



**VILLAGE OF BARTLETT**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**January 11, 2021**

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Erickson called the regular meeting of January 11, 2021 of the Economic Development Commission of the Village of Bartlett to order on the above date at 7:02 p.m. and NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 7(e) of the Open Meetings Act as set forth in Senate Bill 2135 signed by Governor J.B. Pritzker on June 12, 2020, making it effective upon said signing ("SB 2135"), that the regular meeting of Economic Development Commission of the Village of Bartlett (the "EDC") scheduled to be held on December 14, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at the Bartlett Municipal Building, 228 South Main Street, Bartlett, Illinois, may be conducted by audio or video conference without a physical quorum of the members of the Village Board present because an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent due to a disaster, that being COVID-19 pandemic and the applicable restrictions imposed under various laws rules, restrictions, Executive Orders and/or announcements issued by Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker and/or Ngozi O. Ezike MD, Director of the Illinois Department of Public Health, including without limitation "Restore Illinois: A Public Health Approach to Safely Reopen Our State", which currently limits gatherings to the lesser of 25 people or 25% of the capacity of the meeting room as a public health measure.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Commissioners Kirsten Erickson, Gerald Kubaszko, Robert Gorski, Nannette Gudenkauf, Michelle Hughes, Joe LaPorte, Tracy Smodilla

ABSENT: Commissioners Robert Perri, Adam Lewensky

ALSO PRESENT: Economic Development Coordinator Tony Fradin, Assistant Village Administrator Scott Skrycki, Management Analyst Joey Dienberg, Senior Management Analyst Sam Hughes

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Erickson moved to approve the Economic Development Commission Minutes from December 14, 2020 and that motion was seconded by Commissioner Gudenkauf.

AYES: Commissioners Erickson, Kubaszko, Gorski, Gudenkauf, Hughes, LaPorte  
NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Smodilla

ABSENT: Commissioners Perri, Lewensky

MOTION CARRIED



**VILLAGE OF BARTLETT**  
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**January 11, 2021**

---

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

5. O'HARE'S PUB & RESTAURANT BEDA APPLICATION

Mr. Fradin stated that O'Hare's Pub has been operational in the village for over seven years, first opening at the former Sheep & Fiddle location in the Bartlett Square shopping plaza on Army Trail Road in late 2013. As their business grew, husband and wife Bill and Peggy O'Hare-Vance expanded into Bartlett Town Center, where they have operated since late 2016.

Since coming to town, Peggy and Bill have been active and supportive members of the Bartlett community in supporting local events like the Fourth of July, Heritage Days, parades and races and are also involved with local groups including the Bartlett Women's Club, Chamber of Commerce and more. This expansion and relocation, in conjunction with the new bowling alley, will bring the former Bartlett Plaza into near full occupancy after being approximately fifty percent vacant as recently as two years ago prior to its purchase, rehabilitation and rebranding by Mr. Rafidia. In addition to the significant investment and rejuvenation of the center, Ms. Vance estimates needing eight additional full-time staff and additional part-time staff based on events.

Mr. Fradin stated that with this being the first application under the updated version, Ms. Vance has provided a high level of detail about their business's history including sales numbers, as well as a spreadsheet detailing all expenditures to complete this project.

She has cited the total anticipated project cost at \$276,492 per an updated spreadsheet submitted after the initial application. Since the village has never included or added architectural costs as eligible BEDA costs, we are considering that number to be reduced by \$6,300, thus the physical improvements amount to an investment of approximately \$270,000. This number constitutes a full build-out from top to bottom including excavation, flooring, electric, fire suppression, plumbing, framing, a cooler system, a hood, cables, kitchen equipment, painting, a new bar top and more.

This project helps complete the renovation and reoccupation of the former Bartlett Fresh Market space in the former Bartlett Plaza. Prior to its renovation, the space had been vacant for over eight years.

It will also help retain a key business in the downtown area and the village as a whole by incentivizing O'Hare's to expand within the village. Coupled with a new, state-of-the-art bowling alley, the combination of these two businesses is sure to draw both village residents and those in neighboring communities to the area. Mr. Rafidia was previously



**VILLAGE OF BARTLETT**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**January 11, 2021**

---

approved for and received two BEDA grants of \$50,000 each, the first one being approved in October of 2018 and the second in September of 2019.

Also, keep in mind that the shopping center is comprised of two separate buildings, each with its own Parcel Identification Number.

Mr. Fradin stated that with the recent modification allowing a two-year timeframe rather than three, and considering the large investment that Peggy O'Hare-Vance and Bill Vance are making in the community, we recommend a maximum BEDA grant in the amount of \$50,000, to be paid upon proof of all payments having been made, all improvements having been made to the most current codes, and final approvals on all inspections. A grant in that amount would be 18.5% of total project costs.

Ms. O'Hare-Vance introduced herself, husband and son to the commissioners. She stated that they are hopeful to open by March 1, in time for Saint Patrick's Day. She also walked through the details of the bowling alley, adding that it will be an open concept and looking to be family friendly to the community.

Mr. Vance added that they are excited for their business to grow.

Assistant Administrator Skrycki added that they will have pool tables and a kid's party area.

Ms. O'Hare-Vance elaborated on the different amenities they will have such as including the different games and activities for adults and children as well.

Commissioner Smodilla stated that they have enjoyed their business and are excited for the growth. She asked how they expect to cover the expenses of the buildout with the COVID limitations, specifically asking about their revenues throughout the pandemic.

Ms. O'Hare-Vance stated that if they had not been forced to close, it would have been well over one million dollars in revenues for the year. She added that they did as much as they could over the summer given the limitations.

Commissioner Smodilla asked if they are confident to do well given no more forced government closures.

Ms. O'Hare-Vance stated that she is. She added that she has worked with other business owners to turn the center into a destination with activities, compared to where it was.

Commissioner Smodilla expressed optimism with the BEDA Program, and was grateful in its ability to combat pressures and limitations put forth by the Governor.



**VILLAGE OF BARTLETT**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**January 11, 2021**

---

Commissioner LaPorte expressed optimism in the timing of the project.

Assistant Administrator Skrycki stated that Commissioner Smodilla hit the nail on the head, but added that the village does not take \$50,000 lightly, and looks at these projects through a 10-year lens.

Mr. Vance stated that he is also optimistic about the timeline given the circumstances of the pandemic.

Commissioner Gorski asked about the layout of the tables.

Ms. O'Hare-Vance emphasized that the tables will be well spaced out, and that they are prepared for further limitations.

Mr. Vance walked the commissioners through the layout of the entire restaurant.

Commissioner Hughes asked what outdoor seating will look like in the new space.

Mr. Vance stated that they will have a covered patio, and are considering outdoor TV's that can seat about 20 or so.

Commissioner Erickson asked about their video gaming machines, and asked about how important that is financially.

Ms. O'Hare-Vance stated they will have 6, the maximum by the state. She stated that the location of it will help double the income of the machines, at minimum. She added that Mr. Rafidia is very confident about that from his experience in other centers. She expressed gratitude in the support that Bartlett has shown.

Commissioner Smodilla moved to recommend a BEDA Grant in the amount of \$50,000 to O'Hare's Pub & Restaurant to the Village Board that motion was seconded by Commissioner LaPorte.

AYES: Commissioners Erickson, Kubaszko, Gorski, Gudenkauf, Hughes, LaPorte, Smodilla

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Commissioners Perri, Lewensky

MOTION CARRIED



**VILLAGE OF BARTLETT**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**January 11, 2021**

---

6. BRANDING DISCUSSION

Mr. Fradin opened stating that municipal branding is an important aspect of successfully marketing a community.

With many towns throughout the northwest suburbs, the state and the entire country competing for businesses that are able to select where they prefer to be located and often request incentives from multiple potential locations, differentiating your town from the others is both more challenging and more important than ever.

As we make our way out of the pandemic, during which a fair number of projects including the new Culver's, multiple new restaurants, fuel stations and industrial projects have moved forward, the village is once again looking to position itself for future growth through the rest of the twenties and beyond, thus we are looking at ways to rebrand the village. The last time that the EDC and village looked to rebrand itself, we moved away from the "Bartlett Pear" concept to the "Never Far Away" tagline and logo depicting various building structures, a Bartlett "skyline" image.

After a series of brainstorming sessions with the EDC at which numerous slogans and accompanying images were provided, the aforementioned tagline and logo was recommended. At the time, many businesses and investors would claim Bartlett to be "too far out" beyond the range of dense suburbs where they considered expanding into. As development has expanded and this issue has declined over the years, and the village has been better able to distinguish itself from the surrounding suburbs, we now embark to incorporate a new branding strategy.

In our area, various municipalities are well-known for various strengths. Wheeling is well-known for its restaurant row. Elk Grove Village is best known for having the largest industrial park in the U.S. and began using the tagline "Makers Wanted" several years ago. Schaumburg is best known for its vast retail offerings and the Tri-Cities along the Fox River, Geneva, Batavia, and St. Charles, are well-known for their charming downtown areas.

Mr. Fradin added that municipal branding as a whole is comprised of many facets, chief among them that (1) It helps differentiate a community from others. (2) A new logo and tagline do not, in itself, constitute a new strategy. Tactics should represent an integrated, multi-platform approach. Remember, the more times people hear and see your brand and the more ways in which they are exposed to it, the more likely they are to remember it, talk about it, and act as a result of it. (3) What others say about you – not what you say about yourself – will build your brand. In today's world of highly-competitive marketing, advertisements, printed materials, direct mail packages, DVDs, and websites are becoming less and less effective. They are part of "the clutter" – an estimated 3,000+ marketing messages that the average consumer is hit with every day. Only a very small



**VILLAGE OF BARTLETT**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**January 11, 2021**

---

number of marketing messages actually get through and the ones that do are the ones that come from highly credible sources; (4) It needs to strike the right balance between external customer and the internal ones. In a perfect world, we could focus entirely on external customers like corporate site selectors and brokers who influence these investment decisions, knowledge and other skilled workers we are seeking to attract to the village and the news media who are credible, third-party influencers of all of the above groups. However, these days with the proliferation of local social media, blogs, and similar sites, an effective brand provides an opportunity for innovative communities to build a similar group of “electronic ambassadors.” (5) It needs Buy-In. Brands almost always fail to gain traction when those at the top don’t seek input or involvement from stakeholders.

Mr. Fradin asked commissioners to think about the great pride Bartlett residents feel for their home community. Some may not appreciate how their hometown will be represented to the outside world. Thus, involving stakeholders helps make those who feel they were part of the process much more likely to embrace the brand and its purpose.

Since this branding campaign may take some time, staff requests that each member of the EDC think about what positive attributes differentiate the Village of Bartlett from the many others in our area and in the Chicago area at large. Some obvious ones include the high level of safety, the family-oriented nature of the community, the active sports and recreational communities, as well as our growing food niche, both in terms of industrial businesses and those open to the public. We have additionally seen a greater number of entrepreneurial residents open small businesses over the past few years.

Mr. Fradin requested that each commissioner provide some suggestions about which attribute(s) of the village should be focused on at a future meeting as part of this important rebranding process, which we will continue in the coming months.

Commissioner Gorski asked who is being targeted in the branding, residents or businesses.

Mr. Fradin said a little bit of both. It is used at trade shows, but also in marketing businesses that are available.

Commissioner Gorski stated that the word “opportunity” should be used, due to all of the spaces available in town.

Commissioner Erickson commented on the growth of the village and its brand. She stated that this branding plan was created before the era of social media. She emphasized the importance of keep your dollars local, and pushing that message.



**VILLAGE OF BARTLETT**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**January 11, 2021**

---

Commissioner Smodilla agreed, adding that this era requires more nuance. She suggested moving away from a slogan, and suggested involving the community and getting testimonials, using more storytelling.

Commissioner LaPorte added that there needs to be an emphasis on Brewster Creek. He added that it is often forgotten, and needs to be a focal point.

Commissioner Erickson agreed, adding that the average resident doesn't see its importance.

Mr. Fradin stated that it is always one of the biggest marketing points at trade shows, and added that the village is well known in the industry.

Commissioner Smodilla stated that it would be beneficial to get a slogan together and tell a common story, focusing on Mr. Gorski's suggestion of using the word "Opportunity".

Commissioner Erickson stated that this is a great starting off point, and is looking forward to an update.

Commissioner LaPorte suggested reaching out to the board, mayor, administrator, etc and utilizing their networks for this campaign.

Commissioner Hughes added that another key term that she is seeing between everyone's comments is the word "Connecting".

Commissioner Erickson combined the terms to say, "Connecting Opportunities".

Commissioner LaPorte implored the commissioners to look up the definition of community, stating that it runs throughout everyone's comments.

Commissioner Gudenkauf added that this is what the chamber is regularly pushing, and that they are happy to help with this effort.

Commissioner Erickson expressed excitement in moving the village's messaging and branding forward.

## 7. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Fradin shared that he attended the Culver's ribbon cutting. He expressed excitement for this new business coming to town and is looking forward to their success.

Assistant Administrator Skrycki shared how well the staff and board worked with the developer to get this project completed so quickly.



**VILLAGE OF BARTLETT**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**January 11, 2021**

---

Commissioners Erickson and Gudenkauf both expressed how great it is to be building a reputation as a community that is business friendly and great to work with.

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 Erickson, Kubaszko, Gorski, Gudenkauf, Hughes, LaPorte, Smodilla

**NAYS:** None

**ABSENT:** Commissioners Perri, Lewensky

**MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Joseph Dienberg  
Management Analyst