



VILLAGE OF BARTLETT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES
APRIL 11, 2022

1. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Kubaszko called the regular meeting of April 11, 2022 of the Economic Development Commission (EDC) of the Village of Bartlett to order on the above date at 7:00 PM

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Commissioners Gorski, Gudenkauf, Hughes, Kubaszko, Lewensky, Perri, Smodilla

ABSENT: Commissioners Erickson, LaPorte

ALSO PRESENT: Economic Development Coordinator Tony Fradin, Management Analyst Joey Dienberg

3. APPROVAL OF February 14, 2022 MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Smodilla moved to approve the February 14, 2022 meeting minutes, seconded by Commissioner Gorski.

AYES: Commissioners Gorski, Gudenkauf, Hughes, Kubaszko, Lewensky, Perri, Smodilla

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Commissioners Erickson, LaPorte

MOTION CARRIED

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

NONE

5. GEEK INCORPORATED BEDA APPLICATION

Mr. Fradin stated that Geek Inc. Comics has been in business for ten years on Army Trail Road in Carol Stream.

For several years, the owner, Bill Ahart, has been investigating potential expansion locations and found downtown Bartlett to his liking. With Bartlett Cleaners having closed early on in the pandemic, Mr. Ahart leased the space in Main Street Plaza and opened his business this spring.



VILLAGE OF BARTLETT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES
APRIL 11, 2022

Geek Inc. is the first dedicated comic book store in the village, and adds a complementary unique retail use to downtown and is also the only retailer located in Main Street Plaza. In addition to comic books, Geek Inc. sells various games, supplies, and collectible items.

Geek Inc. will be replacing the Bartlett Cleaners sign with a new attractive sign that reads "Comics" along with its logo.

The attached quote for fabrication and installation of the sign by Signet Sign Company is \$3,985, which excludes permit fees and taxes.

Please note that the attached sign rendering is for illustrative purposes only and may not accurately reflect the exact dimensions of the proposed sign, which is subject to staff review and acquisition of a permit.

Staff is recommending a BEDA grant reimbursement of fifty percent of the cost of the sign, which amounts to \$1,992.50.

Commissioner Gorski asked what size the sign would be, and asked if we know the proper dimensions of the sign, for this shopping center.

Mr. Fradin stated he did not have that in front of him, and added that the Planning and Development Services department would review that signage. He stated that they would look at the unified sign ordinance, which varies by center. He stated that if anything, the sign may be too large as quoted, and could be scaled down. He added that if the EDC recommends this BEDA grant, it is not an approval on the sign as depicted, just the amount of the grant. This will still go through staff review for the signage approval.

Commissioner Gorski said that he was just curious as the previous sign, as well as the other signs in the center are smaller than the one in the image.

Commissioner Smodilla thanked Mr. Ahart for coming, and that she has always been a fan of comic books, and asked if they had any vintage Superman.

Mr. Ahart stated that they have Superman issues that date back to the 1940's.

Commissioner Smodilla stated that there was not any real information on the square footage of the sign, she is struggling with if that is an accurate cost. She stated that looking back on the Dogfather application, there was a more accurate square footage listed, and there was a good feel for the actual cost of the sign. She added that she is confused with the estimate listed in the packet, and how it was created. She stated that she is not opposed to supporting the grant for a new sign, given it is in the appropriate scale for the building itself, but also reticent approving a cost of nearly \$2,000, if the cost of the sign is substantially less.



VILLAGE OF BARTLETT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES
APRIL 11, 2022

Mr. Fradin stated that he anticipated that. He reminded the commission that the maximum grant for BEDA is capped at 50% and stated that if the cost of the sign ended up being cheaper, they could not exceed 50%.

Commissioner Gorski asked if the grant would be a not to exceed number.

Mr. Fradin stated that could be appropriate in this case.

Commissioner Smodilla stated to Mr. Ahart that he can see the EDC's commitment to Bartlett's small businesses and have had a great success rate in extending these grants, but stated that she cannot vote to approve something that there are not real numbers on, given the commissions obligation to the taxpayers. She added that she is all for it, but would like to see what the actual cost will be once the permitting process is complete.

Mr. Ahart stated that is understood, and added that he forwarded staff a proposal, and stated that he just received the number that was estimated, with no real information on how they came up with the number. He stated that he is confident he can get more thorough details of how they came up with that number, but he does not have those on hand.

Commissioner Smodilla stated that would be helpful, and noted that according to the correspondence in the packet, that they had made one error already and wanted to make sure everyone's pencils were nice and sharp for this one.

Commissioner Perri asked what the hours of the business are. He also asked if his inventory consists of antique books.

Mr. Ahart stated that they are open on weekdays from noon to 7pm, and on Saturdays from 11am-7pm and Sundays from noon to 5pm. He added that the oldest books they have are from the 1920's, a Mutt and Jeff from 1921.

Commissioner Lewensky moved to recommend a BEDA grant reimbursement of fifty percent of the sign, which amounts in the amount of \$1,992.50 to Geek Incorporated, Seconded by Commissioner Gorski.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Commissioners Gudenkauf, Hughes, Kubaszko, Lewensky, Perri

NAYS: Commissioners Gorski, Smodilla

ABSENT: Commissioners Erickson, LaPorte

MOTION CARRIED



VILLAGE OF BARTLETT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES
APRIL 11, 2022

Commissioner Gorski moved to amend the motion to recommend a BEDA grant reimbursement of fifty percent of the sign, which amounts in an amount not to exceed \$1,992.50 to Geek Incorporated, Seconded by Commissioner Lewensky.

AYES: Commissioners Gudenkauf, Gorski, Hughes, Kubaszko, Lewensky

NAYS: Commissioner Perri

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Smodilla

ABSENT: Commissioners Erickson, LaPorte

MOTION CARRIED

Commissioner Gorski moved to recommend a BEDA grant reimbursement of fifty percent of the sign, which amounts in an amount not to exceed \$1,992.50 to Geek Incorporated, Seconded by Commissioner Lewensky.

AYES: Commissioners Gudenkauf, Gorski, Hughes, Kubaszko, Lewensky, Perri

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Smodilla

ABSENT: Commissioners Erickson, LaPorte

MOTION CARRIED

NOTE: Once the original motion passed, it could not be amended, except by a motion to reconsider (which could only be made by a member on the prevailing side i.e. by any of commissioners Gudenkauf, Hughes, Kubaszko, Lewensky or Perri) a second then if that motion to reconsider had been made seconded and passed, then a motion to amend could be made. Since that did not happen the result is that the first motion stands as passed, 5 Aye, 2 Nay, and 2 Absent.

6. BEDA VIDEO PRESENTATION

Mr. Fradin shared a video marketing the BEDA Program with the commissioners.

Commissioner Smodilla asked if staff would be rotating the businesses in the video.

Mr. Fradin stated that staff hadn't planned to, but staff would consider it down the road if and when the video needs updating.



VILLAGE OF BARTLETT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES
APRIL 11, 2022

Commissioner Gudenkauf asked if this could be shared with the chamber so that they could share it with their members.

Mr. Fradin said absolutely.

Commissioner Hughes asked if it is on the village website.

Mr. Fradin said it is going to be.

Commissioner Gorski asked numerous questions in regards to the accounting of the BEDA Program. He first asked what Fiscal Year the grant is charged to if the grant is not payed out until the next fiscal year. He also asked if staff could share where the BEDA fund is from time to time with the commissioners. His final question was in regards to grant applicants that do not follow through on their projects.

Mr. Fradin stated that it would be charged in the year that it is payed out, however the budgeted amount would roll over from the previous year's approved grants, and would not take away from the next year's BEDA fund. Staff makes it a point to share that amount left each year when presenting new BEDA's and added that staff manages that budget and would never bring a BEDA grant to the EDC that isn't budgeted for. They are also keeping in mind future projects that may be coming down the road. He concluded stating that there have been some businesses that didn't follow through, and with the program being on a reimbursement basis, that that money does not get paid out and stays in the general fund, and does not impact future budgets for the program.

Commissioner Smodilla asked if staff would continue to roll the funds over year to year and also asked about an expiration date for the completion of the project and being able to receive the grant funds. She also asked about a claw back provision.

Mr. Fradin answered by stating that unspent BEDA dollars do not carry over into the next BEDA budget. He stated that there is an expiration date in regards to going along with the approved permit's timeline, and added that staff regularly checks on BEDA applicants to see what is slowing the project down. He also gave an example of a project that took over a year to be completed, and worked with their staff as well as the building department to help move them along and improve their business. He added that this improvement and buildout would not have been possible without the BEDA program, and that the extra time via extensions helped it get completed. He added that in the worst-case scenario, which would be a good problem to have, and the BEDA fund was maxed out, staff would make a stipulation that the next one would be approved at the start of the next fiscal year. In regards to a claw back provision, he stated that it was considered, but that staff and the village board ultimately decided not to include it in the program. Mr. Fradin added that there is an inherent risk in the program, especially in the restaurant industry. He



VILLAGE OF BARTLETT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES
APRIL 11, 2022

stated that the thorough application process is in place to minimize risk, including asking for business plans.

7. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Fradin stated that there are a few updates for the downtown area this spring that include both some new economic development as well as the elimination of a blighted property.

MORE Brewing has broken ground for its 8,000 SF restaurant and microbrewery and site preparation is currently underway.

151 S. Oak Ave. was the former white garage building behind JC's Mexican Restaurant. The structure had suffered from deferred maintenance and numerous Code-related issues. We had tried on many occasions to attract a new user to the building including offering maximum BEDA grants; however, the costs to bring the building up to current Code were exorbitant and the owner has finally proceeded to demolition. There have already been a few inquiries on the lot, and we will keep the EDC apprised of anything we learn about the availability of the site.

Commissioner Lewensky asked if the newly demolished site would be zoned.

Mr. Fradin confirmed it will stay commercial.

Mr. Fradin continued stating that one of the village's home-grown small businesses, Rebecca's Cakes by Design, will be relocating from the rear-facing unit in Main Street Plaza to a high-visibility storefront in Bartlett Town Center. We have offered a BEDA grant for this popular business's expansion and relocation, and we anticipate Rebecca's being successful at this location for many years.

The former Bartlett Tap property at 113 W. Railroad Ave. recently sold to an office use after numerous restaurateurs passed on it. We anticipate the building to be reoccupied in the coming months.

The new comic book store, Geek Inc., opened in a space formerly occupied by Bartlett Cleaners in Main Street Plaza. The COVID testing space next door has an expiring lease and staff and the broker for the building are working with some potential tenants for the space.

One more property has recently been listed, just outside the downtown area.

The former Bartlett Super Wash at 335 S. Prospect Ave. has closed and has been listed for sale. With several new car washes having been built in the past few years including



VILLAGE OF BARTLETT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES
APRIL 11, 2022

Everclean and Squeaky G's, this site may become a redevelopment site rather than a rehabilitation project.

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Smodilla moved to adjourn the EDC meeting and that motion was seconded by Commissioner Gorski.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO ADJOURN

AYES: Commissioners Gorski, Gudenkauf, Hughes, Kubaszko, Lewensky, Perri, Smodilla

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Commissioners Erickson, LaPorte

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Joseph Dienberg
Management Analyst