

**Extracts of Meeting Minutes  
Pertaining to the Arlington Economic Alliance  
Revision of Village Code Section 6-505**

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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**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**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 Since, some of the Code language seems outdated, changes may be necessary.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, 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 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 18<sup>th</sup> in the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

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## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE HELD ON JULY 16, 2014 AT 7:30 A.M. AT THE VILLAGE HALL

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### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tony Guido – Chairman; Sue Duchek; Jamie Janeczko; Regina Schlamp; Gary Skiba; Scott Whisler

### Discussion of Alliance Membership/Mission

Mr. Guido gave an overview of discussions from the previous meeting. Scott Whisler's impression of the purpose laid out by the Village Board is not to rewrite the Code language, but rather to reformulate it. In other words, tailor it to what the Alliance wants to focus on over the next year. Sue Duchek added to this, saying that changing the language isn't necessary, but what's important is having a clearer understanding of the Commission's focus.

Regina Schlamp advocated addressing the make-up of the Commission, and making sure seats are filled by people who are interested in serving. In terms of potential new membership, Mr. Guido and Mr. Whisler both recommended having the presence of the Chamber of Commerce on the Alliance, and suggested that the Executive Director would be the most appropriate person for the role, as elected Chamber Board members often have limited terms.

Potentially having permanent representation by the Park District, Library District, and Visitors Bureau was also discussed by the Commission. The Code may need to be altered to allow for more than 11 members to accommodate new additions. The Alliance requested that Mr. Mertes provide a chart at the next meeting, showing the current members of the Commission, their terms of service, and which roles that are determined by Code they fill. They also requested a list of the top employers in the community. Other updates to the Code language were suggested, such as removing the references to quarterly meetings and to the *Central Business District Association*. Mr. Mertes will provide a red-lined version of the Code language at the next meeting, with the aforementioned updates.

Mr. Guido stated that it was time to also find a new Chairperson, as his term has expired and he is temporarily serving the role until a new one is named. He suggested that the Code state the length of the Chairperson's term and whether it should rotate, and also recommended having a Vice-Chairperson who can run the meetings in the Chairperson's absence. Mr. Skiba concurred with Mr. Guido's suggestion that Alliance leadership positions rotate, as long as there is continuity within the Commission's membership. Getting quarterly marketing updates from Village Staff was also briefly discussed. Knowing what advertisements will be placed before they appear in various media would be helpful to the Alliance members. Mr. Whisler asked that the Code also reference a representative from the Special Events Commission to serve as an ex-officio member.

Developing a vision and objectives before adding new members was suggested by Jamie Janeczko. It might be useful to have goals established so new members can have a clearer understanding of the Alliance's functions when they join. From an outside perspective, Mr. Parulo envisions developing a couple major themes to focus on over the next year as something that would be helpful for the Alliance, and beneficial to report back to the Village Board. Ms. Schlamp added that the goals should be broad and not overly specific, which would allow more flexibility when determining the tasks that would complement those goals. It is important to represent the entire Village as well, and not just focus entirely on the Downtown.

Getting reports on developments and other large-scale economic development projects would be helpful to the Alliance, as vouched for by Mr. Whisler and Ms. Duchek. By being informed early in the process, the Alliance members can be advocates and sources of information for the business community and residents alike, while fulfilling

their role as an advisory body. A brief, confidential report for every Alliance meeting would be useful. Also, if specific direction is given from the Village Board on Economic Development projects, relaying that information to the Alliance would be appreciated.

Ms. Duchek reiterated that changing the Code language isn't a necessity. The work plan goals that were discussed at the February Alliance meeting can all apply to language that already exists. It's important to make sure that the Alliance remains an advisory committee as well.

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## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE HELD ON AUGUST 20, 2014 AT 7:30 A.M. AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

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### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Tony Guido – Chairman; Sue Duchek; Lisa Henderson; Jamie Janeczko; Regina Schlamp; Gary Skiba

### **Discussion of Alliance Membership/Mission**

Referencing the Village's Top 20 employers list attached to the agenda, Mr. Guido acknowledged the significant number of people working in Arlington Heights, particularly for these particular employers. He stressed keeping these businesses apprised of what is going on in the community. Mr. Mertes confirmed that communication efforts have been made to all of these employers, and the Village continues to partner with several of them. The majority of feedback from these businesses has been that Arlington Heights is a good location for their enterprise and commerce in general.

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) publishes "Where People Work", which Dave Parulo suggested could be a valuable resource for the Alliance and their outreach efforts. Gary Skiba noted that the largest employers often have workers from outside the community. It's important to try and connect these employees with the Village's services and resources, especially those unfamiliar with the community. Daisy Porter-Reynolds noted that businesses in Arlington Heights are able to get up to three library cards and that the Library is an excellent resource for them. This allows non-residents access to the Library's services. Neil Scheufler agreed and added that the Metropolis Performing Arts Center utilizes the Library for opportunities on promoting their programming.

Mr. Mertes then reviewed a red-lined version of the Village Code section pertaining to the Economic Alliance. He clarified that any changes would require Village Board approval. Discussed items were:

- Increasing voting membership from 11 to 13
- Adding a Special Events Commission representative as an ex-officio member
- Creating a Vice-Chairperson position to lead meetings in the absence of the Chairperson (both positions would be served by new people every three years)
- Organization/business type
  - Have all appointees serve three-year terms before being considered for renewal
  - Stagger, if possible, so that one-third of Commission is up for renewal every year
- Representatives specifically requested to be voting members
  - Chamber of Commerce – Executive Director
  - Convention and Visitors Bureau – Executive Director
  - Downtown Business Owner/Representative
  - Library Representative (contingent upon their approval)
  - Park District Representative (contingent upon their approval)

Additionally, the quorum would become seven, should the voting membership be increased to 13.

Mr. Guido referenced the Code section stating "Assisting businesses through mechanisms such as seminars and university programs." The question is whether such a section is currently applicable to the Alliance's goals. It was

agreed to strike this particular line of Code language.

Also considered were the lines "Development and implementing a business retention/expansion program" and "Developing and implementing a marketing program to attract new business and industry". Ms. Schlamp saw contrast between this and the Alliance's intent to serve as an advisory body, and such programs have already been implemented in the past. Mr. Skiba concurred, seeing the Alliance as a creative body that can give input, but isn't designed to handle the workload of such major projects. The use of the words "developing" and "implementing" put a different expectation on the Alliance than solely being an advisory committee. It was agreed to modify the Code language to focus the Commission's actions as more "advising" than "developing" or "implementing", especially since these tasks are being done by Village Staff and are part of the partnership between the Village and Chamber.

Ms. Duchek also asked that the language referencing meetings "scheduled on a quarterly basis" be updated as the Alliance meets more frequently than this. The Alliance discussed frequency of meetings and whether meeting every other month was appropriate. Per Mr. Parulo's suggestion, the Alliance agreed to have the language read "at least quarterly" to allow the Alliance more flexibility should the Commission elect to vary its meeting schedule.

Mr. Guido also requested occasional updates from Chamber of Commerce staff regarding retention efforts. Additionally, Mr. Mertes will provide marketing updates from time-to-time. The Alliance members want to take a more proactive approach to interacting with the Village Board, especially on economic development-related activities.

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#### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE HELD ON OCTOBER 15, 2014 AT 7:30 A.M. AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

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##### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Tony Guido – Chairman; Sue Duchek; Mike Field; Lisa Henderson; Jamie Janeczko; Regina Schlamp; Gary Skiba; Scott Whisler

##### **Discussion of Alliance Mission**

Michael Mertes explained the revisions made to the proposed Alliance Code update since the last meeting. Membership make-up would consist of 13 people, with voting members serving three-year terms. Representatives of the Arlington Heights Chamber of Commerce, Meet Chicago Northwest, Park District, and Memorial Library would be listed as organizations requested to have a representative serve on the Commission. Language ensuring that the Alliance exists as an advisory body was added. All these updates are subject to Village Board approval.

Mike Field asked if the language can be adjusted to say that quorum would be 50% plus one member. Mr. Mertes replied that he spoke with legal and his understanding was that specific numbers need to be used (in this proposed case it would be a 13-member body, so seven people would constitute the quorum). However, he offered to verify if language saying a quorum of 50% plus one member can be used in the Code. Also, Mr. Field suggested changing the language to reference a representative of education in general, as opposed to "Higher Education" which is what is currently laid out in the Code section.

Regarding possible Alliance projects for 2015, Mr. Guido inquired as to how Chamber of Commerce activities are organized. Jon Ridler answered that each committee handles different initiatives: networking, events, membership/development, and strategic partnerships. These areas are headed by different Vice Presidents overseeing different subcommittees. Mr. Mertes suggested the Alliance Breakfast, and updating the format and content of the Alliance Newsletter, as possible areas of focus for the 2015 Plan. Coming back with three or four tasks next year would be beneficial for the Commission.

In regards to any aspects in which the Alliance may be able to focus, Sue Duchek inquired as to any critical concerns

that the Chamber hears from the business community and how the Alliance can assist. Outdoor dining was one such example that she provided. Mr. Ridler replied that sandwich board signs are a topic that the Chamber could have brought to the Alliance, who then could have provided their input to the Village Board. Ms. Duchek feels that helping businesses get through the approval process would be a great benefit, referencing the "How to Get to Yes" Alliance Breakfast a few years prior. Mr. Ridler suggested taking common themes learned from retention visits and bringing them to the Alliance for their thoughts and potential recommendations to the Village Board.

Scott Whisler noted that building and fire codes often come from the federal or state levels and Village Staff then needs to filter through them. Unawareness of Code regulations can cause issues for business owners who may have already signed a lease or be conducting space renovations. Trying to get Code information out as early as possible would be tremendously helpful to such businesses. Mr. Whisler suggested another program similar to "How to Get to Yes" for the spring Alliance Breakfast in 2015. Also, it may be helpful to the Alliance to have a code enforcement official, or representative from the Building Code Review Board, give a presentation on the submittal process to the Commission. Also, being made aware of changes to the building code would be helpful. Concurring, Ms. Duchek sees value in helping the Alliance understand the review process and educating the applicants on the process.

Mr. Whisler also suggested the retail incentive program, the Alliance Breakfast, and an industrial networking event as areas in which the Commission could focus on in 2015. Retaining and educating businesses, whether they are growing, shrinking, or staying put is important in Mr. Guido's view. Additionally, giving input on Village Staff's marketing efforts, and helping gauge their effectiveness, is another opportunity for the Commission. Regina Schlamp noted that this should be in an advisory role, and that the Alliance shouldn't be creating the marketing pieces.

Mr. Ridler said that the business community would like to know that there is a Commission advocating for them. The Alliance could be a sounding board for the business owners. Dave Parulo agreed, adding that Chamber retention reports to the Alliance would be useful. Such reporting should focus on both the positive and negative responses provided by business owners to the Chamber.

A survey sent out to businesses could be very worthwhile, in Mr. Field's opinion. If used to look at review processes, the feedback could help Staff discover opportunities for streamlining or finding alternative possibilities. Anita Pacheco sees value in communicating Code changes and updates. Proactive outreach can help prevent business owners from spending money and making assumptions on something they may end up needing to change. Mr. Whisler emphasized making sure there's not a disconnect between the Village and the architects and contractors. Helping entrepreneurs understand the Code and laying out the specifics for them would help communication with Village Staff in Mr. Ridler's view. The Alliance can serve as a bridge between businesses and Staff.

Mr. Guido also spoke of identifying the Village's business attraction tools, and supports utilizing a community-wide survey. Such a survey should be condensed in order to get critical information with a high response rate. Mr. Field and Mr. Parulo added that the survey can be used to identify trends across the Village. Ms. Schlamp and Gary Skiba vouched for the importance of surveys as a validation tool. Before the Alliance proceeds with additional steps, it's important to see how the businesses respond and where they are focusing their attention. Convening a subcommittee of Alliance members to meet with Code Enforcement Staff to help educate the Commission was suggested by Mr. Field. Mr. Guido was in agreement, stressing a need to meet with Staff and do their due diligence before recommending anything to the Village Board.

Ms. Pacheco sees the survey as an opportunity for the Alliance to promote itself too. It can draw attention to the Commission while promoting the fact that it is listening to the business community. In agreement, Jamie Janeczko added that the survey could also clarify who the Alliance is, and mitigate being confused with other commerce-related entities such as the Chamber of Commerce. The survey could be promoted in an upcoming newsletter. Mr. Skiba also noted that by proclaiming accomplishments achieved from previous business interactions, the survey is likely to be given more validity and likely attain a higher response rate. Mr. Parulo added that it's crucial to follow up the

survey by addressing the responses that were obtained. Lastly, Mr. Guido suggested starting consideration of the format, distribution, and potential questions for the survey.

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE  
HELD ON DECEMBER 17, 2014 AT 7:30 A.M. AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Tony Guido – Chairman; Sue Duchek; Mike Field; Lisa Henderson; Jamie Janeczko; Gary Skiba

**Discussion of Alliance Mission**

Mr. Mertes updated the Alliance on the most recent edits to the Alliance Code. Mr. Guido inquired about terms of service and Mr. Mertes confirmed that all representatives will serve three-year terms and can be reappointed by the Mayor. There are no term limits. Sue Duchek suggested striking "Commercial" from the Real Estate category. Dave Parulo asked what happens if a term is vacated and someone new is appointed to that the organization or business type. Mr. Mertes replied that the new Commissioner would finish the remaining term as opposed to starting a new three-year term.

Mr. Ridler suggested, per the revised Code, that the new Commissioners may need to serve an initial term of less than three years in order to maintain appropriate staggering of terms laid out in the Code (no more than five terms ending in one year). The Mayor could appoint the new Commissioners for terms less than three years initially, and when the position is up for renewal, then the reappointment can be for three years moving forward.

Mr. Mertes also verified that quorum must be a set number in the Code. Mr. Ridler recommended holding meetings for discussion purposes when a quorum is not attained. The Alliance is aware that no formal decisions can be made when quorum is not met. Mr. Mertes volunteered to notify the Alliance when it does not appear that a quorum will be reached and will offer to hold the meeting for those who are able to attend. He also responded to a question by Mr. Ridler that the organizations listed in the "Organization or Type of Business" section are entitled to recommend their own appointee for consideration by the Mayor. Jason Kuhl asked for verification whether or not a new appointee would need to be chosen for a particular organization or business type every three years. Mr. Mertes responded that an organization can have one person (or position) remain on the Alliance for multiple terms as long as the Mayor reappoints that Commissioner for additional terms.

**SUE DUCHEK MOVED AND GARY SKIBA SECONDED A MOTION TO RECOMMEND TO THE VILLAGE BOARD THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 6-505 WHICH PERTAINS TO THE ARLINGTON ECONOMIC ALLIANCE, INCLUDING THE DELETION OF THE TERM "COMMERCIAL" FROM THE BUSINESS TYPE "COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE, DEVELOPER OR RETAIL PROPERTY MANAGER". ALL ALLIANCE MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.**