



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



**DRAFT - Explorers' Edge Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday April 16, 2025**  
**Zoom**

**Present:** Gabriela Hairabedian, Tristan Berry, Dave Anderson, Darren Smith, Jackie Leung

**Resource:** n/a

**Regrets:** Tristan Berry, Anubandu Lakhera, Didier Dolivet

**Staff:** James Murphy

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 AM by Chair Gabriella Rojas.

**Attendance & Quorum**

Quorum was not achieved. Present directors participated in a strategy session without motions or formal approvals.

**Conflict of Interest Declaration**

None declared.

**Strategic Discussion: Regenerative Travel Agency**

Overview: Murphy presented a comprehensive business strategy for launching the Explorers' Edge Regenerative Travel Agency as a new revenue-generating social enterprise. The agency will begin operations with highly curated day packages and evolve into more complex offerings over three years.

**Key Themes Discussed:**

- **Vision & Mission:**  
Operate a thriving inbound travel agency focused on high-yield, regenerative tourism aligned with community benefit, sustainability, and innovation.
- **Consumer & Operator Benefits:**  
Packages will provide stress-free booking, authentic local experiences, and clear pricing.  
Operators will benefit from new revenue streams, low-cost marketing, and advanced bookings.

- **Year One Strategy (Viability & Validation):**  
Focused on one-day, high-yield packages targeted at the VFR (visiting friends and relatives) market. Controlled rollout with limited products to ensure operational readiness and minimize risk.
- **Future Years:**
  - Year Two: Optimization – Expanded offerings and streamlined processes.
  - Year Three: Controlled Expansion – Scaled marketing, brand ambassadors, international outreach.
- **Sales Position:**  
Consensus that a dedicated sales-focused staff with travel trade knowledge is essential for success. Position to potentially blend partnership coordination with package sales responsibilities.
- **Operational Costs & Revenue Model:**  
Most early costs are absorbed within the current organizational structure. Revenue to be potentially generated through commission-based pricing, subscriptions, co-op marketing, and affiliate programs.  
Controlled rollout and performance measurement will guide margin adjustments and scalability.
- **Guided vs. Self-Guided Packages:**  
Discussions included the value of guided experiences, particularly for newcomers to nature or rural settings. Local hosts, operators, and interpreters to be integrated where possible.
- **Partner Selection & Community Buy-In:**  
Recommendation to begin with trusted operators who can deliver reliably, support pilot projects, and build industry buy-in through early success.

#### **Partnership Program:**

- Adjustments being explored to streamline financial flows. Businesses may now unlock partnership support by demonstrating their investment in product development (e.g., via receipts) without funds first flowing through Explorers' Edge.

#### **TIAO Membership:**

- Membership with TIAO is currently being reviewed pending assurances of advocacy for the RTO model in their provincial strategy. There is alignment in seeking more value from membership.

#### **Other Updates:**

- Current audit underway.
- AGM to be held in June.
- Board recruitment underway.
- Transition to new bookkeeper in Parry Sound due to Adrienne Golden's retirement.

- Discussion of launching a Regenerative Travel Agency Advisory Committee.
- Interest in launching an Indigenous youth entrepreneurship program (potential \$60K commitment).

### **Organizational Update (In-Camera)**

### **Adjournment & Next Steps**

The meeting concluded at 11:33 AM. The Chair and CEO thanked the Board for their engagement and input.

A follow-up board communication will include:

- Circulating the Regenerative Travel Agency business plan PDF
- Recruitment strategy for sales/partnership staff
- Upcoming package development and marketing timelines

Next Meeting: TBD (pre-AGM strategy and governance session)