



Village of Arlington Heights  
Arlington Economic Alliance  
Commissions Room  
Arlington Heights Village Hall  
33 S. Arlington Heights Road  
Arlington Heights, IL 60005  
January 20, 2016  
7:30 AM

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. ROLL CALL**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. Minutes 12/9/15

**IV. REPORTS**

- A. Development Update

**V. OLD BUSINESS**

- A. Performance Metrics
- B. DiscoverArlington.com Improvements
- C. Annual Alliance Breakfast

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**VII. OTHER BUSINESS**

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

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**Item:** Minutes 12/9/15

**Department:** Planning & Community Development

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Description**

Minutes

**Type**

Minutes

# **DRAFT**

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE HELD ON DECEMBER 9, 2015 AT 7:30 A.M. AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

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### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Tony Guido - Chairman  
Frank Appleby  
Tom Gaynor  
Lisa Henderson  
Mike Kalway  
Jackie Lewis  
Dave Parulo  
Andi Ruhl  
Scott Whisler

### **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Jamie Janeczko  
Jon Ridler

### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Michael Mertes – Business Development Coordinator

### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Mike Field – Township High School District 214  
Jason Kuhl – Arlington Heights Memorial Library  
Matt Ottaviano – Arlington Heights Special Events Commission

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### **Call to Order**

Chairman Tony Guido called the meeting to order at 7:35 AM.

### **Approval of Minutes – October 21, 2015**

The meeting minutes of the October 21, 2015 Arlington Economic Alliance meeting were reviewed.

Michael Mertes gave a summary of the previous Alliance meeting. For the Commission's fiscal year 2016 budget, the \$5,000 previously dedicated to DiscoverArlington.com improvements was transferred to the Village's IT Department budget by the Village Board. However, the Mayor and Trustees still want the Commission to provide input on updates to the website. The remaining \$15,300 dedicated to the Alliance will remain intact. Regarding the Zero Interest Loan program, the Village Board approved an increase in the maximum loan amount from \$10,000 to \$20,000, without a forgivable provision as was recommended in October by the Alliance.

**SCOTT WHISLER MOVED AND DAVE PARULO SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE DRAFT FEBRUARY 18, 2015 ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE MEETING MINUTES. ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.**

### **Introduction of New Commissioners**

All attendees introduced themselves and new members were welcomed to the Alliance. The new voting members in attendance were (business type shown in parenthesis):

- Jackie Lewis of Forbici Salon and Spa (Downtown Business Owner)
- Andi Ruhl of Thrown Elements Pottery (Retailer)

# DRAFT

## Potential Projects for 2016

### DiscoverArlington.com

Tony Guido requested that the Commissioners review DiscoverArlington.com for any potential changes or updates in the coming year. The site has been mobile-friendly since mid-2014. Lisa Henderson spoke of the importance of making sure live feeds, linked to social media, are regularly updated on the site's homepage. Dave Parulo inquired about the audience for the site. DiscoverArlington.com is aimed at visitors and residents to patronize businesses and attend events in Arlington Heights. VAH.com is geared primarily towards residents and provides news and information on services offered by the Village. However, it also includes information for prospective businesses. Ensuring linkage between VAH.com and DiscoverArlington.com was recommended.

Matt Ottaviano feels the Village's websites are being utilized more regularly. He alluded to the annual "Hearts of Gold" nominations. This year, 75 nomination forms were received and all but two had been filled out and submitted via the Village's website. Tracking the data trail was recommended by Mike Kalway. Providing the site's analytics for the next Alliance meeting was requested by the Commissioners.

### Broker Open House

Scott Whisler recommended that the Village host another open house event for commercial realtors serving the Village, and add this to the list of potential projects. This was last done in October 2014, was well-attended, and the brokers found it very useful. Topics such as TIF districts could be covered at the next one. Michael Mertes explained to the Alliance that those in attendance at the last open house were educated on Village programs such as incentives for businesses. Each broker was allowed to introduce themselves and discuss one Arlington Heights property, or prospective business, that they are currently representing. The purpose was to create a networking opportunity for the commercial brokers and potentially match tenants with vacant spaces.

### Performance Metrics

Michael Mertes asked the Alliance to determine what data they would like to have presented on a regular or semi-regular basis, and what measures the Commission could use to ensure goals are being met. Tom Gaynor discussed his thoughts for measuring data and performance. Looking at the big picture and gauging the health of the community's business environment would be a good start. The Commission could then assemble a framework of performance indicators. Also, collecting trend data is valuable.

Following this, Mr. Parulo inquired about what information Staff currently collects. The Village currently tracks business data from a variety of sources:

- Number of new businesses, square footage, employee counts (Village business licenses)
- Vacancy rates (CoStar)
- Retail sales data (Illinois Department of Revenue)
- Community-wide employment data (Illinois Department of Employment Security)

Depending on the source, reporting varies from monthly to yearly. The Department of Planning & Community Development also tracks its own recruitment and retention efforts. The Alliance requested this information at next month's meeting. Past data from these categories would be helpful to determine trends.

Mike Field asked how the Alliance would determine success for itself. Mr. Gaynor explained that the first step is to analyze the information and then determine how the Commission can provide input and assistance to drive the data in a positive direction.

Mr. Parulo recommended hearing from the Chamber on a semi-regular basis. Mr. Mertes offered to reach out to Jim Platt to set up a discussion at an upcoming Alliance meeting. Mr. Platt can let the Alliance know what he is hearing from business owners throughout the community. He has provided reports to the Alliance a few times in the past.

## DRAFT

By collecting, analyzing, and reporting data, the Alliance can provide consultation to the Village Board. Depending on the data set (e.g. retail sales) Village Staff may have trend data as well. Some of the attendees offered to provide information that they gather for their organization as well. The Commission requested that Mr. Mertes present economic development data at the January Economic Alliance meeting.

Mr. Parulo summarized the Alliance's project focus for 2016 in five points:

1. DiscoverArlington.com Improvements
2. Commercial Broker Breakfast
3. Annual Alliance Breakfast
4. Identifying Key Economic Trends
5. Maintaining a Sustainable Community

### Alliance Breakfast

The Commission agreed to continue holding the Breakfast once a year in the spring. For the 2016 program, Mr. Mertes asked the Commission to start thinking about potential topics/speakers. Mr. Field suggested the formation of another subcommittee, as has been done the past few years, to which the rest of the Commissioners could send their ideas. Ms. Henderson volunteered to serve on this subcommittee.

Mr. Mertes and the Alliance members will look at who the event is marketed to, and how to enhance promotional efforts. Currently the invitation is mailed out. The event is additionally marketed through e-blasts, social media, the Downtown electronic message board, local media, and the local cable access channel. The Alliance discussed striking a balance between having a speaker who will draw a large audience and providing content that will be beneficial to the attendees. Arlington Park was discussed as a potential topic/location for the event.

### **Holiday Marketing**

Mr. Mertes provided a summary of the Village's holiday marketing campaign. This involved a mix of print, digital, and radio advertising. The total reach of the campaign is over 3.8 million people. Mr. Field complimented the campaign. He did request that future ads consider the diversity of people in this area. Andi Ruhl agreed, saying she has had many different ethnic groups as customers in her store and it would be good to highlight that diversity.

Mr. Parulo suggested working with the Metropolis Performing Arts Center on future marketing campaigns. Perhaps the Discover Arlington logo could be incorporated in their advertising. Mr. Whisler and Mr. Appleby noted that the Santa Run was widely attended and participated in this year. Runners and their supporters were patronizing the restaurants and shops throughout the morning of December 5<sup>th</sup>.

### **Adjournment**

**FRANK APPLEBY MOVED AND SCOTT WHISLER SECONDED A MOTION TO ADJOURN. ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 AM.

Tony Guido, Chair  
Arlington Economic Alliance

*Prepared by Department of Planning and Community Development*