that identifies their role and how they can help businesses. The Business Centre may be able to share costs, which will include \$360 for one ad in the Almaguin News and \$150 for refreshments.

Website:

There are two upgrades to the website that are underway. Dave is entering businesses to the directory, including direct links to business webpages and is also working on the Investment section of the website.

Central Almaguin Economic Development Association (CAEDA) Support:

Dave has attended the last two CAEDA general meetings and will be assisting them at strategic planning meetings. As the majority of the CAEDA board members are new, Dave provided them with his presentation on Economic Development from Showcase Almaguin. Dave also discussed the Villages of Almaguin concept with CAEDA and they seemed receptive. Dave explained that this relationship between SAHEDC and CAEDA is a good chance to foster any future partnership.

Business Support / Fiber Optic Extension:

Dave is working with local business owners and Lakeland Power on the details of the fiber optic project. The project is still being examined, though the connection costs may prove prohibitive.

Funding Applications:

Dave has completed a funding application for Armour Township, and a water study for the Village of Burk's Falls is underway.

Branding Meeting / Survey:

The Committee discussed details for the organization of the upcoming branding meeting, including: advertisement in the paper and on Facebook; necessary materials and refreshments; volunteers to lead discussions at the tables; and suggested topics and questions for discussion;

The branding survey has been launched, and there is a prize package being offered of dinner and a movie, with Almaguin Campground funding the dinner and SAHEDC funding the movie passes. Close to 60 responses were received over the first weekend, with a good cross-section of business and resident respondents.

Moved by Willy Hollett, seconded by Randy Cox, be it resolved that SAHEDC allocate a maximum of \$100 to Facebook advertising for the branding meeting and survey. Carried.

**Other/New Business**

Carole Mantha notified SAHEDC that the Celebrate Ontario grant process is open. Anyone involved in a new or existing tourist-related event in the area should review the program details online and contact Carole for more assistance with their application. Carole also commended Dave on his efforts with the webpage, noting that the SAHEDC page is the most up to date in the area.

Councillor Blakelock discussed the Agricultural Society's need for better signage. Dave mentioned several potential sources of funding and offered to look further into the matter. The Committee discussed the use of the planned digital signage for such event advertising.

Nicky Kunkel informed the Committee that the Lions Club will not be organizing the Santa Claus parade this year. Any organization or partnership of organizations interested in taking over the event should contact the Lions Club for details from the past years.

**Next Meeting**

The next regular joint meeting of the SAHED-CDO Committees will be held on October 19, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. at the Burk's Falls Offices.

**Adjournment**

Moved by Willy Hollett, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.