

**Minutes  
February 10, 2020  
Village of Bartlett  
Economic Development Commission**

**1) Call to Order**

**G. Kubaszko called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.**

**2) Roll Call**

**Present: K Erickson, S. Gandsey, N. Gudenkauf, G. Kubaszko, J. LaPorte, A. Lewensky, T. Smodilla**

**Absent: M Hughes, R. Perri**

**Also Present: T. Fradin, Economic Development Coordinator  
S. Skrycki, Assistant Village Administrator;  
J. Dienberg, Management Analyst  
S. Spradling, GIS Coordinator**

**3) Approval of Minutes**

**A motion was made to approve the minutes from the January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020 meeting.**

**Motioned by: K. Erickson**

**Seconded by: J. LaPorte**

**T. Smodilla Abstained**

**Motion Carried**

**4) Public Comment**

**None**

**5) Interactive Map-Based Dining Guide**

**T. Fradin** stated that about ten years ago as the country moved out of the Recession, staff began issuing annual dining guides in print in an effort to support and promote eating and drinking establishments throughout the Village. Staff distributes these printed dining guides throughout many public venues in the Village including at the Library, Metra station, community center, Village Hall and the Chamber of Commerce.

While staff will continue to print and distribute these guides on an annual basis, the Village has more recently improved and updated an electronic version of this guide on the Village's website.

Because the print versions become inaccurate quickly as some establishments close and others open, we urge residents and visitors to visit the web-based dining guide which is more easily kept up-to-date.

**T. Fradin** invited up Steven Spradling, GIS Specialist, and has worked with me to develop the map-based dining guide.

**S. Spradling** demonstrated the use of the online guide. He then asked the commissioner's if they had any questions.

**S. Gandsey** asked if the list includes gaming cafés.

**S. Spradling** stated that all places that serve food, or offer carry-out, are on the list which includes gaming cafés.

**T. Smodilla** suggested that the map page highlight what is included in the interactive map page.

**S. Spradling** thanked commissioner Smodilla for the suggestion and added that he would implement that.

**J. LaPorte** asked for clarification on the website's navigation.

**S. Spradling** walked through the requested steps.

**S. Gandsey** suggested adding more images and descriptive links to the maps.

**K. Erickson** suggested adding more "Things to Do" to the map page. She also asked if the Village provides businesses with the website data (i.e. clicks, etc)

**S. Spradling** stated that they are looking into it, they have wanted to add highlights to events that individual businesses are doing. He added that the difficulty is getting that information from the businesses.

**T. Fradin** stated that this is relatively new, and at this point they are not sharing that data.

**T. Smodilla** recommended tying into village branding similar to that of Small Business Saturday to be consistent and attractive to residents.

**S. Gandsey** agreed with the branding comments.

**K. Erickson** suggested semi-annually sharing this information with businesses and reminding them to share back with the village to keep it as up to date as possible. She suggested sitting down with a small panel of businesses and providing them with updates on what the village is doing for them.

**N. Gudenkauf** stated that she heard Gambits was closed.

**S. Skrycki** stated that the last correspondence he had with the owner, they had a personal family issue and that they will keep the village up to date. He said that was a few days ago and he will be following up.

**A. Lewensky** suggested optimizing the website for mobile devices, and suggested creating an application for this.

**S. Skrycki** stated that staff is in the process of revamping the website, and along with that includes enhancing the mobile framework.

## 6) Video Gaming Revenues Report

**T. Fradin stated that** the Village opted into allowing video gaming in late 2012 when the State of Illinois passed legislation allowing for it. The EDC hosted multiple public hearings on the matter, ultimately recommending in favor of allowing it to the Village Board as a strategy to help retain business by allowing an additional source of income as well as generating additional revenue for the Village.

Since that time, the video gaming machines have generated over \$1 million for the Village. Revenues for every establishment in the state are available to the public on the Illinois Department of Revenue website, and staff tracks it on a monthly basis.

When the Village Board adopted the BEDA program to offer financial incentives to businesses and developers in an effort to attract redevelopment of properties to sales tax generating uses, the program has been funded directly by this newer revenue stream. As we begin looking toward the next fiscal year and several potential BEDA grant applicants, we will continue analyzing the data.

**J. Dienberg** presented an overview of the gaming numbers. He stated that Video gaming in Bartlett Started in November, 2012, currently the Village has seventeen businesses with a total of 79 video gaming machines. Since 2012, the video gaming machines have generated \$1,051,553.14 for the Village. He added that the limit per business, the limit of terminals was raised by the state to 6, and many Bartlett Establishments will be upgrading to that 6<sup>th</sup> machine.

He emphasized the total number that individual businesses were bringing in, which is a total of 35% of the total winnings each machine brings in. He highlighted that these smaller restaurants are getting a substantial boost to their monthly income, which is very beneficial in some leaner times for this businesses.

**S. Skrycki** pointed out to the commissioners that Bartlett is right in the middle of the pack in the total number of machines in relation to neighboring communities. He added that the rumor is that Bartlett is plagued with machines, but wanted to point out that it simply isn't the case in direct comparison.

**T. Smodilla** thanked Mr. Dienberg for putting the report together, and stated that it is very telling which places are doing well, and which ones need some help. She asked where Moretti's is listed, as she does not see it on the report.

**J. Dienberg** stated that Moretti's is listed under its LLC as Cadillac Ranch.

**K. Erickson** asked if businesses look at these gaming numbers to see how they are doing in comparison to other communities, and other businesses.

**T. Fradin** stated that some do, and the majority of the ones that do are the gaming parlors themselves. He emphasized the benefit that these games have on individual restaurants as it is such a great help to them during leaner times. He added that is especially apparent in the lack of turnover in comparison to before the machines were allowed.

## **7) Discussion on Scheduling of Meetings**

**G. Kubaszko** stated that over the past few months, several commissioners have inquired into the possibility of scheduling the meetings for an earlier time so as to reduce other conflicts. Staff has researched the Resolution establishing the EDC in 1980 and some minor amendments in 1999 and found no reference to when the meetings should be held; only that meetings be held on a regular basis. He added that the point is to have a discussion on the topic, and no vote will be made tonight.

**T. Smodilla** stated that she is amenable to change, as long as they accommodate everyone's working schedule.

**A. Lewensky** asked if there is a specific window of time that meetings have to be in order to create availability to the public.

**T. Fradin** stated that there is nothing specific they have to stay in other than being on a regular basis.

**N. Gudenkauf** stated that she has been on the EDC for some time now, and has stated that there have been a lot of new members. She wonders if Mondays at 7 is really a good time, and stated that it must be horrible for staff, creating a very late night. She stated that for her self, she rarely wants to go back out in the cold and the dark to come back out for a 7pm meeting.

**T. Smodilla** stated that as a public agency, their obligation is to the tax-payer and anything earlier would make it more difficult.

**N. Gudenkauf** stated that changing the time will not affect the taxpayer.

**K. Erickson** agreed with Commissioner Gudenkauf and stated that meeting at an earlier time may be more inviting for residents to be in the audience, where they can come straight from work, rather than going home and leaving again. She suggested 6pm as a much more preferred time, by better serving the public.

**T. Smodilla** argued that people getting off of a 5:40 train will not attend a 6pm meeting. She added that there are many points to be made, and pointed out that the Village Board also meets at 7, which is important to keep in mind as a public agency.

**S. Skrycki** emphasized that this decision is up to the commissioners, and should be focused on what works best for them, as staff will attend the meeting no matter the time.

**A. Lewensky** agreed with Commissioner Smodilla's point that they need to be available. He emphasized that if there is a time that better fits the public, that it should be discussed.

**T. Smodilla** pointed out that those that would be interested in attending an EDC meeting are interested in Business issues, she posed the question if Manny Rafidia would oppose a 7pm meeting.

**T. Fradin** stated that Manny Rafidia has expressed interest in meeting before Village Hall Opens.

**S. Gandsey** stated that it sounds like the group is against meeting before 6pm, and asked if anyone is opposed to looking at meeting at 6pm. She added that she is open to any time.

**A. Lewensky** stated that he is good with any time, but emphasized meeting at a time that makes them most available to residents. He asked if there are any other suggested times.

**S. Gandsey** pointed out that the meetings are already scarcely attended, and asked if 7pm is even a good time for residents. She asked if morning meetings are off of the tables.

**S. Skrycki** stated that communities are very inconsistent. He stated that some boards meet at 7pm, 8pm, and some even meet during the work day.

**G. Kubaszko** stated that much of the conversation has been about moving the meeting up an hour or so, he then asked about the other end of the spectrum, and asked what the other commissioners thought of an 8am or 9am meeting.

**T. Smodilla** stated that her vote will always be for the taxpayer.

**N. Gudenkauf** stated that they are not here at 7pm.

**K. Erickson** agreed.

**T. Smodilla** stated that it does not matter, she said what matters is that they are available, and that is a part of good transparency and good governance.

**N. Gudenkauf** stated that they would be available, just at a different time.

**K. Erickson** emphasized that even if they cannot attend a meeting, that they can still get their comments shared by sending them to staff to share. She added that Village staff is already there during the day, that it would be much more productive to utilize staff when they are already at Village Hall as opposed to additional hours. She added that she likes a 6pm meeting, but she also is not opposed to exploring daytime options once a month.

**S. Skrycki** suggested that the commissioners share their preferred time with staff through an email, and staff could compile that and bring it back with information behind it. He also added

that this does not need to be solved tonight, and stated that they will respect the taxpayer no matter what time it is.

**N. Gudenkauf** stated that in all the time she has been on the EDC, she has not seen an audience, so it is clear that this time does not work for residents.

**K. Erickson** stated that a different time could be a real opportunity to engage the business community. She emphasized that a restauranter could not attend a 7pm meeting, and it might be something they can further explore.

**A. Lewensky** added that if it doesn't work out, they can always change back. He added that it can be coupled with a plan to get more engagement.

**K. Erickson** agreed, and added that it could just be a trial period.

**S. Gandsey** agreed and added that it would be great to have more action items.

**T. Smodilla** stated that when they have had opportunity for public engagement through public forums, they have come out. They just need a reason to.

## 8) New Business

**S Gandsey** asked about an update on the Bartlett Tap, especially in terms of the BEDA Money that was spent on the business.

**S. Skrycki** stated that the money that was granted to the owner went towards Code Compliance, fixing a fire suppression system, fixing the cooler system that was 100 years old, and fixing the facility to make it ADA accessible. He added that those components were paid for by video gaming revenue, not property taxes. Those expenditures will stay with the business. He added that in hindsight knowing they would close so quickly, that staff may have still recommended the BEDA Grant. He stated that the number 2 call that Tony gets to his desk on a weekly basis from business owners is "Do you have a Turn-key commercial kitchen available," and the answer for the last 5 years has been "no." He stated that when they pick up the phone now, the answer is "Yes". For staff to be able to offer a commercial kitchen in the center of downtown is a great advantage. He stated that staff is not happy about the turn of events, but stated that staff is going to work to bringing in an owner that is committed to the restaurant business.

**A. Lewensky** added that the owner lost a great deal of money in this project. He stated that it is important to emphasize that the village didn't just give away money, and it made great improvements to the building.

**T. Smodilla** asked what the disposition of the business is,

**T. Fradin** stated that Mr. Castilla owns the business, but not the building. He added that he is actively trying to sell the LLC. He added that the right owner and operator will have a great opportunity in that site.

**N. Gudenkauf** asked for an update on the Mexican Restaurant in the Streets of Bartlett.

**T. Fradin** stated that Mr. Rafidia has been in the restaurant business for decades, and has been showing the building to different operators. He added that the restaurant itself is done and ready to go, its just waiting on the right operator.

**S. Skrycki** stated that if they would like a walk thru to let staff know.

**S. Gandsey** asked for an update on the current BEDA Grants that have been approved.

**T. Fradin** stated that for Siri Indian Grocery is close to being finished. In terms of the Still, it is unsure if they are going to move forward at this point, and that they are not going to commence in the near future. In terms of 120 Live, they will be open in the coming months, and they are shooting for March.

**T. Smodilla** stated that with the progress of The Still, it would be beneficial to put a cap on the amount of time to commence the project so that the Village is not holding funds indefinitely.

**T. Fradin** stated that they have discussed implementing that change along with the Village Administrator. He said that along with some other tweaks, they are looking at putting in a hard deadline of one year to start construction on the project.

**S. Gandsey** added that when meeting with future businesses, it may be beneficial to ask them if they have funding in place.

**T. Smodilla** agreed and also suggested require business plans.

**T. Fradin** thanked the commissioners for the suggestions. He added that he is leery of creating a requirement of written business plans, as someone can write an immaculate business plan and not be as successful, and the best business owners can not have the best plans. He did add that staff does encourage it in practice.

**T. Smodilla** asked if there is anything in the BEDA Grant agreement that would prevent someone from selling assets purchased through the BEDA Program if that owner goes out of business.

**T. Fradin** stated that currently there is not. He added that administration did not want to become collection agents and that often more money would be spent on legal fees in something like that. He stated that these funds will usually be spent on permanent fixtures, and will stay with the building.

**T. Smodilla** suggested that maybe even the language being included would be a strong deterrent.

## 9) Adjournment

**A motion was made to adjourn the meeting.**

**Motioned by: S. Gandsey**

**Seconded: N. Gudenkauf**

**Motion Carried. The Meeting Adjourned at 8:07pm**