



**VILLAGE OF BARTLETT**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**July 8, 2024**

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Kubaszko called the regular meeting of July 8, 2024, of the Economic Development Commission (EDC) of the Village of Bartlett to order at 7:00 PM

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Commissioners Densford, Erickson, Gorski, Gudenkauf, Kubaszko, Lewensky, Suffern

ABSENT: Commissioner Perri

ALSO PRESENT: Economic Development Coordinator Tony Fradin, Assistant Village Administrator Scott Skrycki

3. APPROVAL OF May 13, 2024, MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Erickson, seconded by Gudenkauf to approve the May meeting minutes.

AYES: Commissioners Densford, Erickson, Gorski, Gudenkauf, Kubaszko, Lewensky, Suffern

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

5. COMMUNITY BRANDING UPDATE

Mr. Fradin provided a recap of the process to date that ultimately brought in a5 as the village's branding consultant. He reminded the EDC that the new branding slogan can be modified based upon the target audience and includes "I Belong," "We Belong," and "You Belong" in Bartlett. He did hours of research into branding campaigns and never saw another one that could be modified in such a way, which makes ours unique.

For economic development purposes, we will use the "You Belong in Bartlett" slogan. Mr. Fradin showed the EDC the new branding tee-shirt and distributed them to commissioners. He described some of the photos in the PowerPoint presentation including MORE Brewing, Rebecca's Cakes by Design, and Get Fresh Produce.



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Mr. Fradin described some of the economic development goals such as business retention and expanding regional awareness of the village to attract visitors and customers to businesses and events. He stated that the branding campaign is village-wide, but most of the mom-and-pop businesses that will be promoted are located downtown. Route 59 and Stearns is home to more regional and national businesses, but they will also be included.

The next round of photos will highlight some community attractions including Bartlett Hills golf course, the State Park, and BAPS mandir.

Mr. Fradin described the budget for the current fiscal year, keeping it under \$50,000.

Mr. Skrycki noted that the village is not a business selling items; we are selling a way of life, and this will be a momentum-gaining branding campaign.

Mr. Fradin continued that we will be using social media including boosts, we will also utilize Google ads, something that we have not yet used, and some of the more costly items include television and radio spots including WGN and WBBM.

Commissioner Suffern asked what percentage of the budget is being allocated to media.

Mr. Fradin replied that is yet to be determined. Our consultant, a5, has vast experience and connections with media sources and we discuss that with them when we meet almost weekly.

Chairman Kubaszko asked how the terminology “We Belong” was arrived at.

Mr. Fradin replied that it is the result of focus groups, meetings with various village representatives including the EDC and Village Board, and months of research. Ultimately, a5 presented three options to the Village Board, who selected the “Belong in Bartlett” tagline. Others included “Better in Bartlett” and “Good For Us.” This one stood out above the others.

Chairman Kubaszko asked to elaborate on the focus groups.

Mr. Fradin replied that Mr. Skrycki and I helped a5 put them together. Mr. Skrycki added that it included School District U-46 and surveys to the schools and civic groups. The village did an internal survey previously.

Mr. Fradin stated although the overall branding message is a simple one, it came after a lot of thought and process including input from many. The survey had over 1,000 responses.



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Commissioner Suffern suggested that we include the branding message on signage to help reinforce it for residents. Mr. Skrycki replied that is a great idea and we are looking at areas in town to do that. It would be an additional village expense. He added that we are still early on with this process, and it will be going for three to four years.

Commissioner Erickson suggested that the village create a selfie frame that can be used at local events like National Night Out and Oktoberfest, to help grow the brand organically. Mr. Fradin replied that is a good idea and we will pursue that.

Commissioner Erickson asked how far in advance we must plan for the media spots.

Mr. Fradin replied that we are working on getting on the schedule for them and must commit to the appearances months in advance. We want to promote holiday events, so we are looking into it now.

Mr. Skrycki stated that we are looking at events including Oktoberfest, Merry & Bright, Small Business Saturday, and the village's first Restaurant Week early next year to promote as part of this branding effort.

Mr. Fradin went on to display the landing page on the village website and noted that we recently purchased the "Belong in Bartlett" domain. Mr. Skrycki added that as we get further into the Lake Street TIF, you will see the "You Belong" branding to be used at trade shows and to send to commercial brokers.

Mr. Fradin displayed the Economic Development postcard and remarked that, in addition to the initial professional photos, we will be using some of our own photos and can take photos from businesses' Facebook pages too if they agree.

Commissioner Suffern asked what the messaging will be for the trade show and economic development materials. Mr. Fradin replied that it will be generic, talking about things like how many businesses are in town and that Bartlett is a safe and prosperous community that welcomes them. We can also do a two-sided postcard or flier and change the information on the back depending on the target audience.

(an inaudible question about printing)

Mr. Fradin replied that we can print simple things in-house, but sometimes we may want a heavy-stock glossy printed item and may use a local printer. Mr. Skrycki added that we can do bulk mailings too.

Mr. Skrycki explained that we will be able to measure social media engagement and that we will probably see some results in a year or so.



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Commissioner Erickson suggested that we order branded stickers and commended the tee-shirts. She mentioned that when the EDC and village did the wayfinding signs in 2010, we never carried the branding through beyond some of the basics.

Mr. Fradin agreed, noting that besides using it on various promotional and printed items, previous branding efforts were never promoted heavily to residents with things like tee-shirts, social media, and photo opportunities.

Chairman Kubaszko suggested that we expand this branding to the business park, with the additional tagline “They Belong in Bartlett.” Mr. Fradin reiterated that this is a village-wide effort, and we will look at ways to include those in the industrial parks as well.

Commissioner Suffern noted that, while he loves local events, he believes they should be downtown. He stated that Apple Orchard Park and Leiseberg Park are in isolated areas and do not boost the downtown like Heritage Days did in the past. He noted that there are many empty parking lots in the area on weekends and to optimize economic impact, more events should be held downtown.

Commissioner Erickson explained that, as part of the Oktoberfest Committee, they looked at many locations, eventually landing where they thought best. She said that there is also a band shelter being planned for Leiseberg Park. Once they decided on a venue, they need to stay there. She further explained liability issues and other reasons why it will remain at that location. Also, it is the Bartlett Area Chamber of Commerce and another community questions why it is always held in Bartlett.

Mr. Skrycki explained that there are events that are great for the downtown area such as the Cocoa Crawl and Merry & Bright activities.

Commissioner Densford mentioned cruise nights in Lombard and asked if we have ever considered those. Mr. Fradin replied that some businesses have done it on their own, for example Culver’s and even previously in Streets of Bartlett. Commissioner Suffern described the car show years ago along Oak Avenue during Heritage Days as phenomenal. Commissioner Densford added that he plans events for the Bartlett Raiders and may investigate hosting one.

Chairman Kubaszko inquired about the Metra parking lot status. He mentioned that the lots seem empty much of the time. Mr. Skrycki replied that the use of the lots is at about sixty percent of where they were pre-pandemic on Tuesdays through Thursdays. Mr. Fradin added that he can attest to this, walking past those lots most weekdays and seeing them mostly empty on Mondays and Fridays, but at the percentage Scott mentioned three days per week.



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Mr. Skrycki stated that as part of the rehabilitation projects for Metra includes improvements to the Bartlett and Elgin area including a consolidation of the two platforms back into one in a few years. This will change the parking patterns when it happens.

Commissioner Suffern asked about the status of the apartment project that we have been talking about for years along Railroad Avenue. Mr. Skrycki responded that we are currently working on potential amendments to the contract.

## 6. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Fradin detailed the status of the Lake Street Corridor Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District. Next Thursday the Joint Review Board will convene to review the qualification report and redevelopment plan, and to make a recommendation to the Village Board regarding approval of the new TIF.

Mr. Fradin further added that he did a “broker blast,” highlighting the Banbury Fair property recently listed for sale as well as multiple vacancies in Stearns Crossing shopping center. The blast went to 316 recipients, 191 opened it, there were 46 clicks on properties, the most being for the Banbury Fair listing (20).

Commissioner Suffern expressed his disappointment with banner flags reading “slots” still around the village. They remain month after month and are not good for the village’s image.

Mr. Fradin agreed and said that the EDC reviewed the sign ordinance last November, its recommendations went to the Committee of the Whole last December, and the Director of Planning and Development Services, Ms. Stone, reported that the updated ordinance should be going to the Planning and Zoning Commission by the end of the year. No changes have been made yet.

## 7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Erickson, second by Commissioner Gudenkauf

AYES: Commissioners Densford, Erickson, Gudenkauf, Kubaszko, Lewensky,  
Suffern, Gorski

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Tony Fradin, Economic Development Coordinator