



**ADDISON COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Date: April 17, 2025 (Hybrid)

Board Members Present: Chris Lapierre, Jason Larocque, Gina Larrow, Nicole MacTavish, Richard McKerr, Susan Ritter, Ryan Bartlett (7:37 AM), David Castle, Bob Ortmyer

ACEDC Staff Present: Fred Kenney, Camille Lyons, Alex-Armani-Munn, Nichole Bachand-Bartlett

Absent: Renny Perry, Mark Foster, Darcy Tarte, Adam Lougee

Call to Order:

7:33 AM Jason called the meeting to order.

Introductions: In-person attendees introduced themselves

Changes to Agenda:

- Add brief Executive Session.

7:35 AM: Jason requested approval of the agenda as amended.

Motion: Chris Lapierre moved to amend and accept the agenda.

Second: Susan Ritter

VOTE: 8-0-0

Approve Minutes of the March 20, 2025, Board Meeting:

Jason requested a motion to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2025, Board meeting.

Motion: Richard McKerr moved to approve the minutes.

Second: Chris Lapierre

7:37 AM VOTE: 8-1-0 (Susan Ritter abstained, Absent)

March Staff Activity Report: Fred Kenney

- A lot of start-up and new business activity.
- Fred has been taking Alex to a lot of introductory meetings with businesses and organizations in the area. We have spoken to four different people who are potential new borrowers. There hasn't been much new borrowing activity in the past few months. Some are acquisitions, some are renovations, some expansions and one is a current borrower who needs to add to their loan. Will be scheduling the Loan Committee.
- Great turnout for March ACEDC & ACCoC Webinar about ChatGPT, approx. 35 attendees.
- Fred and Alex attended the annual Legislative Coffee at the beginning of March. Met nine out of ten of our delegates from this area and many other legislators as well.
- Camille finalized the IRP application and submitted it by the end of March. Camille received a response from USDA/RD staff stating that the application will be reviewed this week.



Continued March Staff Activity Report....

- ACEDC retained a new attorney. Dave Venman out of Vergennes.
- Two new members in March. All start-Up businesses. Lincoln Peak Vineyard and FarmWise Solutions.
- February and March M&C Reports are in the Board Meeting Packet.
- Camille is actively working on some new grant opportunities, and we will have some communications coming out this week announcing some upcoming grant programs available over the next 6 months. Hoping to generate some interest among our community partners and municipalities. Staying active with grant assistance.
- Nicole MacTavish and Alex are working on the potential to host a legislator tour at the Hannaford Career Center later this year. Allowing them the opportunity to see the Career Center firsthand, engage with Nicole and gain a better understanding of the significant impact the Career Center makes in our local community.
- Confirmed Basin Harbor is the venue for the annual Board Retreat.
- Also confirmed Town Hall Theatre for ACEDC's Annual Meeting for the evening of Thursday November 6th, 2025.
- Confirmed Lincoln Peak Winery for the Mixer, exact date in September to be determined.
- Updates on the predevelopment work for Middlebury Industrial Park. We had a good meeting with Middlebury College, they are very supportive of the project. We are meeting with the Town Manager of Middlebury, Mark Pruhenski and Assistant Manager David Sophrin, tomorrow Friday April 18th, 2025, and will be going before the Select Board next Tuesday April 22nd, 2025, in hopes of gaining their support and financial participation. After that meeting Alex will work with Camille on securing engineering services for that project.
- REDS (Regional Economic Development Strategy) is under way. REDS was an action called for under the West Central Vermont CEDS (Conference of Economic Development Strategy) which calls for the specific action to come up with an economic development plan specific to Addison County and in addition to that the REDS will serve as an official update to the Ac Regional Plan Economic Chapter which was drafted in 2004 and hasn't had a significant update since. The REDS will also inform ACEDC efforts and guide our strategic planning. Will be convening the REDS committee next month which includes Nicole MacTavish, Mark Foster, and Renny Perry and there is another seat available if anyone is interested.
- In partnership with Bristol Core, Vergennes Partnership and Better Middlebury Partnership and are hosting a small business forum at the Bristol Library on April 28th. Several Addison County legislative representatives will be attending as well as staff from the Congressional delegation. Opportunity for businesses to share their concerns and challenges they are facing surrounding tariffs and other issues at the federal level.

Event is capped at 30 attendees; this week we sent an invitation with a registration form to express interest in attending. Then Alex and three other directors from Middlebury organizations will review and pick 30 people to attend and make deliberate invitations to ensure we have the best mix of folks from different municipalities, different areas, and different industries so that we can get as much representation out of it as possible



- You will see a couple of emails from Fred as the organizer of the Board and Executive Committee Meetings, cancelling them and Alex will send out new calendar invites for the meetings.

Citizen Comments: None

Transition Update: Fred Kenney and Alex Armani-Munn

Fred is working part-time starting Monday April 14th and will continue to reduce his hours until June. Alex and Fred looked at a plan of projects Fred needs to wrap up before he leaves and other topics he needs to cover before he goes on retirement. Fred and Alex should be able to get through most of that and the remaining meetings in the county throughout May. Fred will still be around but copy Alex on all emails/correspondences. If the resolution on the agenda today passes, Alex will officially take over May 1st.

Board Resolution to Authorize a New Executive Director

Motion: Susan Ritter moved to approve the resolution, as presented, to authorize Alex Armani-Munn as Executive Director of ACEDC with all powers and authority as allowed by the Corporation Bylaws, policies, and this Resolution, as of May 1, 2025.

Second: Nicole MacTavish

VOTE: 9-0-0

Gina Larrow, as Board Secretary, will execute agreement and documents then meet with Fred to switch over bank signatures and any other transitions required.

Annual Retreat: Alex Armani-Munn

May 22nd 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM at Basin Harbor

- See Alex's draft agenda in the Board Packet.

Regarding OPOS: Alex Armani-Munn

After meeting with the executive committee, Alex received strong feedback that there was too much time spent on the left side of the OPOS at past retreats and not enough left available to discuss strategy.

Alex Arman-Munn: Does the board feel strongly about needing focus on the left side? No **Jason Laroque:** Some threats could probably be crossed off.

Alex Armani-Munn: I would like to revisit a different model next year for the strategic plan.

Susan Ritter: Can remove leadership transition out of the weakness category.

Fred Kenney: Would it be worth adding the volatility at the national level to the threat category.

Susan Ritter: Yes.

Fred Kenney: It could affect our funding.



Continued Annual Retreat Agenda Discussion: Alex Armani-Munn

With Camille's title change to Project and Grants Manager it made sense to not only have her doing the grant research, applications, and administration but to shift all the grant tracking and reporting to her as well, originally it was the Office Operations Manager's position. Now she can see the grant through its entire life cycle.

That then allows Nichole to focus more on marketing, social media, and communications. We are paying Clover Ridge a substantial amount monthly to do a lot of that work and with Nichole's experience and skillset we know she has the capability to do that inhouse. Fred made this observation and talked with Alex, and everyone/staff was excited to jump onboard and excited to make the shift.

Discussed the options for how some of the time during the morning of the retreat is spent. Morning discussion will set the table for the strategic planning in the afternoon.

Would folks prefer to break it up and be more interactive, or are we ok with back to back presentations?

Gina: It's a long day so some interaction is nice but hearing you (Alex) say you prefer your original plan to have the presentation and discussion then I think it's important for us to hear that as the new director you feel there's a benefit to sticking with your plan to present and discuss.

All agree and there will be enough time for breaks and other interaction.

Executive Session:

8:06 AM **Motion:** Susan Ritter made a motion to enter executive session to discuss Personnel, as provided by 1 VSA Section 313(a)(3).

Second: Gina Larrow

VOTE: 9-0-0

End Executive Session: 8:12 AM

Adjourn:

8:14 AM **Motion:** Nicole MacTavish moved to adjourn.

Second: Dave Castle

VOTE: 9-0-0

Next Board Meeting: Annual Board Retreat May 22nd at Basin Harbor. Next is June 19th.

Respectfully submitted, Nichole Bachand-Bartlett, Office Operations Manager