



3 Taylor Road, Bracebridge, ON P1L 1S6
1-800-835-7303
Algonquin Park, Almaguin Highlands, Loring-Restoule, Muskoka,
Parry Sound & South Algonquin
www.explorersedge.ca



Explorers' Edge Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 12, 2023
Webinar

Present: Hilary Chambers, Angela Pollak, Gabriela Hairabedian, Dave Anderson, Darren Smith, Jackie Leung, Michael Martyn, James Roberts

Resource: Laura Ross

Regrets: Didier Dolivet

Staff: James Murphy, Erin Smit (taking minutes)

Call to Order and Chair Remarks: Hilary Chambers called the meeting to order at 9:33am.

Round Table

Approval of Agenda – April 12, 2023

Motion: Angela Pollak

Seconded: Darren Smith

Discussion: n/a

Carried.

Approval of Minutes – January 25, 2023

Motion: James Roberts

Seconded: Jackie Leung

Discussion: n/a

Carried.

JM opened by congratulating Angela Pollak on her win of an Ontario By Bike award, Michael Martyn on the Festival of the Sound tickets sales launch, and mentioned James Roberts safe return from guiding trips in Mexico over the winter. JM also noted big week in the office – Luke Preston started yesterday and other two new staff members are getting in the mix.

YEAR END REPORTING

Changing format moving forward – better articulate spend in document circulated prior to board meetings, as well as compressed timeline for board meetings with information to be covered provided beforehand. JM discussed where money is flowing as outcome as BOP – high level plan was presented, followed by detailed plan with strategy, action items and outcomes in detail.

JM noted a shift in spending this fiscal year to focus more budget into marketing – the RTO has partnered with Destination Ontario for more reach. Project is a \$75k value partnership, RTO contribution is \$25k. Content written for this partnership includes details on each of the sub-regions.

The Cottage Country Spirit Local Travel Package launched for spring with all 600 packages selling out in 20 minutes. A \$30k expense for voucher redemption has been moved to accrued liability. Participating businesses who have not received vouchers in the past will be highlighted with social posts.

Required expansion of office space for EE will no longer be undertaken at the current space. Executive board members chose to instead rent additional space at the Muskoka Collective on a three month trial lease. Satellite offices throughout the region could be an option in the future as well, while keeping costs in mind. Will note changes in travel expenses with new content creation staff on the road.

Income Sheet & Balance Sheet 2023

- Deferred Revenue
- Negative Net Income
- Internal Audit: Bookkeeper & Office Staff

Year End Financials

- Coincide with Year End report
- Draft delivered to Chair and Vice Chair April 21 and final to Ministry April 30

External Audit

- Brandy Harris

FISCAL SPENDING

- Destination Ontario Spring/Summer Partnership: \$25k
- Cottage Country Spring Voucher: \$30k Expense, Accrued Liability
- Office Space: Muskoka Collective 3-month lease
- HR Expenses: office equipment, technology, travel expenses

HUMAN RESOURCES

New staff will meet tomorrow for a staff lunch, Luke and Erin will share an office moving forward, and rented space at Muskoka Collective will be utilized as well.

Rebecca Francis: Sustainability Specialist

- Rebecca will lead the RTO's Sustainable Tourism Pilot Project, which tracks the progress of six regional operators to build the business case for mass participation by the industry.

Jake Good: Social Media Coordinator & Content Developer

- A journalist by training, Jake has an extensive background in social media management and content development, most recently in the craft brewing industry.

Luke Preston: Regenerative Projects Manager

- Luke will play a key role in the building of multiple innovative projects, including the Regenerative Travel Agency and the Work-Integrated Catalyst Housing initiative.

James Murphy, Kate Monk, Erin Smit

- Job descriptions have been revisited
- Updated Employment Agreements being drafted
- ETA April 20, 2023
- Working with a third party

Hilary complimented the move forward into a more robust team with new staff onboard and new projects able to be undertaken as a result.

PARTNERSHIPS

A few time sensitive partnerships in the works coming up shortly, including marketing projects, signage projects and FAM trip with Toronto Metropolitan University. Each project has an MOU – this will fall under Luke’s purview moving forward.

Jayne’s Luxury Cottages

- Rendezvous Canada International Trade Show

Tall Pines Music Festival

- Media Purchase and Marketing

Georgian Bay Mindoo Gamii Biosphere

- Signage, tent and dispersion material

Township of Muskoka Lakes

- Signage & Wayfinding

ADDITIONAL NOTES

- Anthony Falcone & Laura Ross Site Visit: April 20
- South Algonquin, Camp Bongopix Tavern: April 18
- Loring-Restoule (TBD)
- Downtown Parry Sound Business Association: April 12
- Almaguin Highlands Secondary School: April 20

Hilary noted June 5th date can be confirmed for the LR meet.

GOVERNANCE – NOT FOR PROFIT

- Establish working committee
- Review and circulate ahead of September AGM

- Implications to membership (?) and revenue generation

JM discussed the feedback from the lawyer coming forward including updating the bylaws (nothing needs to be approved today). JM asked if working committee would be established or if board would meet as a whole after reading the main 30 page document. Darren, Michael and Angela volunteered as working committee, will report back to board as a whole and voting can happen at that time. Angela asked for a newer board member to also be included so the working committee is not made up only of members leaving the board in the next year – Gabriella volunteered.

April 21st year end report will be circulated to the board before being submitted to the Ministry on April 30th.

BRIDGE FINANCING – TPA

- No ETA for the TPA
- RTO Meeting Rescheduled – TBD
- Anthony Falcone & Laura Ross: April 20, 2023 Site Visit
- Cash flow to ensure overhead obligations are met
- Muskoka Community Futures Bridge Financing
- \$100,000.00 (nothing nailed down for a rate)
- \$150.00 admin fee to set up the financing

RESOLUTION: WHEREAS the Board of Regional Tourism Organization 12 be authorized to borrow an amount not to exceed \$100,000 for short term bridge financing from Muskoka Futures.

Michael Martyn noted that this is a common practice for NFP organizations.

Motion to Accept Resolution as Presented

Motion: Darren Smith

Seconded: Michael Martyn

Discussion: n/a

Carried

Feedback from board to continue moving forward with shorter meeting – use of consent agenda to move things along. Angela recommends watching the board onboarding videos as well if you have not. Hilary appreciated the notes that were provided with the financials that were circulated, James will make a point to continue this process moving forward.

Three audits in the works currently: FedNor, Auditor General and our internal audit with Brandy Harris. Jackie Leung asked about when we'll know about what our total funding will be for this fiscal year from the Ministry – no information to provide at this point, but details will be sent as soon as we have them.

Motion to Adjourn

Motion: Jackie Leung

Discussion: n/a

Carried.