



Village of Arlington Heights
Arlington Economic Alliance
Commissions Room 2nd Floor
Arlington Heights Village Hall
33 S. Arlington Heights Road
Arlington Heights, IL 60005

July 16, 2014
7:30 AM

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Minutes - 5/28/14

IV. REPORTS

V. OLD BUSINESS

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Discussion of Alliance Membership
- B. Discussion of Alliance Mission

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

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Item: Minutes - 5/28/14

Department: Planning & Community Development

Minutes - 5/28/14

ATTACHMENTS:

Description

Minutes 5/28/14

Type

[Minutes](#)

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE HELD ON May 28, 2014 AT 7:30 A.M. AT THE VILLAGE HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tony Guido - Chairman
Sue Duchek
Mike Field
Regina Schlamp
Gary Skiba
Scott Whisler

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jamie Janeczko
Amy Philpott

STAFF PRESENT:

Michael Mertes – Business Development Coordinator

ALSO PRESENT:

Dave Parulo – Meet Chicago Northwest
Jon Ridler – Arlington Heights Chamber of Commerce

Item 1: Call to Order

Chairman Tony Guido called the meeting to order at 7:40 AM.

Item 2: Approval of Minutes – March 19, 2014

The meeting minutes of the March 19, 2014 Arlington Economic Alliance meeting were reviewed.

SUE DUCHEK MOVED AND GARY SKIBA SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE DRAFT MARCH 19, 2014 ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE MEETING MINUTES. ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

Item 3: Discussion of Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting – Alliance Mission

Tony Guido summarized the Committee-of-the-Whole meeting from May 12, 2014 in which the Arlington Economic Alliance asked the Village Board for guidance on the purpose and mission of the Alliance. Scott Whisler added that it was a good meeting and the main sentiment received was that the Alliance members should tell the Village Trustees what they would like to do and achieve. Sue Duchek agreed. The Committee-of-the-Whole meeting was an opportunity for the Board to understand why the Alliance is reviewing and potentially updating its mission. It's also an opportunity to empower the Commission.

Regina Schlamp said that the Village Board was able to share their thoughts on their perception of the Alliance's purpose. Taking what was learned from the COW meeting, now an updated vision for this commission can be created and its role can be determined. Mr. Guido discussed consideration of the Code language and whether some of it should be rewritten. The Village Board is interested in the Alliance's guidance and the purpose of this particular Alliance meeting should be to brainstorm ideas. Since, some of the Code language seems outdated, changes may be necessary. It's important to figure out what the Alliance is best able to accomplish, and channel the members' efforts towards this.

Mr. Whisler recommended less focus on marketing at this time, with Discover Arlington being discussed by a separate focus group. Also, it will take more than one Alliance meeting to determine its goals and mission. Determining the make-up of the Commission, as well as its responsibilities, should be a primary focus. Furthermore,

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the Alliance should exist to communicate with the Village Board on current business happenings. Jon Ridler agreed, feeling that the Alliance could assess the community's needs and provide desired expertise. Mr. Guido added that communication with Arlington Heights residents, as well as partnerships with relevant community organizations, is crucial. A mission statement would be very helpful.

Mike Field stressed avoiding any confusion or duplication with other entities, such as the Chamber of Commerce. It would be helpful to have clarification on the purpose of other complementary organizations. Ms. Schlamp feels that some of the business community doesn't view the Alliance as a resource, although they should. Ms. Duchek stated that the Alliance should look out for all businesses and business types in Arlington Heights. Organizations such as the Chamber and Visitors Bureau have specific members or entities that they are required to promote and provide services.

Mr. Guido referenced Part "a" of Section 6-505 of the Village Code, specifically relating to the intent and purpose of the Arlington Economic Alliance. Ms. Duchek and Mr. Whisler agreed that this language was still relevant. Additionally, significant business-related issues affecting the community should be discussed at Alliance meetings, such as when the Commission reviewed and made recommendations on the Village's permit processes. They would like themselves, as well as Staff, to proactively bring up and discuss such issues at future meetings. Mr. Field stressed leadership on bringing these topics and issues forward. Michael Mertes referred to monthly updates provided to the Alliance as reference tools for current community news. However, he will be more proactive in informing the Alliance as to communitywide business-related information.

Ms. Duchek recalled when the Alliance met less frequently than once a month (which is how often it currently meets). When certain topics came up, such as indoor smoking and Downtown parking issues, the Alliance took an active position. Gary Skiba mentioned that the Alliance should weigh in when there are commerce-related issues of Village-wide interest. Dave Parulo noted a need for a mechanism to draw the Commission's attention to these issues. Mr. Mertes stated that he is available as a resource as well, in case the Alliance members have questions.

Per the business retention aspect of the Alliance section of the Village Code, the Small Business Retention Agreement is covering businesses smaller than 2,000 square feet or with eight or fewer employees. Due to the diversity of businesses in Arlington Heights, as well as the sheer number (including home-based businesses, estimates are over 4,000), Mr. Ridler views retention as a valuable aspect for the Alliance to still have as part of their mission. The Small Business Retention Agreement could bring about topics that could be discussed by the Alliance. The Chamber is seeking to learn the hot-button issues during their retention outreach and report back to the Village for potential resolution. Mr. Mertes added that common themes can also be positive, and help the Village learn what are seen as its assets too. Some of the potential work items discussed during the Alliance's monthly meeting in February, such as broker coffees, could fall under the category of "Retention", according to Mr. Whisler.

Several Alliance members spoke to the need for having the language in the Code pertain more to providing oversight and input. Mr. Parulo recommended using language that makes sure to empower the Alliance, much to the suggestion of the Village Board. It was agreed that the concepts laid out in the Code should be focused on more than the wording, at least initially. Ms. Duchek added that discussing the Code is helping the Alliance better understand what has already been laid out in terms of direction, before moving forward with making changes. To the agreement of several Alliance members, Mr. Whisler also felt that the Executive Directors of the Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau (Meet Chicago Northwest) should have permanent seats on the Alliance, whether as a formal member or with ex-officio status. He also suggested having a manufacturing/industrial representative as well. Having a Top 20 employer was recommended additionally. The Alliance would like to fill the three current vacancies on the Commission.

Mr. Field suggested having an outline for the next Alliance meeting to focus more on individual topics. Concurring with this idea, Mr. Guido added that the goal of this meeting specifically was to brainstorm and gauge everyone's opinions. He sees benefit to inviting other organizational representatives (Park District, Library, etc.) to better inform

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them and provide a Village-wide channel for what is being accomplished in terms of economic development. Mr. Field also would like to ensure that marketing is not taken off the Alliance's plate, as it's such a crucial part of business development efforts in any community. Perhaps the Commission just needs to consider its role in this aspect. Ms. Duchek and Mr. Whisler agree. They see the Alliance as able to offer valuable input on how marketing in Arlington Heights is achieved. She referenced the Commission's role in interviewing and providing feedback on the firm that developed the Discover Arlington campaign. The Economic Alliance has played an active role in promoting the community.

Regarding retention, Mr. Mertes noted that a lot of the feedback has been positive. However, business concerns have often varied on a case-by-case basis. There have not been one or two consistent sources of frustration among Arlington Heights businesses. Ms. Duchek pointed to the permitting process and how the Alliance worked with Village Staff to help streamline the process. This was an example of finding a common concern in the business community and working to find a resolution.

Mr. Whisler explained how reaching out to the Building Code Review Board could be helpful. The Alliance can help relay information to business owners and answer to their concerns. Mr. Field sees the Economic Alliance newsletter as a vehicle to communicate information such as this. It is mailed to all commercial addresses in Arlington Heights. Also, sending it electronically in addition to standard mail would be helpful to cover the most ground possible. Ms. Schlamp emphasized this balance, and referenced the experiences of the Library District's efforts to send out their newsletter entirely in digital format, and how many recipients preferred to have a paper copy instead.

The Alliance will hold their next regularly scheduled meeting on June 18th in the 2nd floor Commissions Room. In the meantime, Mr. Guido will work with Mr. Mertes to put together an outline of points of discussion for the next meeting.

Item 4: Other Business

There was no other business discussed at the meeting.

Item 5: Adjournment

MIKE FIELD MOVED AND SUE DUCHEK SECONDED A MOTION TO ADJOURN. ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 AM.

Tony Guido, Chair
Arlington Economic Alliance

Prepared by Department of Planning and Community Development