



## LAKE CHAMPLAIN – LAKE GEORGE REGIONAL PLANNING BOARD

Regular Meeting of the Board

October 7, 2025 at 1:00 PM

Clinton County Legislative Conference Room, 137 Margaret Street #208, Plattsburgh NY 12901

Hamilton Co Bd of Supervisors Conference Room, 102 County View Drive, Lake Pleasant NY 12108

Warren County Committee Room, 1340 US 9, Lake George NY 12845

### **AGENDA**

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of July 8, 2025 Annual Meeting minutes (Board Action)
4. Treasurer's Report (Board Action)
  - June, July, & August 2025 Abstracts (Board Action)
5. Strategic Plan Presentation – Lauren Palmer, Everstrive Solutions
  - Adoption of 2025 – 2030 Strategic Plan (Board Action)
6. 2025 Budget Amendment (Board Action)
7. 2026 Salary Schedule Amendment (Board Action)
8. 2025 Budget Amendment (Board Action)
9. Award of LCLGRPB-06-25 On-Call Mobile Wireless Planning and Engineering RFP (Board Action)
10. Amendment of RFP Award amount for LCLGRPB-02-25
11. Loan Committee Report
12. Principal Planner Report
13. Economic Development Coordinator Report
14. Executive Director's Report
15. 2026 Meeting Dates
16. Other
17. Next Meeting Date – January 13, 2026 at 1:00 pm – IN PERSON IN LAKE GEORGE
18. Adjourn



LAKE CHAMPLAIN-LAKE GEORGE

# REGIONAL PLANNING

BETH GILLES

DIRECTOR

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Chairman O'Brien called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Shannon Thayer-Voting (Plattsburgh)  
Joshua Kretser-Voting (Plattsburgh)  
Kevin Randall-Voting (Plattsburgh)  
Meg Wood-Voting (Lake George)  
Ike Tyler-Voting (Plattsburgh)  
Anthony Fernandez-Voting (Lake Pleasant)  
Christy Wilt-Voting (Lake Pleasant)  
Jodie Small  
John Taflan-Voting (Lake George)  
Kevin Geraghty  
Dave O'Brien-Voting (Lake George)  
Evera Sue Clary-Voting (Lake George)  
Charlie Tall-Voting (Lake George)  
Bob Henke  
Christine Norton  
Al Nolette

### MEMBERS ABSENT

Mark Henry  
Rebecca Murphy  
Karl Weiss  
Shaun Gilliland  
Michael Diskin  
Jim Dougan  
Beth Hunt  
Clay Arsenault  
Tracy Eldridge  
John Strough  
Frank Thomas  
Kevin Hajos  
Deb Donohue

### ALSO PRESENT

Beth Gilles  
Allison Gaddy  
Sam Blake  
Jessica Leerkes  
Kiersten McCane  
Colleen Nelson  
Cassandra VanCott  
Lauren Palmer

Ms. Gilles took roll call and established a quorum.

### Approval of July 8, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Chairman O'Brien asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from July 8, 2025.

Motion made by Mr. Tall.

Seconded by Ms. Clary.

Hearing no additions or corrections, and no opposed, motion carried.

### Treasurer's Report

Mr. Nolette noted that the financials are doing well, the operating fund is strong, and the organization is maximizing investments in the ICS account. To date, LCLGRPB has earned \$81,850 on the investment account, with \$74,378 being allocated towards operations and offsetting



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salaries. Mr. Nolette informed the Board that the consolidated sheet within the accounting packet shows \$480,000 in the fund balance level, which doesn't include 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter billings, so the actual number is closer to \$700,000.

Chairman O'Brien asked for a motion to accept the Treasurer's report.

Motion made by Mr. Tyler.

Seconded by Ms. Wood.

Hearing no further discussion and no opposed, motion carried.

Chairman O'Brien asked for a motion to accept the 2025 June, July and August Abstracts as presented.

Motioned by Ms. Clary.

Seconded by Mr. Tall.

Hearing no further discussion and no opposed, motion carried.

### **Strategic Plan Presentation – Lauren Palmer, Everstrive Solutions**

Ms. Palmer presented on the final Strategic Plan that is a culmination of months of work, from interviewing board members, staff, and stakeholders, to hosting the Board Retreat and an all-staff workshop. These are the suggestions that Everstrive Solutions has for LCLGRPB to review and put into place over the next 5 years to ensure a successful organization.

Ms. Palmer stressed that the intention of this plan is to be an internal facing document that allows staff and board members to review current work as well as plan as it aligns with LCLGRPB's goals and tactics. To begin, the planning process included document review, staff and leadership interviews, peer research, stakeholder survey, focus group, board retreat and an all-staff workshop. The key research findings include LCLGRPB excels in grant writing and administration, they're not well understood by all stakeholders, is a small team with exposure from turnover, and is working on the right priorities (housing, small businesses, broadband, and community/regional planning). There are strategic pillars that are goal statements for LCLGRPB, which includes core services, regional leadership & strategic coordination, and organizational sustainability & visibility.



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The first pillar, core services, includes strategic goals that could incorporate strengthening the region's ability with economic revitalization, broadband expansion and housing, expert guidance, and fulfilling the responsibilities of an Economic Development District. Success metrics for these goals include the number of funded projects initiated and/or completed, customer satisfaction from local government partners, and increased loan program utilization.

The second pillar is regional leadership and strategic coordination, which would establish LCLGRPB as a proactive regional convener on priorities including rural health care, transportation and workforce development, as well as strengthen strategic alignment across local and regional plans. Success metrics for this pillar are increased number of regional convenings hosted or facilitated by LCLGRPB, increased participation rates, and resource mapping.

The third pillar, organizational sustainability and visibility, focuses on strengthening the planning board's internal capacity, leadership continuity, and public engagement. The strategic goals for this pillar are establishing fully independent systems for internal services such as finance, accounting and human resources, increasing board member engagement, and strengthening knowledge sharing and staff development for leadership succession. Success metrics for this pillar could include an increase in board attendance at regular meetings, completion of phased transition plans for administrative functions, and results from annual staff satisfaction or engagement surveys.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Chairman O'Brien shared his appreciation for the plan bringing together many ideas that have been discussed previously but haven't been implemented, so this is a clear plan for the board and LCLGRPB to follow for the years to come for success. Ms. Wood shared her appreciation for the plan being in a context for the board to follow when it comes to planning and reviewing work annually. Ms. Thayer acknowledged the breakdown of how to implement these changes outlined in the strategic plan as it provides a reasonable metric for the board.

Chairman O'Brien asked for a motion to adopt the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan as presented.

Motion made by Mr. Taflan.

Seconded by Ms. Wood.



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Hearing no further discussion and no opposed, motion carried.

## **2025 Budget Amendment**

Ms. Gilles noted the changes in this revised budget amendment which includes:

- Increase legal by \$5,000 due to needing a legal review of the bylaws and policies as the strategic plan implementation begins.
- Increased travel and training by \$10,000 due to a recently signed contract with Essex County to conduct a vacant and blighted housing inventory, which will be taking place next month. Ms. Gilles referred to the revenue of the contract with Essex County, which is a total of \$25,000, \$15,000 of that will be paid this year (2025) and \$10,000 will be paid at the beginning of 2026, with the project completion scheduled for February.

Chairman O'Brien asked for a motion to accept the 2025 Budget Amendment.

Motion made by Ms. Clary.

Seconded by Mr. Tyler.

Hearing no further discussion and no opposed, motion carried.

## **2026 Salary Schedule Amendment**

The proposed salary schedule changes include:

- Title change for Jessica Leerkes whose current title is Economic Development Coordinator, and the proposed change would make her title Principal Project Coordinator.
- The Assistant Economic Development Coordinator position has been eliminated, and the Junior Planner position has been added back to the salary schedule for continuity of planning titles.
- The Economic Development Coordinator position has remained in the salary schedule for a future hire to capitalize on pillar 1 of the strategic plan, which embraces and fulfills the responsibilities of an economic development district.

Chairman O'Brien asked for a motion to accept the 2026 Salary Schedule Amendment.

Motion made by Mr. Tall.

Seconded by Ms. Wood.



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Hearing no further discussion and no opposed, motion carried.

### **2026 Budget Amendment**

Ms. Gilles explained that salaries and fringe increased by about \$50,000, legal was increased by \$18,000 due to legal guidance that will be needed in 2026 as LCLGRPB reviews board composition and potential changes to it, and an additional \$5,000 was added to travel and training. LCLGRPB was recently awarded a new NBRC grant on the Adirondack Hub Workforce Housing Build-Out Analysis, so \$65,000 is being allocated to hire outside assistance for that.

On the revenue sheet, it shows LCLGRPB being awarded a \$20,000 grant to work on stormwater education, as well as the \$10,000 for the Essex County blighted house inventory work. Additionally, LCLGRPB just signed a 3-year, \$245,000 contract with the Adirondack Community Foundation to work on workforce housing within the Adirondack Park, and those payments will be made in installments.

Chairman O'Brien asked for a motion to adopt the 2026 Budget Amendment.

Motion made by Mr. Tyler.

Seconded by Mr. Tall.

Hearing no further discussion and no opposed, motion carried.

Ms. Gilles noted that LCLGRPB has written 50 grants in 2025 totaling \$65 million in funding. Of the 50 submitted grants, 15 have been announced, 7 were successful totaling \$4 million. Currently, there are 43 outstanding grants, plus 3 additional grants that will be submitted by the end of October 2025. Ms. Gilles provided a heads up to the board members that there will be another review of the budget in the foreseeable future.

### **Award of LCLGRPB-06-25 On-Call Mobile Wireless Planning and Engineering RFP**

Ms. Gilles explained that this is an NBRC grant for cell availability throughout the region. Once the drive test was completed, an RFP was posted for an on-call engineer to research the reason there isn't service and then attempt to engineer solutions. The RFP received 4 responses and the group that reviewed the responses chose to award Global Technology Associates (GTA), who are the same people hired to do the drive test.



Chairman O'Brien asked for a motion to accept the RFP award to Global Technology Associates.

Motion made by Ms. Clary.

Seconded by Ms. Wood.

Hearing no further discussion and no opposed, motion carried.

**Amendment of RFP Award Amount for LCLGRPB-02-25**

Previously, the Executive Committee approved an RFP award for Amy Fitzgerald Planning for \$20,600. The amount needs to be amended to increase it by \$1,000 for a total amount of \$21,600.

Chairman O'Brien asked for a motion to approve the amendment for LCLGRPB-02-25.

Motion made by Mr. Tall.

Seconded by Ms. Clary.

Hearing no further discussion and no opposed, motion carried.

**Loan Committee Report**

The Loan Administrative Committee has met 3 times since the last regular board meeting. The committee approved a loan application from Four Corners Café and Eatery, LLC in Speculator, Hamilton County for \$155,000, as well as a loan application for The Hedges on Blue Mountain Lake for \$100,000 to construct a new laundry facility, both from the Small Business Loan Fund (SBLF). New Way Lunch in Warrensburg has paid off their loan and the collateral has been released. Additionally, Christopher's Restaurant in Plattsburgh has paid off their loan and the collateral release is in process.

The committee has instructed Ms. Gilles to file for a foreclosure of Karasell Flowers in Fort Edward, Washington County, which has two loans of \$60,000 in RLF 5 and \$68,000 from the SBLF. The total combined principal owed is \$100,367.13 and collateral is a mortgage on the business property.

As of the date of this meeting, there are 51 loans in the portfolio totaling \$5,476,000 in loan capital, \$3,253,000 in outstanding principal, and there's currently over \$1 million in each fund to lend.



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## **Principal Planner Report**

Ms. Gaddy spoke about LCLGRPB's Forward Together conference held on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, at the Lodge at Schroon Lake. The sold-out conference included Kisha Santiago, Deputy Secretary of State for Planning, Development and Community Infrastructure as the keynote speaker, 90 registrants and 12 presenters for the morning session, along with 50 attendees and 10 agency representatives for the "Funders Roundtable Lunch" in the afternoon.

A grant from the Lake Champlain Basin Program of \$108,000 for the Eastern Hemlock Assessment for the Lake George Watershed project has begun recently, and the contract with CC Environmental will assess the condition of Hemlock trees in the Lake George Watershed and provide landowner education and outreach.

There are 15 active grants which include submission of 2 grant applications for Building Recreational Infrastructure for Communities, Kids and Seniors, as well as 7 applications for NYS DEC Adirondack Communities Smart Growth grants within Hamilton, Essex and Warren Counties.

## **Economic Development Coordinator Report**

There are 21 active grants and 3 WIIA applications submitted, which include a variety of project types including traditional infrastructure, development, theater renovation, trail upgrades and planning, and brownfields assessment.

Ms. Leerkes is working with Elizabethtown on their sewer project to advance funding for engineering to achieve 30% design for potential future funding revenue. The total project cost is \$38 million.

Mr. Leerkes shared that Clinton County was awarded \$180,000 to complete a pre-planning inventory and analysis of potential Brownfield sites, so the county issued an RFP for the project and Barton & Loguidice was awarded for the contract. Kickoff for the project is set for October 23, 2025, and will identify underutilized, vacant and abandoned parcels, as well as the creation of a county-wide inventory of areas where significant adverse impacts are present. Additionally, Ms. Leerkes explained the EDA Resiliency Grant, which is disaster recovery funding available to communities that received major disaster declarations in 2023 and 2024.



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## **Executive Director Report**

Ms. Gilles shared that she participated in Adirondack Explorer's "A Fair Share" panel, the NYS Adaptation and Resilience Plan Local Partners Advisory panel, presented at the International Economic Development Council Conference, and led a Housing Workgroup for NCREDC Strategy update. Ms. Gilles and Ms. Leerkes welcomed NBRC to Essex County to view some NBRC funded projects including the sewer project in Elizabethtown, the Essex County Food Hub, as well as the water treatment plant in the Town of Essex. Additionally, LCLGRPB submitted 2 Water Quality Improvement Project applications for \$2.8 million and \$2.12 million, as well as 2 Adirondack Smart growth applications for \$125,000 and \$109,749.

Highlights since the last board meeting include completing the strategic plan, hiring Trampoline Design as LCLGRPB's marketing firm, contracting with Essex County to complete a Vacant and Blighted Housing Inventory, along with partnering with the Adirondack Community Foundation to work with communities on workforce housing readiness, and approval of 2 loans and 2 potential applicants working with SBTA providers.

## **Next Meeting Date – January 13, 2026 at 1:00**

This annual board meeting will be in-person on January 13, 2026 at 1:00 in Lake George for elections of board members, etc. Ms. Gilles will send out the meeting invite to board members.

## **Other**

Chairman O'Brien thanked Cassandra VanCott on future success as her employment with LCLGRPB is ending on October 10, 2025.

Chairman O'Brien adjourned the meeting at 2:00 pm.

*Respectfully submitted by Kiersten McCane, Operations Coordinator*