



# Antrim County Economic Development Corporation



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

## MEMBERS

**Sherry Comben**  
12/31/2026

**Peter Garwood**  
12/31/2025

**Leslie Elrod**  
12/31/2026

**Cherie Hogan**  
12/31/2027

**Rachel Krino**  
12/31/2027

**Dawn LaVanway**  
Annual Appointment

**Kathleen Peterson**  
12/31/2026

**Tim Timmer**  
12/31/2028

**Vacancy**  
12/31/2028

## STAFF

**Jeremy Scott**  
County Administrator

**Janet Koch**  
Deputy Administrator

**Tina Schrader**  
Administrative Asst.

**Margie Boyd**  
Secretary

## OFFICE ADDRESS

P.O. Box 187  
Bellaire, MI 49615

**PHONE:** 231-533-6265

**FAX:** 231-533-8111

## SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

If you wish to attend a meeting and require special assistance, please contact the Administration Office.

The Antrim County Economic Development Corporation meeting is scheduled for

**Tuesday, May 16, 2023**

Antrim County Building,  
Board of Commissioners Room  
203 East Cayuga Street, Bellaire, Michigan

## **AGENDA ITEMS INCLUDE:**

9:00 a.m. Call to Order  
Public Comment  
Approval of Minutes – [April 18, 2023](#)  
Discussion: Strategic Planning  
Various Matters as Appropriate  
Public/Member Comment  
Adjourn

If you have any questions, concerns, please contact the Administration and Planning Office at 231-533-6265.  
We appreciate your cooperation in this matter. Thank you

# Antrim County Economic Development Corporation

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

**April 18, 2023  
Minutes**

Members present: Rachel Krino, Dawn LaVanway, Sherry Comben, Pete Garwood, Kathleen Peterson, and Tim Timmer

Members Absent: Leslie Elrod, Cherie Hogan, Bonnie Robbins

Others Present: Jessica Lovay from NLEA; Janet Koch

## **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m. by Rachel Krino.

## **2. Public Comment**

None.

## **3. Approval of Minutes**

**Motion by Kathleen Peterson, second by Dawn LaVanway, to approve the March 21, 2023 meeting minutes as presented.**

**Motion passed.**

## **4. Discussion: Strategic Planning**

Jessica Lovay, Community Development & Grants Director with Northern Lakes Economic Alliance, described her technique for compiling the responses from the EDC members regarding strategic planning; identify action items, identifying potential partners, funding. She said seven of the nine EDC members responded; a very good response.

Ms. Lovay said the common themes of the responses were education, being a resource, and a connector of information. True actionable involvement did not come across as a priority.

Main categories of topics and sub-topics were:

- Community & Human Services
  - Affordable housing
  - General needs of growing population/health facilities
  - Childcare,
- Business & Economic Development
  - Broadband
  - Property redevelopment
  - Talent attraction and workforce development
  - Business attraction & economic development
- Environmental
  - Preserve & protect natural resources
- Organizational Objectives
  - Communication
  - Access to Resources
  - EDC Evaluation
  - Collaboration

Ms. Comben said true actionable items would require dedicated staff. She described how other counties approach economic development. Mr. Timmer suggested that EDC members meet with businesses in 2024 to determine their needs. Ms. Lovay said NLEA focuses on larger businesses; she said the EDC contacting smaller businesses could be beneficial. She also said that it would be helpful if news of large businesses and properties being sold could be forwarded to NLEA.

Ms. Krino said the EDC outreach had been limited during the pandemic, and that now was a good time to refocus and move forward. Ms. Lovay recommended prioritizing the items and how often the EDC wants to address the items, that the May meeting could put a timeline to action steps.

Ms. Krino asked if the EDC was a policy & procedures organization or an action organization. Mr. Timmer suggested that the EDC provide metrics that could track accomplishments. Ms. LaVanway said an annual report could provide data regarding housing and other items.

Mr. Garwood suggested rating items from two points of view; first by community importance, second by EDC focus. There was a consensus that affordable housing should be a high priority.

It was noted that if funds were required for any action steps, the County's Capital Improvement Plan was in planning stages. Mr. Garwood said in his experience that project-based funding requests were most successful, and that the EDC would be most successful if their goals were supported by the BOC.

Ms. Koch noted that Dave Emmel, NLEA President, had told the BOC in a recent training workshop that economic growth is quantitative and that economic development is qualitative. Business surveys were discussed. It was mentioned that some communities were currently conducting surveys. Ms. Krino noted that the EDC could request the survey results.

The EDC's mission to "Retain, expand, and promote County-wide economic growth and stability" was mentioned.

Ms. Lovay noted that there seemed to be a disconnect between where the EDC wanted to go and how the EDC was going to get there. She asked the EDC about its roles and responsibilities. She recommended that the EDC recognize its own resources and what its highest priority focused and productive items should be.

It was the EDC's consensus that organizational objectives should be their highest priority. It was mentioned that the organizational objectives could also serve as an outreach and marketing plan. Ms. Krino and Ms. Koch will collaborate to send out a request to EDC members for their input regarding organizational objective action items.

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

Ms. Koch mentioned that two seats are still available for the NLEA symposium on Monday, May 22 at Boyne Mountain.

**Meeting adjourned at 11:03 a.m.**

## **Antrim EDC Organizational Objectives**

**Communication** – Effectively communicate with the County Board of Commissioners, County Staff, program partners, public, etc. on EDC goals, objectives, and areas of opportunity.

1. EDC appointed member attend County Board of Commissioner Meeting Bi-Annually to report on economic development in the county along with ongoing activities by the EDC Board.
2. Develop an elevator speech to be used by members while in the community and establish guidelines regarding representation of the EDC at outside community meetings.
3. Inventory EDC members memberships to other organizations including nongovernmental organizations. Provide opportunity during regular EDC meetings for related updates.
4. Put together and post newsletters and bulletins possibly quarterly.
5. Develop a comprehensive list for information distribution.
6. Request the County Administrator dedicate some space in his monthly newsletter 2 to 4 times per year for the inclusion of EDC progress and economic development related issues that affect the County.
7. Request the townships, villages and/or chambers dedicate some space in their regular newsletters (if they have one) 2 to 4 times per year for the inclusion of EDC progress and economic development related issues that affect the County.
8. Request the townships, villages and/or chambers include an EDC link on their website.

**Access to Resources** – Promote materials, opportunities, and resources gained through the EDC by providing links, email blasts, social media posts, local unit of government meetings, and other avenues in which communicating to the people of Antrim County is available.

1. Conduct an EDC works session to identify resources and information key to economic development and develop a dissemination list. Create a system for EDC specific members to monitor and report on the specific resource.
2. Review current EDC section of the website regarding missing links and information about resources.
3. Establish a Facebook page that would share important local, regional, and statewide opportunities and updates regarding economic development opportunities. These have to potential to be shared by area Chambers.
4. Include a brief EDC update in the monthly newsletter distributed by the county.
5. Develop a most frequently asked questions/ answers.
6. Develop a list of resources and links available to communicate with the public.

**EDC Evaluation** – After establishing goals and objectives for the EDC develop a process and timeline for evaluating progress.

1. Establish a timeline for each goal based on low, medium, high priority.
2. Establish a metric evaluation on actionable items.
3. Community Survey to include area businesses, service organizations and governmental bodies, ask questions regarding EDC. How are we doing?
4. Review progress two to four times per year.
5. EDC subcommittees: communication, business development, environmental, etc. based on goals of the group. (Who is responsible for what)

**Collaboration** – Encourage involvement from County leadership, program partners, business, and community leaders to engage in the future development of Antrim County and work through hurdles or roadblocks preventing successful economic development.

1. Continue to work with area chambers.
2. Continue to work with businesses to understand the needs of each industry.
3. Continue work with NLEA, SBDC, SCORE, Network Northwest, MEDC, MDARD, Venture North, Housing North and More.