

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

**JOINT MEETING MINUTES**

**January 14, 2014**

The regular meeting of the South Almaguin Highlands Economic Development Committee (SAHED) and the Community Development Officer Committee (CDO) was held at the Burk's Falls Municipal Office on Monday January 14, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.

In attendance: Councillor Lewis Hodgson, Councillor Rosalind Hall, Councillor Rod Blakelock, Emilio Foffano, David Gray, Judy Kosowan, Anna Branch, Andrew Farnsworth

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

**Adoption of Minutes**

The minutes from the regular meeting December 16, 2013 were approved, moved by Anna Branch and seconded by Councillor Hall. (Carried)

**CDO Report**

**Investment Readiness**

David gave an update on the Investment Readiness process. Following evaluations of the four proposals and two interviews, the committee recommends John Finley Consulting for approval by the three councils. A contract will be drawn up and provided to Mr. Finley following council approval. The first meeting will be scheduled as soon as possible following approval, at Mr. Finley's discretion.

**Humaniqua**

David gave an update on the Humaniqua initiative, which, in partnership with the Central Almaguin Economic Development Association (CAEDA) will allow local businesses free access to human resources forms and assistance. Preliminary estimates from CAEDA suggests that the service will be free for 2014 and would cost approximately \$400 for 2015.

**Explorer's Edge Snowmobiling Initiative**

Explorer's Edge will be organizing a snowmobile tour in the Muskoka and Almaguin regions this winter. Ideas are being accepted for routes, points of interest and map suggestions.

**Food Seminar**

David attended a food seminar at Almaguin Highlands Secondary School dealing with food security, food programs and accessibility. Stemming from the seminar was the idea of supporting the establishment of a community garden in Burk's Falls. A space would be prepared, planted and harvested by volunteers, with food being provided to the Food Bank to help local residents. The committee felt that the program may be worth pursuing for 2015. Past projects of

a similar nature in the area should be investigated prior to beginning anew, in order to avoid duplicating efforts or mistakes.

Community Kitchens were discussed, involving a monthly cooking demonstration for people who are unfamiliar with how to prepare affordable and nutritious meals. Also discussed were a potential “good food program”, in which staple food items are purchased in bulk to increase affordability, and a “suspended coffee/meal” program, in which attendees at local dinner nights or coffee houses pay for several meals in order to provide for those who cannot afford the meal.

### Waterloo Economic Development Course

David has submitted his Year One essay, representing the successful end of the first year of the program.

### Visitor Guide

David gave an update on the visitor guide, including advertising pricing from the Manitoulin Expositor (newspaper format) and a goal of launching the guide for the May 24 weekend. The guide may include all of Southern Almaguin Highlands, and David will reach out to our neighbouring municipalities to see if they would like to be included. The committee felt that the guide should be developed with a one-year shelf life. David will work backwards from the total budget amount (\$10,000-\$12,000) to determine approximate pricing for advertisements. Informal meetings will be held on Thursdays at noon in David’s office (above the Burk’s Falls Township Office) until the project launch in order to: develop a value proposition to provide to businesses to solicit advertisements; coordinate topics and authors for articles; and organize the delivery and launch of the guide.

### Joint Operation and Management Agreement

The final draft of the joint Operation and Management Agreement for SAHED and CDO was presented and will be sent to the three councils for edits or approval.

### New Business

Anna Branch suggested the possibility of a “Shop Hop”, in which participants are given a booklet of local businesses and earn stamps at each business they visit. Anna will explore this more with the Chamber of Commerce.

Anna also brought forward the idea of a “Volunteer Burk’s Falls” organization, which would bring together people who wish to volunteer with organizations that require volunteer help.

### Next Meeting

February 10, 2014 at 6:00 pm, Burk’s Falls Township Office

**Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn from Councillor Blakelock, seconded by Councillor Hodgson. (Carried)