

Northern Vermont Economic Development District

Board Meeting

October 7th, 2025

On Site Meeting Location: North Hero House 3643 US Route 2
North Hero, VT 05474

There is no Zoom option

Wood Fired Pizza to be served at noon.

Meeting starts at 1:00

AGENDA

1. Call the Meeting to Order - Pat Ripley called the meeting called to order at 1:11
2. Introductions
 - a. Dave Snedeker, Kyle Dwyer, Abby Long, Marty Feltus, Tasha Wallis, Jackie Dagger, Pat Ripley, Bill Sheets, Tim Smith, Ann Nygard, Andy Julow, Scott Johnstone, Lisa Birmingham, Fauna Hurley, Elisabeth Nance, Morgan Nichols, Catherine Dimitruk, Bob Buermann
3. Approve Minutes – Dave Snedeker moved to approve the minutes, Tasha Wallis seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.
4. NVDA Board Appointment – Abby Long (vote) - Abby Long introduced her work as the Executive Director for Kingdom Trails and time on the NEK Collaborative Board. Tasha Wallis made a motion to appoint Abby, Lisa Birmingham seconded. Abby was appointed unanimously.
5. Lamoille River EDA Grant update – Tasha Wallis provided an update on the EDA Grant being used to expand hydrological modeling of the Lamoille River. All RPCs and RDCs in the modelling region have been engaged and work on modeling has been taking place over the past few months. A larger planning grant to further projects coming out of this modeling has been applied for. Tasha also noted that CDBG applications were due at the end of September. Tim noted that this grant paid for a workshop held two weeks ago regarding flood preparedness.

6. Presentation: Jackie Dagger Program Manager for Vermont Outdoor Recreation

Economic Collaborative

- VOREC was established in 2017 via executive order with the goal of strengthening outdoor recreation infrastructure and maximizing economic benefits associated with it. Move Forward Together Vermont is the strategic vision for outdoor recreation, acting as the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). This plan informs how investments are made across the state in outdoor recreation. The two primary goals of this plan are equity and climate resilience, with 19 priority actions spread across three themes (stewardship, wellness, and economic development).
- Local Level Economic Impact Project - Assessment of existing data regarding economic impact of outdoor recreation, CORE toolkit for local level impacts, and final recommendations report.
 - Pat asked if towns will be getting a set of tools to gather data or actual data to work with. Jackie indicated towns would have access to tools that aid in data collection/guidance on how data can be used at the local level.
- Toolkit is still being wrapped up with a larger launch planned for early 2026. Will include four guided sections (background, build your case, create your outdoor rec economic snapshot, and “deeper dive.”)
- Next steps include wrap-up presentation (10/15), final reports to pilot communities (end of October), and Vermont CORE Toolkit Launch (early 2026). Toolkit launch will have associated webinar and subsequent trainings detailing how to use the tool/potential benefits.

7. Federal Legislative Updates

a. Fauna Hurley -Senator Welch’s Office

- i. Offices are still open at the moment despite the government shutdown and looking to hear feedback about any problems individuals or organizations may be experiencing. No additional information on supplemental funds is available at the moment. Interested in hearing about the impacts of ACA funding ending, currently pushing for this in budget resolution.

b. Morgan Nichols – Congresswoman Balint’s Office

- i. Concerns about healthcare access and food security; meeting with healthcare workers scheduled in Winooski to understand impacts specifically on small healthcare facilities. Participated in New England/Quebec discussion regarding the state of trade/challenges businesses are currently facing. Monitoring the impact of drought on the farming community, outdoor recreation, and tourism. Looking for feedback on effects of the shutdown; possibly meeting with federal employees in order to better support them.

1. Tasha asked whether USDA funds intended for individual states will still be available. Morgan indicated this is still uncertain and will be following up.
2. Abby asked if any info regarding USDA and Rural Business Development Grants that were supposed to be announced in July is available. Morgan indicated she will be looking into this and encouraged everyone to share these sorts of concerns via email as they arise.
3. Katherine indicated that Emergency Management Planning Grant delays have been hugely impactful across the state. Funding has been held up since 10/1. Katherine also indicated that the EDA planning grant went through and reporting has been streamlined.

c. James Paradissis - Senator Sander's Office

i. N/A

8. Northern Border Regional Comm. update – Skipped

9. CEDS Document Review - NVDA

- a. Discussion about how to provide feedback on draft CEDS; will be sending out google doc version for all to provide edits. Initial feedback included the following
 - i. Housing - Action items need to be bulked up
 - ii. Outdoor Rec - Important for our region and should be bulked up/made to align with information from presentation today.
 - iii. Some topics added earlier in the document must also be added to SWOT analysis
 - iv. Colors of certain charts must be adjusted to accommodate visually impaired. Numbers should also be included in the appendix.

10. Partner's Updates

- a. Finished universal service plan funded by ARPA in August; working to complete Wolcott. NEK Broadband and Northwest Fiberworx both applied for additional grant funding.
- b. Finished last phase of environmental restoration and parking improvements at Smugglers Notch. Used EDA money for part of the final phase.

11. Upcoming meeting dates:

- a. Tuesday, December 2nd - Virtual Meeting
- b. Tuesday, February 3rd, 2026

12. Walking Tour of North Hero

13. Old/New Business - None

14. Adjourn - Meeting adjourned at 2:46

