

Extract of Meeting Minutes
From the May 12, 2014 Committee of the Whole Meeting

President and Board of Trustees
Village of Arlington Heights
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AGENDA
Board Room
May 12, 2014
7:30 PM

C. 8:15 p.m. - Request of Arlington Economic Alliance for Village Board Vision of Alliance per March 19, 2014 Alliance Meeting

Mr. Dixon said Section 6-505 of the Village Code discusses both intent and purpose and subsection E discusses powers, duties, and responsibilities of The Arlington Economic Alliance. There are very specific assignments/delegations to the Alliance.

Mayor Hayes thanked the Economic Alliance for all the great work the Alliance does on behalf of the Village as the Villages' representatives. They are one of the key entities in terms of economic development and the business environment and community.

Tony Guido, Chair of the Arlington Economic Alliance, discussed that the Alliance has read the code and has looked at the accomplishments the Alliance has done over the past years. Some of the events they pride themselves on is the economic breakfasts they have had along with the speakers at this event which helped the community with information regarding small business loans and educating them on where to go with any kind of help they need with their business. Mr. Guido said what the Alliance is looking for right now is the fact that the code is in place, but the landscape in the Village along with the rest of the businesses in the Village have changed. The way the Village is marketed, branded and social media have changed over the years. Some of the code is outdated. Some of the things they are looking for is a vision of what the Board thinks the Alliance should be doing. Over the years they have done marketing, branding, and helped develop websites, retention visits, and helped with the permit processes.

Mr. Guido said the Alliance would like some direction from the Board on what the Board thinks the Alliance's future should be for the next three to five years and how they can help market the town or what they should be doing at this point. Most of the members on the Alliance run businesses in Arlington Heights. Mr. Guido's business has been here for 30 years and being here for 30 years, they have seen things come and go, but they don't want to lose track of what makes this town what it is, including the library, parks, the Village, the Chamber, the schools, entertainment and community events.

Over the last six to eight months the Alliance talked about branding. They did surveys and talked about advertising. They know that some of the codes are outdated. They came up with "Power of Partnership." Partnership with the library, park, schools and how they can work together. Right now working with the Chamber they are doing retention visits and report back to the Alliance to give them updates. But there should not be overlap in what the Chamber is doing and what the Alliance is doing. They should be working on the same idea in different directions with the same common goal of the "Power of Partnership" to bring all these different entities together by communicating with each other. The Alliance talked about advertising or communicating with each other using different avenues such as using their newspapers, bulletins, letters to keep residents informed since people read all different forms of media. Anywhere from "apps" to mail, etc. The Alliance would like to ask the Board how to move forward. They would like a plan for the next three to five years to look at how to bring all of these different groups together as one with the Alliance.

The Alliance has made retention visits, they have listened to the businesses, they have made recommendations, but all these other entities are promoting themselves when it is all for Arlington Heights. The Alliance thinks this is something that should be looked at and they are looking for help, guidance, and input from the Board. What does the Board think the Alliance should be doing and what the Chamber should be doing so they are not over-lapping and become more productive in the next three to five years? Mayor Hayes said some of the things that Mr. Guido mentioned are already in place over the past year, for example, the Small Business Development Agreement. The Alliance was involved in this process so efforts were not duplicated. He thinks the Board has tried very hard over the past year to try to utilize this community partnership approach utilizing all the available resources and not duplicate efforts.

Trustee Glasgow thanked Mr. Guido for all the work that is done with the Alliance. One of the concerns he has is does the Alliance feel they are duplicating efforts. Mr. Guido replied that yes, that some of the things the Alliance has done over the past years the Chamber is currently doing. Trustee Glasgow said one of the things he sees is that the members of the Arlington Economic Alliance are the trusted business leaders appointed by the Mayor because of their knowledge of businesses and Arlington Heights. They represent all of the businesses in Arlington Heights. He thinks there is a place for both the Chamber and the Alliance using their different views. Do you feel that the Arlington Economic Alliance is beneficial at this point in the form that it is and if not, what suggestions do they have.

Sue Duchek, member of The Arlington Economic Alliance, talked about why they asked for direction which is due to frustration within the Alliance. She had been on the Alliance for ten years and has seen how it was when she started and how it is today which is two different things completely. This started as an advisory position, which was bringing to the Alliance what they heard on the streets within each of their own industries since they are all representing positions within the Village. She looks at her role on the Alliance not as a business owner but as a voice of other businesses and bringing those concerns to the Alliance to discuss. She has seen a lot larger work load being given and she feels like she somehow inherited a job along the way that wasn't necessarily the initial role. If this is what it has become, then the Alliance needs to have some direction as to what is exactly their role, advisory or to be making retention calls. Not just to be given a project to work on. In other words, how could the Alliance best serve.

Mayor Hayes agrees that some of the code language needs to be changed. He said looking at 2A and B rather than charging the Alliance with the development and implementation of business retention and expansion program or marketing program the Alliance should be assisting in the development and implementation of those items through an advisory role. He does not think the Alliance should be making retention visits.

Trustee Tinaglia said the Alliance should put together a code on how the Alliance can best help Arlington Heights. As an Economic Alliance what can they bring to the table to offer as business entities? This could be reported back to the Board.

Trustee Scaletta discussed when the Alliance talked about partnerships with the park district and the library that would be a good opportunity for everyone to get together and use resources. The Board would like to hear what makes the business community happy, what does not make them happy and how things can change in a positive way that benefits the businesses. That's everything that the Alliance has been doing to make things better. The Alliance was part of streamlining the codes, streamlining processes, giving feedback on what works and what does not work in the business community whether it has to do with marketing or any other facet. It would be great if the Alliance would come back to the Board and let them know what needs to be focused on and what would be better handled by staff. They should make a motion and bring it to the Board for anything they want to change. The Alliance should use this as an opportunity to re-evaluate the

commission and say this is what we were, this is what we became and this is where we want to go.

Trustee LaBedz said learning about how extensive the activities are that the Alliance is doing, she can see how they would want direction and discussion about narrowing their focus since it can be overwhelming. She appreciates the Alliance's comments on partnerships including the library, parks and schools. There is more to the Alliance than the businesses since it involves the economy in the Village that will attract the businesses to come into the Village.

Trustee Blackwood discussed that when she looks at the composition of the Alliance she is looking at leaders of industry in various sectors within the community. It would be a representation of large organizations all the way down to store front businesses. Do we have the right component of small business vs. large business? This would be information that would help Charles Perkins attract businesses into the community. What does the Village want economically and this is what the Alliance should be talking about. What is important is each member of the Alliance has a voice as to what is happening in their industry and how that industry is affecting the Village.

Trustee Farwell thanked the Economic Alliance for all their hard work. As a Board the Trustees look to the Economic Alliance as a true business advisor for the businesses in the community. You're not advising a business you are advising this governmental entity which is hard to do. This is the perfect time to ask the Alliance to re-group and redefine themselves and come to the Board maybe in an informal setting.

Trustee Sidor said pro-active information from the Alliance would be very helpful.

Mayor Hayes said the consensus is that the Alliance should take a look at the code provisions and as Mr. Dixon mentioned to take a pen and mark up what needs to be changed. Come back to the Board with what the Alliance envisions as the role of the commission based on what was said tonight and what your additional thoughts might be.