



MINUTES

BRAED Board of Directors Meeting
Virtual via ZOOM
October 20, 2020
6:00pm

Board of Directors of the Battle River Alliance for Economic Development (BRAED) was held virtually via the ZOOM platform.

Communities:

Bittern Lake: Angie Lorente
Coronation: Shelley Cook
Daysland: Edward Kusalik
Edgerton: Wendy Belik
Forestburg: Bob Coutts
Hardisty: Doug Irving
Holden: Mark Gieblelhaus
Irma: Joan Green
Killam: Ben Kellert
Ryley: Brian Ducherer
Viking: Debbie O'Toole
Wainwright: Carley Herbert
Beaver County: Kevin Smook
Camrose County: Anjah Howard
Flagstaff County: Jordyn Prior
Paintearth County: Stan Schulmeister

Member at Large: Arnold Hanson

Workforce Consultant, Ministry of Labour / Government of Alberta: Jean Vidal

Guests:

Amber Hunter, Vice-President, Business Development, North America research FDI
Brock Skettering, Head of Advocacy, Keep Alberta Rolling Ltd

Staff:

BRAED Executive Director: Cathy Goulet
Recording: Cindy Hurum

1. Call to Order

Chair, Brian Ducherer called the Virtual Board of Director's Meeting to order at 6:05pm

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion: That the agenda of October 20, 2020 be accepted as amended.
Add item 6 d: BRAED Executive Expiry dates

Moved: A. Hanson

CARRIED

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion: That the minutes from April 29, 2020 Board of Directors Meeting be approved as presented.

Moved: B. Kellert

CARRIED

4. Guest Speakers

- a. **Amber Hunter**, Vice-President, Business Development, North America Research FDI
BRAED's Value-added Agriculture Value Proposition Project – see presentation attached
- b. **Brock Skettering**, Head of Advocacy; Keep Alberta Rolling Ltd.
Growing Film Industry Opportunities & Partnerships Throughout Rural Alberta – see presentation attached

5. Management Report – Cathy Goulet

- a. **Update on Government of Alberta Relationship and Funding** (Michelle Evans and where BRAED is headed)
 - As of 2020-21BRAED receives \$50,000 per year operational funds from the Government of Alberta
 - BRAED Executive Director and Chair are working on where BRAED is headed, we have \$95,000 operational funding with the \$50,000 from the GOA and \$45,000 in memberships
 - The plan is to meet with the members and EDOs and learn what the priorities are.
 - Assuming there's interest from members, considering another model that can work
 - Is there potential to work with Industry?
 - Understanding what municipalities' needs are. "Form Follows Function", in the next 6 weeks BRAED's Executive Director will meet with each municipality independently
What do you see going forward?
 - \$450,000 across the Province for REDA funding is not a lot from the Provincial Government

Discussion followed –

E. Kusalik asked “if the town does not have an EDO, will it be individuals and organizations that will be interviewed, farmers and ranchers?” BRAED’s Executive Director responded with “let’s not limit ourselves, we can reach out to Ag Societies, individuals, Chambers of Commerce, seed cleaning plants, Credit Unions. The world has changed so much since 1998, maybe it’s time for a re-organization.”

A. Hanson said he agreed and because we are in a whole new world, we need to be on top of the tide. “Let’s promote ourselves and get people to the table to enhance the region.”

S. Schulmeister said “I don’t know how to respond; I see the problem the Province has. We need to do more on our own but I’m not sure what municipalities can offer. We need to be realistic and open minded.”

E. Kusalik wondered if we need to prioritize areas or certain projects to focus on?

C. Goulet replied, “that will be part of the conversation with the municipalities over the next 6 weeks.”

D. Irving mentioned that “Hardisty is looking to withdraw from BRAED but, the town does have a Development group, they are an active group and could be the representation for the town. Commitment would still be sponsored by the town.”

C. Goulet replied that “Economic development looks different for every community, Hardisty is oil, and for some it may be tourism.”

b. Report to Operational Plan

- Value-added agriculture project is moving along well. We are now into the investment attraction piece
- Energy Sector – has not been started. Will be having a conversation with Doug Irving from Hardisty
- Tourism sector – deferred to fourth quarter. The Santa Trail Promotion has been deferred to 2021 due to COVID impact
- Economic recovery information – loading content on the BRAED website and attending and promoting economic recovery opportunities and resources

c. Communications Update

- KNOTice continues to be well received. Statistics have maintained a steady level of activity indicators. Links inside the email content to Alberta statistics dashboards were clicked more often than in past months. Overall, the statistics remain consistent and the open rate is above industry levels.
- Twitter – our overall impressions are down by 55% from September when tweets about economic impact of agriculture and harvest were popular (an “impression” is the number of times a tweet is shown in an active Twitter feed... or the number of times it was seen). The community profile tweets, and promotion campaign is being finalized to start soon

d. BRAED Executive Expiry Dates

- We will have two executive positions available December 2020, both positions are members at large. A. Hanson's term has expired, and S. Cook is resigning. We will be looking to fill both these positions at our meeting in December. Nominees should advise their Councils in advance.

Motion: To accept the management report as presented.

Moved: M. Geibelhaus

CARRIED

6. Financial Update – Cathy Goulet

- BRAED is on track to realize a small operational surplus in 2020-21. Due to a reduced cost for the Value-added agriculture project, there will be a smaller draw on reserve funds, leaving the organization in a slightly better cash position at yearend than originally anticipated.

Motion: To accept financial statements as presented.

Moved: A. Hanson

CARRIED

7. Regional Round Table – Members.

◊ Bittern Lake - Angie Lorente

- The town has been quite busy, even through COVID.
- New rink last year, new skate shack and lighting
- The town lost its board members for Community hall and if we don't get new ones, not sure of the fate of our hall

◊ Coronation – Shelley Cook

- Opened the pool this summer with COVID Guidelines
- Rebuild a section of road, paving going on in town
- Opened a new gym with 40 monthly memberships
- Hockey is going

◊ Daysland – Ed Kusalik

- The Rusty Nail moved into the old Home Hardware location, another business going in with her
- The Hotel has been filled in
- Garage in town being torn down at a cost of \$37,000
- Lift Station construction is proceeding
- A large number of Home Business applications have been received

◊ Flagstaff County – Jordyn Prior

- Working on Business Enhancement with BREOC support
- Putting out a Tourism and Lifestyle Video
- Promoting Industry and why you should move here
- Finalized a gift guide to promote shop local
- Flagstaff Crafted has taken off, more and more people want to know where their food comes from, we are now looking at Community supported Flagstaff Fresh,
- ie: herbs, garden, beef
- Webinar series going on – finding innovative solutions – how to find your target audience

◊ **Forestburg** – Bob Coutts

- The town has seen brisk home sales
- Local meat shop has doubled its capacity
- 13-lot residential sub-division being build
- Looking for a new CAO
- Sold a seven-acre site for bio-waste incinerator project which will employ 22 people

◊ **Hardisty** – Doug Irving

- We've had a really busy summer with Keystone Excel project at the tank farm
- Hotel and service industry has been busy
- Had a town visit and saw where the Keystone line will connect
- Gibson's working on new tank
- Control centre building in Hardisty is up and moving forward

◊ **Holden** – Mark Giebelhaus

- Things in town are still slow
- The theatre is showing one movie a month
- The Gallery is open and online sales are good
- Holden Hotel has take-out which is going well
- Sewer line is being replaced
- Ice is going in the arena

◊ **Irma** – Joan Green

- New CAO has been hired, trialing part time in the office and part time virtual
- Very happy to have students back in the new school with the addition of 30 new students from Hardisty
- Planning for infrastructure work on main street in 2021. It is a big project with underground work and street paving. Starting the engineering work now
- Many things on hold due to COVID – no Santa Daze this year but local businesses still doing Christmas promotions

◊ **Killam** – Ben Kellert

- Re-opening the pool and rink
- Hockey is going

- Opened the indoor playground
- Daycare is open
- Real estate Sales are good
- Completed the renovation on care facility couples' suites
- Killam school held a highly successful online auction where they raised \$7000

◊ **Paintearth County** – Stan Schulmeister

- Held organizational meeting, looking at all committee and boards and what they're doing
- Valley Ski Hill complete and making snow
- 3 new windfarms kicking tires
- IPL pipeline complete

◊ **Ryley** – Brian Ducherer

- The pool is open
- Ag Society receives money from land they seed and harvest. They had 5 combines harvesting with 100% to the ag society
- 3 blocks of road, sewer, and water upgrades at a cost of \$1.4 million with paving next summer
- As of September 1, 2020, Beaver Municipal Solutions is now an MCC, works independent of the Alberta Government, the new Board will take over November 1st
- Grant from the Alberta Government for solar panels and now run our Municipal buildings

◊ **Viking** – Debbie O'Toole-Balaban

- The town has been in talks with Alberta Transportation to fix and or replace the service road by the gas stations west of highway 36 for the past 5 years. Finally, we may see some action this year. The road will make it more serviceable for truckers and local traffic
- We have been replacing drainage culverts in the north end draining to the east side of town to prevent further flooding in town. We have had issues with county water being rerouted through town and excessive amount of rain fall; the system was not made to handle that amount of water. Hopefully, next spring we will have no flood issues.

◊ **Town of Wainwright** – Carley Herbert

- The town is offering a 25% rebate promotion on all town-owned lots, residential, commercial, and industrial
- Jingle & Mingle Wainwright promotion will include Light Up Nite on November 12th and (details TBA)
- Circle K is under construction next to Tim Horton's
- Innovation Masterclass, partnership between the Town of Wainwright & Flagstaff County, is underway with 6 students. This program works with local business to see

how they can bring in innovation and technology to their business to be successful in the future

- *What to Know Before Getting into E-Commerce* webinar was held on October 21st
- Promoting Wainwright Health Care Aid program in cooperation with Medicine Hat College. Will start in January of 2021. Coursework online with labs and practicums in Wainwright & District. Deadline to apply is December 20th, 2020
- Working on bringing a Rural Nursing program to Wainwright for fall 2021
- Wainwright welcomes Dr. Vetter who is doing maternity and minor surgical procedures in the community

◊ **Associate Member** – Arnold Hanson

- Harvest completed and, in the bins
- Hwy 36 is busy
- Downfall – with the prices of barley so high, cattle market has hit a hold
- Sloughs are being drained

◊ **Workforce Consultant, Alberta Labour, and Immigration** - Jean Vidal

- **Canada-Alberta Job Grant** –this program is continuous intake. Applying for the Canada Alberta Job Grant is now online <http://www.albertacanada.com/jobgrant>
- This program can also be used to train an unemployed Albertan that you might want to consider hiring... and at 100% reimbursement.
- There is an informative YouTube video that was also made and can be viewed <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uw6DmiTL9rk&t=102s> and if employers have further questions, they are welcome to contact me at jean.vidal@gov.ab.ca
- September's unemployment rate for this area (Camrose-Drumheller) is **12.4%**, only slightly lower than Calgary and Edmonton. A balanced labour market is 5%. To see September's unemployment rate in different areas across the province, click <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/2727158> for the details
- For the Weekly Economic Review: <https://open.alberta.ca/>
- One of the top ten in demand occupations is truck drivers, and there is now a program to assist young people wanting to get into the occupation through Trucking HR Canada. They are offering training funds to employers to train new hires ages 15-30 in trucking or related roles. Full details on their up to \$10,000 per person fund can be found <https://truckinghr.com/hr-training-resources/wage-subsidies/>

8. Next Meeting – 6PM December 17, 2020 (Election of Executive)

Chair B. Ducherer addressed the group –

- To Shelley Cook, on behalf of the Executive Board, Thank you very much for your time on the board. We wish you well on your new endeavors.
- To BRAED's Executive Director – Great job on Guest Speakers. Both were awesome.
- Meeting adjourned at 8:20pm



Stan Schulmeister, Secretary



Brian Ducherer, Chair

Sept 28, 21