

VILLAGE OF LAKE IN THE HILLS
BUSINESS RELATIONS COMMITTEE

February 13, 2007

The Business Relations Committee met February 13, 2007 at the Lake in the Hills Village Hall, 600 Harvest Gate, Lake in the Hills, IL at 6:07 p.m. Those present were Committee Members Joe DeMay, Mary Siewenie, John Andrea, Chris Hadfield and Russ Ruzanski. Also present were Assistant Village Administrator Shannon Andrews, Recording Secretary Nancy Sujet and Ex Officio Member Trustee Wakeman. Committee Member Colin Taheny was absent from this evening's meeting. Chairperson Jeffrey Altman arrived at 6:20 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES 01-16-07

Committee Member Siewenie motioned to approve the January 16, 2007 meeting minutes. Committee Member Hadfield seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a sign of ayes, no nays.

OLD BUSINESS

Business Mentoring

Discuss results of previous month's calls/Assignment of calls for February

There were no new businesses for January.

Committee Member Hadfield volunteered to take the calls for February.

Algonquin Road Constructions Updates

Chairperson Altman arrived late to the meeting and stated that he had nothing new regarding the Algonquin Road Construction. Committee Member Siewenie asked once the Committee receives information from the County what is the Committee planning on doing. Ms. Andrews stated that there would be an open forum with the County and the businesses. Committee Member Hadfield asked if this was a function of the Business Relations Committee. Ms. Andrews informed Committee Member Hadfield that the Business Relations Committee is a bridge between the County and the businesses. She then informed the Committee that the County is in the beginning process of removing trees and waiting for permits from the utility companies to relocate all the utilities. Committee Member Andrea asked if there was a link on the Village's website to the County regarding the construction. Ms. Andrews stated that she will verify that information.

Business Enhancement Program Update – Pandemic Planning

Committee Member DeMay mentioned that the Committee has been talking about hosting a meeting with James Wales and the Lake in the Hills businesses regarding Pandemic Planning. District 158 is hosting one in February and the Village of Lake in the Hills is hosting one in March for Lake in the Hills' residents. Committee Member DeMay stated that James Wales would be available on April 19 to host a lunch meeting at the Safety Education Center; it holds 40 – 50 people and box lunches would be served. James Wales will set-up the whole agenda. Committee Member DeMay then asked Ms. Andrews to briefly explain the flu.

Ms. Andrews gave a brief description of Pandemic Flu and stated that awareness needs to increase. Committee Member DeMay asked what is currently been done nationally and locally. If it has happened three times in the past Century and 30 – 50% of the population will be ill, businesses would be interested. Committee Member Andrea asked if a date has been set for the luncheon. Ms. Andrews informed the Committee that the tentative date is April 19, 2007 from 11:30am – 1:00pm. She also stated that James Wales could give a history of what currently is being done. Committee Member DeMay commented that James Wales may have a better idea after he has done a couple presentations.

He then asked if the businesses should pre-pay for the event. Ms. Andrews suggested that if a business RSVP's and does not show, perhaps we should bill them.

Committee Member DeMay stated that the Committee needs to decide if they want to hold the meeting on April 19th. The Committee does have money to buy lunches and maybe get some brochures. Committee Member Ruzanski asked again if it is scheduled for Thursday, April 19th from 11:30am – 1:00pm.

Committee Member DeMay motioned to have the Pandemic Planning meeting on Thursday, April 19th, 2007 from 11:30am – 1:00pm. Committee Member Andrea seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a sign of ayes, no nays.

2007 Strategic Planning

Committee Member Ruzanski asked if there were any questions or ideas to get the committee thinking. Ms. Andrews informed the committee that the Business Relation Committee goals are aligned with the Villages Goals. The following are the 8 questions:

1. Who are we?
2. What do we do?
3. Why are we here?
4. What kind of committee are we?
5. What kind of committee do we want to become?
6. What is our objective? What are the ends we seek?
7. What courses of action might lead to the ends we seek?
8. What is our current strategy?

Committee Member Hadfield suggested another question. How do we fit into the Community? Committee Member DeMay suggested. Who are we and what do we do? Committee Member Hadfield asked if the Committee is still represented by this. Ms. Andrews referred him to the definitions in Chapter 20 Section 20.07. The Committee has the ability to make any kind of goals. Committee Member Hadfield stated that he has not received any kind of feedback from the businesses as to what is broken. Committee Member Siewenie agreed.

Ms. Andrews mentioned to the Committee that a survey was completed in 2004, but it largely focused on the businesses' relationship with the Village. The survey did find that businesses were interested in more information on grants and marketing to residents. She suggested that it may be time to do another survey. Committee Member DeMay suggested doing the SWOT analysis. What can we do and what are the obstacles in front of us. Committee Member Ruzanski stated that the Committee is on the right track. The Committee needs to ascertain the issues. The key is still to get the businesses to attend the meetings and share their thoughts with the Committee. Business Enhancement Program is the right track, maybe it's time to do another one. Committee Member Andrea stated that questions are fine but that businesses are not going to come to the meetings unless they want to. We need to let them know where we are if they need us.

Committee Member Siewenie asked if the businesses could Google to get some of their information. Maybe we need to physically go to the businesses with a survey. But there are so many different problems we don't want to put the wrong thing out there. Chairperson Altman stated that when the survey was done, the Committee personally followed up with the small number of businesses that were interested in making contact. No one really had any problems the main issue was the roads. One of the early programs was with McHenry County College and training the work force. Maybe it won't solve their problem but give them direction to solve it. We need to continue doing the Business Enhancement Program the way we have been but maybe a newsletter would be nice. We can put the

information in a newsletter in case they cannot attend the luncheon. If the businesses have any questions we can let them know when and where we meet and put our names in the newsletter.

Committee Member Siewenie agreed with Chairperson Altman. There were four new businesses last month, maybe invite them to attend the next meeting and have them tell us about themselves and any concerns they may have. Committee Member Hadfield stated that he is still in favor of surveying the businesses again. Chairperson Altman stated that we can survey the businesses again and learn from what we did last time.

Committee Member DeMay asked Ms. Andrews if there was a way to find out how many businesses have left the village and why. Ms. Andrews stated that this would be very difficult to produce an accurate figure.

Ms. Andrews then informed the Committee that included with the packet was information regarding who the major employers are as of January 2007. If the business has not signed up for a license then they would not be on the list. Ms. Andrews then went over the Business Mix Analysis and Home Based Business Analysis.

Committee Member DeMay asked about the Coffee Shop that closed. Should the developer or the Business Relations Committee have played a role in the business even opening in the first place? Chairperson Altman stated that the investor/business owner decides where to open the business. Committee Member DeMay suggested that maybe the Business Relations Committee should start looking around and saying what businesses should go in or not. Chairperson Altman stated that one way the Village can control businesses is by licensing and zoning. Committee Member DeMay asked if the Committee should be involved more. Committee Member Andrea feels that it is not the role of the Business Relations Committee. Chairperson Altman confirmed that the Planning and Zoning Commission gets information to the Village Board regarding what businesses are looking to come into the Village. Committee Member DeMay feels that if the Committee knows that this is happening, shouldn't we help the businesses? We are here to try and help business succeed. Committee Member Hadfield asked if Famous Firehouse Coffee belonged to the Chamber and if the Committee should be plugged into the Chamber. Chairperson Altman stated that the Committee should deal with the Chamber whenever possible but that we do not want to duplicate anything that the Chamber does.

Discussion took place regarding the Table Committee from the Chamber.

Ms. Andrews listed the Committee opportunities on the board which consist of: 1. New Survey, 2. Having a part in the Newsletter and 3. Inviting the businesses to attend the meetings.

Committee Member Siewenie mentioned that the Chamber has a wonderful publication and that maybe the Committee could advertise in that publication. Committee Member Hadfield asked if the bigger box stores are a part of the Chamber. Committee Member Siewenie said that most of the members are smaller businesses. Ms. Andrews asked the Committee had any other opportunities to share. Committee Member Ruzanski said it was a great start.

Ms. Andrews then listed the Committee's strengths which are: 1. Good Program Contents and 2. Access to Resources. The Committee's weaknesses are: 1. Business mix, 2. The Committee does not know what the businesses need and 3. Low Participation at the Business Enhancement Breakfast/Luncheons. Committee Member Siewenie stated that businesses need to know that there is an Available Space List available to them. Ms. Andrews informed the Committee that the State of Illinois has a system called L.O.I.S. which is very similar to our Available Sites. Each municipality feeds information into the site.

Chairperson Altman asked to add Village Staff, Village Board and Government under the Strengths for the Business Relations Committee. Committee Member DeMay stated that one of the weaknesses is that the Committee does not have power. Committee Member Andrea stated that the Committee is just an informational Committee.

Further discussion took place regarding the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the Committee.

Trustee Wakeman did mention that all Committees are listened to by the Village Board.

Each Committee Member went over their thoughts about the SWOT.

Discussion took place regarding Planning and Zoning and future planning for commercial development and whose role is it to plan for commercial development and getting the retailers into the Village.

Committee Member Hadfield asked how many of the topics that are under the weakness could be a topic for the luncheons.

Chairperson Altman referred everyone to Section 20.01 of the Municipal Code. Committee Member Hadfield asked how much business coaching the Committee should be doing. Chairperson Altman stated that the Committee needs to identify issues with the current businesses. Committee Member DeMay stated that maybe the newsletter will help. Chairperson Altman indicated that businesses are going to look at what towns they want to go to, they have the resources. Committee Member Ruzanski stated that every potential business owner has a vision and we do not want to give negative input to them. Committee Member Andrea asked how many retail businesses have left. Chairperson Altman stated that Sears has left but that had nothing to do with the Village. Committee Member DeMay stated that the Village needs to retain businesses. Committee Member Andrea mentioned if the businesses came to the Committee or Village for help, then we could try to keep them in the Village.

Ms. Andrews will put the participation in the newsletter on the Agenda for the next meeting. Committee Member DeMay asked if the newsletter is mailed or e-mailed to the businesses. Ms. Andrews informed the Committee that the newsletter is currently 3 pages and is e-mailed to businesses. The newsletter would have to be 4 pages in order to go to a printer. The budget has been increased so that the newsletter can be mailed out. The Business Relations Committee could have a section of the newsletter referring to the Gordon Larsen Achievement Award one month and then something else another month. Committee Member Hadfield suggested an article about Pandemic Planning. Committee Member Siewenie suggested updates about the monthly meetings. Committee Member Ruzanski indicated that this would maybe get businesses to attend the meetings. Committee Member Andrea thought that it would cut back on the Business Enhancement Program. Trustee Wakeman suggested a meeting about better security and quality employees. Committee Member Andrea stated that some businesses just do not want to invest in training. Ms. Andrews indicated that everyone should think about it and maybe it could be part of the survey.

Committee Member Andrea stated that when a business needs to come, they will be at a meeting. Ms. Andrews indicated that an invitation should be extended to all businesses. Committee Member Ruzanski stated that the businesses need to know that the Committee exists and the Village cares about their business. Give them the opportunity to attend. Committee Member DeMay asked what is the Committee trying to get out of the survey. Ms. Andrews suggested discussing this at the next meeting.

Ms. Andrews clarified whether the Committee wanted her to continue to report what is happening with the Chamber or they want a liaison from the Committee to attend the Chamber meetings. She then indicated that the TABLE liaison may not come to every Business Relations Committee meeting. Would the Committee like to establish their own role with the Chamber? Committee Member Andrea suggested discussing it at the next meeting. Committee Member Hadfield asked if the Committee should represent a business to the board. Committee Member DeMay stated that the Butcher on the Block came to a meeting when they had issues and the Committee tried to assist him. Committee Member Hadfield stated that the Committee is a great resource, but if a business asks us for help, he wants to be able to provide examples of how the Committee helped in the past and we don't currently have a lot of these examples.

Ms. Andrews indicated that the Committee has come a long way and we need to give the Business Relations Committee time to grow. Committee Member Hadfield indicated that he is looking for a spark. Committee Member Siewenie informed the Committee that the Property Owners Association was very excited about receiving the Gordon Larsen Achievement Award. Ms. Andrews indicated that the Committee needs to promote business resources. Any one of the threats can become an agenda item down the road.

New Business

None

STAFF REPORT

Police Department Survey

Ms. Andrews informed the Committee that Officer Lathrop of the Lake in the Hills Police Department has developed a survey for the business community to identify how day to day crimes and nuisances affect our businesses. Officer Lathrop has asked if the Business Relations Committee would be interested in assisting the Police Department in trying to increase the participation on the survey. Previously, the Committee has personally invited businesses to attend our programs. Should the Committee again decide to promote the upcoming pandemic program through personal invitations, Officer Lathrop would greatly appreciate it if the Committee could mention the survey and encourage the businesses to complete and send them in.

Ms. Andrews indicated that if the Business Relations Committee could help and participate that would be great. Committee Members Hadfield and Siewenie volunteered to help. Committee Member Ruzanski thought it would be a great idea if each one of the members took a strip mall and asked if Officer Lathrop could come to the next meeting to give them information about the survey.

Summer Sunset Fest

Ms. Andrews informed the Committee that the last update from the Summer Sunset Fest Committee is that they are planning to continue the Business Expo in 2007. Members of the committee felt that they shouldn't pull the event after just one year. They are interested in giving it another chance and working to iron out concerns that were addressed by the businesses who attended. Denise Wasserman has drafted a letter to the businesses on behalf of the committee. The letter tries to lead businesses to treat the event as an expo and marketing opportunity versus an opportunity to sell their products to the community.

Ms. Andrews asked if one of the Committee Members could attend the next Summer Sunset Fest meeting. Committee Member Andrea stated that he could, but asked when are the meetings held. Trustee Wakeman informed the Committee that the meetings are held on the 1st Wednesday of every month at 7:30pm. Committee Member Siewenie asked if most of the businesses that participated last year were from Lake in the Hills. Ms. Andrews indicated that there was a healthy mix. The Summer

Sunset Fest Committee would like the Business Relations Committee's role to be more than what it was last year. Trustee Wakeman indicated that the Summer Sunset Fest Committee is guessing what the Business Relations Committee role is going to be. How will the Committee help the Summer Sunset Fest Committee? Committee Member Andrea indicated that he felt the role would not change much from last year. He does not see the Committee expanding the role. Should the Business Relations Committee go and get the businesses? Committee Member Siewenie stated that she thinks the Business Relations Committee should go out and get the businesses. Committee Member Andrea indicated that last year the businesses needed to contact Village Hall. Committee Member Hadfield mentioned that Denise Wasserman had a waiting list last year. Ms. Andrews indicated that there was a good list of names but the Committee needs to decide if they want to limit the businesses to Lake in the Hills only.

TRUSTEE LIASON REPORT

Trustee Wakeman informed the Committee that there have been 2 robberies in the village and the Police Department did go out and visit all businesses. They offered them escorts to their cars. 7 businesses took the Police Department up on their offer.

Trustee Wakeman commented that available sites would be helpful in case you were aware of a business looking for space to rent or buy. She then stated that the Village Board feels that the Business Relations Committee can make the decision as to what is best for them. The Village Board has total faith in the Business Relations Committee. The Planning and Zoning Commission makes recommendations to the Village Board, but the Village Board still makes the final decision.

Trustee Wakeman indicated to the Committee that the Business Enhancement Program is a good idea, if we learn any concerns from the businesses even if it is just one business. She then suggested to the Committee that maybe in the summer to have a topic about security.

DISCUSSION

None

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Committee Member Andrea to adjourn the meeting. Committee Member Hadfield seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a sign of aye, no nays. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Nancy Sujet
Recording Secretary