

APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE HELD ON APRIL 16, 2025 AT 7:30 A.M. AT THE VILLAGE HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tony Guido
Heather Larson
Michael Mulder
Kerri Oots
Marc Poulos
Brian Roginski
Andi Ruhl

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Tonia Etoh
Terry Iverson
Ellen Para
Andrew Stengren
John Toliopoulos

STAFF PRESENT:

Michael Mertes – Business Development Manager

ALSO PRESENT:

Keith Moens, Resident

Appointment of Temporary Chair

HEATHER LARSON MOVED AND MARC POULOS SECONDED A MOTION TO DESIGNATE ANDI RUHL AS TEMPORARY CHAIR FOR THE APRIL 16, 2025 ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE MEETING. ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

Call to Order

Temporary Chair Andi Ruhl called the meeting to order at 7:34 AM.

Approval of Minutes – March 19, 2025

The minutes of the March 19, 2025 Arlington Economic Alliance meeting were reviewed.

MICHAEL MULDER MOVED AND BRIAN ROGINSKI SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE DRAFT MARCH 19, 2025 ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE MEETING MINUTES. ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

Development Update

Mr. Mertes stated that the developer of Arlington 425 had withdrawn the project. Mr. Mulder inquired about the status of the former office complex property at the intersection of Seegers and Arlington Heights Roads. Mr. Mertes said that a senior living facility was previously approved at the site, but Staff has not received a formal proposal for any new development as of yet.

Village Board Strategic Priorities

Mr. Mertes explained that the Village Manager has requested items from advisory Commissions to provide to the Village Board as part of their upcoming two-year strategic planning meeting. Also provided to the Alliance was a summary of the discussion from the previous month's meeting.

Ms. Larson wanted to emphasize re-tenanting or redeveloping vacant office space. Ms. Ruhl has seen significant demand in the visual arts and suggested the creation of an Arts District, whether located within a specific facility or a designated geographic area. This includes encouraging re-use of vacant industrial spaces. Residual benefits could include attracting new businesses and visitors who will spend money at local businesses such as restaurants. Ms. Larson recommended incorporating this into the "Business Incubation" section of the summary to the Village Board.

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Mr. Mulder inquired about the Hickory-Kensington neighborhood and other industrial sections of the community as opportunities to convert into arts-related uses. In regards to business incubation, he feels that the Village's primary role should be in helping facilitate, and encouraging private sector investment in, such a facility. Mr. Guido inquired about marketing efforts and Mr. Mertes explained Staff's efforts. Mr. Mulder asked about the Arlington Park property and how the Village would leverage the marketing of site redevelopment while considering potential impact on other local businesses.

Ms. Larson suggested that proactive marketing of key development and redevelopment sites be incorporated into the strategic plan recommendations, and Mr. Mulder concurred. Mr. Roginski spoke regarding his participation with the Downtown Arlington Heights Business Alliance and wants to try and ensure that a complement to the Downtown, and not a direct competitor, is being created at the Arlington Park site. Ms. Ruhl commented that many people will still be more attracted to the Downtown's environment and want to support local, independent merchants. Adding to that, Ms. Oots said that different demographics will be attracted to each area, while Mr. Poulos sees a potential uptick in customer traffic throughout the community. Mr. Mulder wants to make sure that impacts on Metra are considered as well.

A children's business fair was suggested as a pop-up event by Ms. Ruhl. Other communities have done something like this, and it could encourage youth entrepreneurship. Ms. Larson summarized the Alliance's comments for amending the list of strategic priorities as:

1. Moving the "Development Opportunities" section to the top of the list
2. Incorporating efforts to market, develop, or redevelop key sites to the "Development Opportunities" section
3. Adding cultural amenities to the "Business Incubation" section

HEATHER LARSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AS AMENDED. ANDI RUHL SECONDED. ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

Economic Development Statistics Report

Due to time constraints, Mr. Mertes suggested that the Commission postpone discussion of the *Economic Development Statistics Report* to a future meeting.

ANDI RUHL MADE A MOTION TO TABLE THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STATISTICS REPORT TO A FUTURE ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE MEETING. MICHAEL MULDER SECONDED. ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

Other Business

Mr. Larson gave a recap of Meet Chicago Northwest's 2025 *Restaurant Week* promotion. There were 25 participating restaurants from Arlington Heights. Over \$50,000 was spent on a media campaign to promote the participating restaurants from the communities that Meet Chicago Northwest represents. As a restaurant owner, Mr. Roginski felt it was a successful event that was marketed well. Mr. Guido asked if take-out was included and Ms. Larson responded that the focus is primarily on dine-in, but that a few restaurants did offer take-out options.

Meet Chicago Northwest also partnered with the Downtown Arlington Heights Business Alliance on a tour of the Downtown for local hoteliers. This was meant as a way for hotel staff to encourage guests to visit Downtown Arlington Heights during their stay. Mr. Roginski expressed support of this effort. Mr. Guido discussed a new commercial truck

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center at Arlington Heights Ford. Mr. Roginski mentioned that Cortland's Garage will be celebrating its 10th anniversary in September.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Adjournment

**BRIAN ROGINSKI MOVED AND TONY GUIDO SECONDED A MOTION TO ADJOURN.
ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 AM.

Andi Ruhl, Temporary Chair
Arlington Economic Alliance

Prepared by Department of Planning & Community Development