Board of Directors Meeting Minutes – 6/20/25

Location: Zoom Meeting Online
Directors Attending in Person: None
Directors Attending Remotely: Conrad Harris, Jill Jaret-Rossi, Jeremy Elliott, Ron Carter, Andrea Cohen
Directors Excused: Dody Day, Erik Remmers, Joe Woodin, Tina Norton
Also Attending: LEDC Executive Director Pat Ripley, LCPC Executive Director Tasha Wallis

LEDC ED Pat Ripley called the meeting to order at 8 a.m. Friday, June 20th. Board members did not have any additions or changes to the agenda. There were also no community announcements. The meeting began with an introduction from recently appointed board member Andrea Cohen of the Vermont Electric Coop. Andrea has extensive experience in economic development and advocacy having served as director of Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility. She currently serves as Manager of Government Affairs and Member Relations for the Coop. Board members welcomed Andrea to the group and expressed gratitude for her willingness to participate and bring her economic development experience to LEDC. Board members in attendance also introduced themselves and provided some background on their experience with LEDC and beyond.

Lamoille County Planning Commissioner Tasha Wallis was also present and provided the board with some updates on items her team is currently working on, including hazard mitigation projects around the county, recent broadband buildout progress and more. She also discussed LEDC's potential future role in developing infrastructure in Lamoille County, specifically water and wastewater capacity for Lamoille County communities. Lamoille County currently has less water and wastewater capacity than the Town of Essex, she said. The group agreed to discuss LEDC's potential role in this effort at a future meeting.

The board then turned its attention to the May 16 board meeting minutes. There were no suggested changes or additions to the minutes. Jill Jaret-Rossi motioned to approve the minutes and Ron Carter seconded that motion. The motion passed with one abstention from Andrea Cohen.

The group then turned its attention to the monthly financial reports. There were no major changes or developments to mention in the reports, LEDC Pat Ripley said, adding that everything is business as usual. Jill Jaret-Rossi made a motion to approve the financial reports and Ron Carter seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

LEDC Pat Ripley then provided updates on several items LEDC is working on, starting with the project work at the Johnson Industrial Park project and the Salvation Farms project. The latter will likely no longer involve LEDC since Salvation Farms has opted to move to Hardwick, which is outside Lamoille County and LEDC's coverage area, he said. LEDC ED Pat Ripley also added that the NEPA environmental review for the Johnson Project is getting close to finalized, which will be a big step toward project completion. He also provided updates regarding LEDC's annual membership drive, which wraps up at the end of the fiscal year June 30th. As reported at previous meetings, the membership drive is not reaching last year's levels of participation from businesses. The same efforts have been made by LEDC to recruit and maintain members but, Ripley said, he believes

economic uncertainty and reduced revenues for businesses have some trimming their budgets and removing expenses like annual LEDC memberships. He also added that this is not a budgeting problem for LEDC and that the inability to find a suitable Membership and Marketing Director since the departure of the previous director has him thinking of moving in another direction with the membership work. He said he is leaning toward hiring contractors to handle some of the marketing work and continuing to handle the membership drive in house without making a hire, but that it would mean a reduced focus on membership recruiting. Conrad Harris and Jill Jaret-Rossi both expressed support for LEDC Director Pat Ripley to make that determination and other board members agreed. LEDC ED Pat Ripley said he would include a line item in the fiscal year 2026 budget to cover these expenses and potential other resulting expenses from handling all membership activities in house. He added that he would be considering the best path forward over the next few months. LEDC ED Pat Ripley also presented a draft budget for FY 2026 to the board and reviewed it with the board. He also reminded the board that there will be no meeting in July.

The group then turned its attention to a resignation by board member Geoff Lindemer. Jill Jaret-Rossi motioned to accept the resignation and Ron Carter seconded that motion. The motion passed unanimously.

There were no questions regarding ED Pat Ripley's monthly report. The group then spent time offering community announcements and event sharing. The meeting adjourned at 8:49 a.m.