

Antrim County  
**Economic Development Corporation**

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

**July 18, 2023**  
**Minutes**

Members present: Rachel Krino, Sherry Comben, Cherie Hogan, Dawn LaVanway, Kathleen Peterson, Tim Timmer  
Members Absent: Pete Garwood  
Others Present: Jessica Lovay, Chris Bauer, Janet Koch

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. by Rachel Krino.

**2. Public Comment**

Jessica Lovay, Northern Lakes Economic Alliance’s Community Development & Grants Director, said the Governor is preparing to sign legislation that will allow housing projects to be eligible projects for the Brownfield Act. She added that a developer has contacted NLEA regarding a workforce rental housing project north of Bellaire Highway. The developer is in the early stages; pro forma, preliminary site plan, etc. Anticipated income level for renters is 80% to 120% of average median income. The housing will be deed restricted and lease-restricted to long term rentals.

Ms. Lovay said there is a statutory approval process for individual Brownfield projects; an Act 381 of 1996 plan would need to be approved by the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.

Mr. Timmer asked about getting an update regarding the TCE plume while addressing a Brownfield project.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Krino made a correction to the minutes regarding a statement about 3D imaging.

**Motion by Dawn LaVanway, second by Sherry Comben, to approve the June 20, 2023 meeting minutes as amended.**

**Motion - approved.**

**4. Discussion: Strategic Planning**

Review of Environmental Objectives

**Preserve and Protect Natural Resources:** Continue to recognize Antrim County’s valuable natural resources by supporting and promoting area parks, trails, rivers, lakes, etc., encouraging responsible usage and direct intentional economic development growth areas.

- a) Plume Status – Work with EGLE and other environmental experts to update the public on the status of the plume and mitigation activities. Promote access to plume materials available at the County building.

Mr. Timmer asked about proactive steps that could be taken regarding the plume, and if there was a future opportunity for intervention that steps should be taken sooner rather than later. Ms. Krino said EGLE has been active with phasing water main projects.

- b) Access to Resources – Provide links to DNR, local conservation groups, trail systems, etc. on EDC or County website.

It was noted that the County website already contains much information about recreational and natural resources.

**PRIORITY: High.**

**TIMELINE: Visit monthly; adjust as needed.**

#### Review of Community & Human Services Objectives

1. **Affordable Housing:** Promote and advocate housing initiatives by providing access to resources and education supporting the housing needs of Antrim County.
  - a) EDC Education – Presentations from partner agencies (Housing North, Northern Homes, Habitat for Humanity, etc.) on various housing topics. Topics could include buyer education, regional housing efforts, Community Land Trust, development incentives, infrastructure, etc.
  - b) Access to Resources – Provide links to housing partner agencies on EDC or County website.

**PRIORITY: High**

**TIMELINE: Visit monthly; adjust as needed.**

2. **General needs of growing population/Health Facilities:** Understand Antrim County’s needs of the growing population and status of health facilities.
  - EDC Education – Presentations from health care industry experts (Health Department of NW Michigan, East Jordan Family Health Center, County Health Department, etc.) to gain an understanding of what is available to Antrim County residents of all ages and income, what is needed or missing, and plans to address the growing needs for the future.

Antrim County Commission on Aging, North Country Community Mental Health, and the Area Agency on Aging of Northwest Michigan were also mentioned as groups that provide resources.

**PRIORITY: Medium**

**TIMELINE: Quarterly**

3. **Childcare:** Understand Antrim County’s childcare status and what the needs are.
  - a) EDC Education – Presentations from childcare industry experts (United Way, Great Start Collaborative, etc.) to gain an understanding of what is available to Antrim County residents, program opportunities, what is needed for the county, and plans to address the growing needs for the future.
  - b) Access to Resources – Provide links to childcare partner agencies on EDC or County website.

**PRIORITY: Medium**

**TIMELINE: Quarterly**

#### Discussion of Outreach Procedures (Tabled 6/20)

The EDC discussed messaging procedures for outreach. An “elevator speech” was noted as important. Ms. Koch said she would send a draft version to the EDC with a

request for comments. She will provide the comments and a reworked speech into an agenda item for the next meeting. She will also provide a draft of the member matrix.

A consistency of messaging was discussed. It was noted that the EDC does not have funding; the group's focus is on connecting business needs to available resources.

#### **5. Vacancy Recommendations to Board Chairman**

Ms. Krino said there had been five applications to the EDC. Ms. LaVanway said the Chair of the Board of Commissioners appoints and the Board confirms. Ms. Hogan felt the business community was underrepresented on the EDC. It was the consensus of the EDC that they saw a need for a broader representation, particularly of the business community.

Ms. Krino asked for input regarding the onboarding of new EDC members; she indicated that she would reach out to the new members and meet with them individually.

#### **6. Various Matter/Roundtable Updates**

Ms. Koch provided a copy of a Housing article she'd been requested to write for the Michigan Association of County magazine. She added that Torch Lake Township would be considering a septic ordinance at their meeting that night.

The EDC asked Ms. Koch to record the portions of the August meeting that include the presentations from Ventures North and the Antrim Foundation. Ms. Koch was also asked to send the member matrix to EDC members to return to her for compilation. The EDC requested that consideration of the matrix be on the September agenda.

Kathy Peterson said she felt there were been many new visitors to the area this summer.

Rachel Krino mentioned Medicaid renewals, and said the Antrim County High Tea for Breast Cancer Prevention event had been successful. She added that the Health Center's recent 3-year Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) review was complete and had been successful.

Dawn LaVanway said the Mancelona Township offices are looking good. She mentioned other potential projects in the east side of the county, including one regarding ORVs.

Sherry Comben said a number of properties were up for tax foreclosure and if the EDC was interested in any specifics she would be happy to provide them.

Cherie Hogan mentioned that property taxes are a contributing factor to the housing problems.

Tim Timmer said he wouldn't be in attendance at the next meeting. He added that he'd been talking to numerous marine/boating people, and that there might be a slowdown in the next year as inventory is starting to increase.

#### **7. Public Comment**

None.

**Meeting adjourned at 11:07 a.m.**