

BACC Annual Meeting Minutes 11.03.25

In person: Jen Palmieri, John Kascenska, Michelle Cleveland, Karen Kennedy, Laura Malieswski, Burton Hinton, Chris Andrews, Kelly Greer, Dave Kennedy, Jim Crowe, Michael Crowe, Christine Emmons, Senator Russ Ingalls, Dennis Baiquinero, Michelle LaRocque Tipton, Ben Tipton, Markail Tipton, Renee Powers, Jack & Carol Mulligan, Georgia Gould, Jon Schaefer, Loralee Tester, Shawn Tester, Abby Long, Heather Tanner, Daniel Tanner, Marti & Fritx Walther, Jon Greeley, Victor Waryas, Kevin Duniho, Kris Graham, Kraig Sourbeer

John called the meeting to order at 6:30pm

Board Introductions: John Kascenska, President; Jen Palmieri; Chris Andrews, VP; Michelle Cleveland, Secretary, Karen Kennedy, Treasurer, and Burton Hinton.

It was mentioned that all members can come to our board meetings every other month.

Voting on renewing Karen Kennedy and Chris Andrews for another 3-year term onto the 2026 board. Christine made a motion to approve both the nominations for a 3-year term and Chris seconded for both, all members voted yes, and motion carried.

Feedback from Chamber members: All the events are great!

Business of the year presentation to East Burke Rentals:

Al and Robin cannot be here tonight. In response to receiving the award, the Beaupre's said, "We are so very grateful to the Chamber, community and supporting businesses that honored East Burke Rentals with this nomination of 2025 Business of the Year! We "thank you" for the recognition and really appreciate it."

Guest Speakers:

Jon Schaefer – Burke Mountain/Bear Den Partners: This was 5 years in the making and can't wait to work with all the businesses.

Mike Pieciak - Vermont State Treasurer: Emphasized that expanding housing is a major priority, with money being invested into communities. He also highlighted the Baby Bonds initiative, designed to reduce intergenerational poverty, strengthen rural economies, and encourage young Vermonters to stay in the state. His proposal would invest \$3,200 for every child born on Medicaid, with the funds growing to an estimated \$11,500 by age 18 and \$24,500 by age 30. Beneficiaries would be required to live in Vermont when they withdraw the funds.

Shawn Tester, CEO of Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital, discussed the rising cost of health care and highlighted NVRH's new construction project, which will include 25 beds dedicated to mental health services. He also noted that NVRH has formed a partnership with North Country Hospital.

Review of 2024 – See attached summary

Meeting adjourned at 7:20pm