



Village of Arlington Heights
Arlington Economic Alliance
Community Room, 3rd Floor

October 18, 2023
7:30 AM

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Minutes 9/20/2023

IV. REPORTS

- A. Development Update

V. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Promotion of Manufacturing
- B. Small Business Assistance Opportunities

VI. NEW BUSINESS

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

- A. Public Comment

IX. ADJOURNMENT

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Arlington Economic Alliance
10/18/2023

Item: Minutes 9/20/2023

Department: Planning & Community Development

ATTACHMENTS:

Description

Minutes 9/20/2023

Type

Minutes

DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE HELD ON SEPTEMBER 20, 2023 AT 7:30 A.M. AT THE VILLAGE HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Andrew Stengren – Chairman
Rich Casey
Tonia Etoh
Tony Guido
Terry Iverson
Heather Larson
Kerri Oots
Michele Petrie
Jon Ridler

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Ellen Para
Brian Roginski
Andi Ruhl
John Toliopoulos

STAFF PRESENT:

Michael Mertes – Business Development Manager

ALSO PRESENT:

Keith Moens, Resident
Barb Kain, Township High School District 214
Kathy Gannon, Township High School District 214
Mary Ellen Graf, Township High School District 214
Alvin Lewis, John Hersey High School

Eric Dieterich, John Hersey High School
Rich Hyde, John Hersey High School
Emily Sohn, John Hersey High School
Heidi Weiner, Demgy Chicago
Justin Parietti, Demgy Chicago

Call to Order

Chair Andrew Stengren called the meeting to order at 7:32 AM.

Approval of Minutes – August 16, 2023

The meeting minutes of August 16, 2023 Arlington Economic Alliance meeting were reviewed.

HEATHER LARSON MOVED AND JON RIDLER SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE DRAFT AUGUST 16, 2023 ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE MEETING MINUTES. ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

Development Update

Demolition continues at Arlington Park. No formal redevelopment plan has been submitted at this time. A separate demolition permit has also been applied for at the International Plaza shopping center. Grace Terrace is a proposed 25-unit affordable housing development for persons with disabilities with priority given to veterans. The project would be located on Arlington Heights Road between Golf and Central. The proposal still requires review from the Housing, Design, and Plan Commissions. An updated proposal for a multi-family development at 116-120 W. Eastman Street was approved by the Design Commission. The amended project still requires Plan Commission review.

Arlington Alfresco Discussion

The last day of Arlington Alfresco for 2023 is Monday, September 25. Furniture will need to be removed by the following morning to allow for street cleaning and set-up for Harmony Fest featuring the Taste of Arlington Heights (September 29-30). Campbell Street and Vail Avenue will be re-opened to vehicular traffic on the morning of Sunday, October 1. Restaurants with individual approvals from the Village can have outdoor sidewalk dining through October 31.

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Promotion of Manufacturing

Mr. Mertes summarized discussions from the previous two Alliance meetings regarding the promotion of manufacturing in Arlington Heights. The Commission had asked to hear from High School District 214 in regards to their Apprenticeship program. Several representatives from District 214 came to this meeting to present on this topic, along with employees from Demgy Chicago, a company that participates in the Apprenticeship program.

Ms. Gannon provided an introduction of School District 214 and Ms. Kain spoke to the variety of career pathways that are offered to students, including manufacturing. This encompasses a sequence of courses beyond high school, as well as work-based learning, and a capstone early learning credential. Chairman Stengren asked how students learn about these programs, and Ms. Kain said that students are made aware by guidance counselors and are recommended partly based upon an eighth-grade "area of interest" survey.

Mr. Hyde stated the purpose of the program is to help kids find their passion, and Hersey High School offers industry-grade equipment to provide authentic experiences for the students. The schools look for industry partners to explain their needs, referencing welding as an example. Mr. Dieterich added to this, saying that the District shows students all the available programs to help find their niche. There are multiple routes that students can take and noted that his personal goal in high school wasn't necessarily college, which is why he took up welding at Harper College, and that some students may want an alternative to a traditional four-year college.

The Apprenticeship program was created four years ago, said Ms. Gannon, and provides an opportunity for students to also be paid to work for, and learn from, a participating company. Essentially, the students are employees of those businesses. There are over a dozen apprenticeships offered. Students apply their junior year, and the apprenticeship makes up about half of their senior-year coursework. The program started with four apprentices, and now has 44.

A student and current apprentice, Miss Sohn, discussed the experiences that led to her interest in manufacturing. She took fabrication tech classes at Hersey which affirmed her desire to pursue a career in that field. She stated that her goals are either to work for the company she is currently apprenticing for, Demgy Chicago, or build on her skills in college. Ms. Kain added that schedules are built around students' needs and meeting State graduation requirements. Ms. Gannon noted that there are coaching support systems for students as well.

Ms. Weiner of Demgy Chicago, a custom injection molding operation, has a company policy to help ensure employee growth and training opportunities. The talent pipeline for manufacturing is very small right now and District 214's program has been amazing. Ms. Weiner likened the program to "STEM without college debt", and said that the school district provides transportation for the apprentices which is also very helpful. Mr. Parietti, also of Demgy, sees value in the support their company gets from the school district and that Miss Sohn has been a great addition to their team. Miss Gannon added that Demgy has customized projects to help with Miss Sohn's educational growth.

Meet Chicago Northwest is working with the school district regarding hospitality apprenticeships, and Ms. Larson asked if there are specific training marks that a company has to reach. Mr. Parietti said that the work needs to be tailored to the individual student. The program has also helped the company with administrative needs, such as updating job descriptions. Mr. Iverson mentioned that he works with high schools in three different states and that District 214 has a great program that is an incredibly valuable resource. Mr. Casey asked how the school district can create more apprenticeships and grow the program. More staff time, as each apprenticeship is customized, would be helpful according to Ms. Gannon. Getting additional funding is also important. Ms. Kain added the importance of finding willing partners, and Mr. Iverson concurred while citing a need for more industry awareness.

In terms of outcomes, Ms. Kain explained that it depends on the student. Some go on to college, some go straight into the workforce, while some do both. Ms. Gannon added that there is no obligation by the participating business to continue employing the student following the conclusion of the school year. Mr. Iverson inquired about measurements where schools and districts are judged by the number or percentage of students that go on to college. Ms. Kain expressed value of some post-secondary education.

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Mr. Guido asked about the program being marketed to local manufacturers and Ms. Gannon said that District 214 is always looking for more partners. Chairman Stengren asked how a company gets involved with the program. Ms. Gannon responded that staff meets with the business owner and tours their facility. Background checks on the owners are run as well. Ms. Kain added that they want to make the process as simple for the business as possible. Mr. Ridler asked about return on investment and follow-up with students who have gone through the program. Ms. Gannon said that it can be difficult to track students once they have graduated, but some informal data is accessible such as individual success stories.

Ms. Oots asked about mentoring programs and Ms. Kain stated that the school district is making that a priority this year. Mr. Iverson offered to speak to students who are potentially interested in a career in manufacturing, and suggested mentorships via Zoom. Mr. Lewis invited the Economic Alliance to see the program first-hand at Hersey High School. Chairman Stengren asked that discussion of this topic continue at the Commission's next meeting.

Small Business Assistance Opportunities

Mr. Mertes is working with the Arlington Heights Memorial Library on an "open house" for small businesses the morning of October 25. Business owners are welcome to come to Village Hall and meet representatives from various organizations, specifically the Village, Library, Chamber of Commerce, Meet Chicago Northwest, SBDC at Harper College, SCORE, Park District, and School District 214 Apprenticeship program. Attendees can arrive and leave any time between 9:00am – 11:00am.

Mr. Mertes is also finalizing details for a Manufacturing program on November 1 and has been working with Mr. Iverson on it. High School District 214 will be in attendance to speak about their Apprenticeship program and IMEC (Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center) will speak about a grant program that they are offering. Also, Mr. Mertes has been in communication with Ms. Para regarding "thank you" notes to businesses and they will work on a template note for the Alliance's review.

Other Business and Public Comment

Mr. Mertes explained that the Village Board recently approved their two-year strategic priorities for 2024-2025. Three priorities in particular had an economic development focus:

- *Work with the Chicago Bears Football Club, our residents and business, all other local, regional, and state-wide partners to develop a responsible, mutually beneficial, and one-of-kind redevelopment plan for the former Arlington Racetrack that benefits our community's interests and is worthy of the property's legacy.*
- *Seek economic development initiatives to strengthen the local economy, reduce vacancies, and enhance key gateways.*
- *Seek, maintain, and expand attainable housing within the community.*

Adjournment

RICH CASEY MOVED AND HEATHER LARSON SECONDED A MOTION TO ADJOURN. ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 AM.

Andrew Stengren, Chair
Arlington Economic Alliance

Prepared by Department of Planning & Community Development