

MINUTES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
March 20, 2019

The meeting of the Libertyville Economic Development Commission was called to order at 7:30 a.m. at Village Hall, 118 W. Cook Ave Libertyville, IL.

Members Present: Chairman John Cortesi, Commissioners William Abington, Brian Grano, Thomas Kreuser, Dan Marks, Steve Martin, Sara Rolsma, and Edward Werdell.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: John Spoden, Director of Community Development and Heather Rowe, Economic Development Coordinator

Others Present: Mark Anderson, MainStreet Libertyville

Minutes: The Commission approved the minutes of the February 20, 2019 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Sales Tax Review: Chairman Cortesi opened the meeting and referred to the sales tax data in the Commission's packet for the Village and similar communities. A general discussion on various retail segments continued.

- Tax revenues have nudged upwards.
- Vehicle Sales: SUV sales and electronic vehicle sales are up, but sedan sales are down. This trend is expected to continue through 2019.
- There is an opportunity to target high end retailers downtown.
- While restaurant sales tax figures appear increased 2018, local restaurants are reporting slower lunchtime traffic. This has increased with addition of restaurants at Melody Farms. There may be a rebound after customers have had a chance to try those restaurants and then return to established businesses, but may also continue with other proposed restaurants at Hawthorn Mall. This is a trend to watch and may require continued local restaurant promotion.
- Additional housing is needed to support area businesses.
- Additional office is needed downtown to create more daytime customers. Village should consider reviewing downtown office regulations for areas where certain office types could be added.
- A downtown directory should be considered at the train station and elsewhere.
- It's important to continue to promote the patronage of local businesses that support the community. Online retailers (Amazon) don't give back to the community or present local sales tax. There should be a way to get a sense of the amount of taxes paid to the State by Amazon within the zip code. The Commission requested staff research this further and suggested municipalities and the legislature should push for municipalities to benefit from online sales.

The Commission inquired of the Village's sales tax rate compared to surrounding communities. Ms. Rowe shared a chart which showed the Village's lower comparable rate. The Commission offered the following comments:

If the Village is considering a tax increase, it may make sense to focus on a non-home rule tax that brings the rate comparable to other communities. This is better than focusing on just one retail segment like the Places for Eating tax does. It's better to consider this during a good economic

Minutes of the March 20, 2019, Economic Development Commission Meeting
Page 2 of 2

climate and while the Village is on a stable footing if the Village knows funds are needed in the future, rather than waiting until there's an economic downtown and the Village is desperate and customer sentiment is down. As the Places for Eating tax has shown, the small increase should not impact sales if the rate is comparable with surrounding communities.

Communications and Discussions:

At the Chairman's request, Staff reviewed pending development by Pharmalogistics at Libertyville Corporate Center, within the property which house Starbucks/Clucker's downtown, and at various other sites. Staff also noted that the Village Board approved the contract for the dining related signage at the Lake Forest Oasis; the signage will post April 1st. A letter has been sent to dining establishments inquiring if they desire a photo feature in the Spring 2019 dining guide which is being updated for May distribution. A public open house on the Comprehensive Plan is tentatively scheduled for May 9th.

The Chairman inquired if there were Main Street updates. Mr. Peterson reported that the organization was just awarded its National Main Street accreditation and that they had a very successful Wine About Winter event.

Ms. Rowe noted the next Commission meeting will be held at Laser Precision.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather J. Rowe, AICP
Economic Development Coordinator