

Antrim County  
**Economic Development Corporation**

Mission Statement: Retain, expand, and promote County-wide economic growth and stability.

**March 21, 2023**  
**Minutes**

Members present: Dawn LaVanway, Sherry Comben, Leslie Elrod, Cherie Hogan,  
Kathleen Peterson, Bonnie Robbins, and Pete Garwood

Members Absent: Rachel Krino, Tim Timmer

Others Present: Jessica Lovay & Sam Bailey from NLEA; Janet Koch

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9 a.m. by EDC Vice-President Dawn LaVanway.

**2. Public Comment**

None.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

**Motion by Kathleen Peterson, second by Sherry Comben, to approve the February 21, 2023 meeting minutes as presented.**

**4. Discussion: Strategic Planning**

Jessica Lovay, NLEA's Community Development & Grants Director, said she had received six responses from EDC members regarding the group's strategic planning. She presented the results.

Mr. Garwood asked about adding "retention" to Business Development & Attraction. Ms. Lovay indicated that retention was essentially wrapped business development. Ms. LaVanway asked about "Diversify County's economy." Ms. Lovay said that was one of the county master plan's guiding principles.

Ms. Lovay noted that NLEA had grouped the items into four topics: Community & Human Services, Business Attraction & Economic Development, Environmental, and Organizational Objectives. Ms. Elrod noted that what the EDC seemed to focus on were items listed in Organizational Objectives.

Ms. Lovay and Janet Koch, Antrim County Deputy Administrator, described the recent MSHDA regional meeting that discussed the statewide housing plan and its regional implementation.

Sam Bailey, NLEA Strategic Initiatives Manager, said Housing North expects to release a new housing needs assessment in May. It is anticipated that the assessment will be part of the housing discussion at the May 22 NLEA symposium breakout session.

The EDC discussed what qualified as a brownfield site. Also discussed were next steps for setting goals for the EDC. Ms. Lovay also noted that the group should establish steps to reach each goal.

Mr. Garwood listed five action items regarding housing the EDC could consider:

- Contact housing staff to provide experiences in other counties
- Invite BOC to participate in the above
- Answer the question: is affordable housing a county responsible
- Identify stakeholders
- Identify timeline

For the next meeting, Ms. Lovay asked the EDC to send the following to Ms. Koch:

- Identify action items for each priority/goal
- Is funding needed to accomplish
- Identify potential partners

It was noted that an action step could be education regarding a specific issue, e.g., childcare. The state's Trishare program was mentioned.

An example Ms. Lovay used was "Advocate and promote housing needs in our community." She provided an example of another goal as "Educate the EDC regarding community infrastructure capacity."

Many aspects of housing were discussed.

#### **5. Various Matters / Public/Member Comment**

Ms. Koch reported that EDC is a member of all five chambers of commerce in Antrim County.

The EDC asked that Ms. Koch email the EDC the short term rental information Ms. Hogan provided from a Boyne City resident.

**Meeting adjourned at 10:48 a.m.**