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3 **Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the**
4 **Northbrook Economic Development Committee (EDC) and**
5 **Industrial & Commercial Development Commission (ICDC)**
6 **Remote Virtual Meeting**
7 **January 13, 2021**

8 **EDC Members Present:** Chairman Jim Kahan, Robert Caldwell, Martha Carlos, Matt Cassidy, Jay
9 Glaubinger, Mike Gold, Michael Goodman, R. J. Gravel, Kate Hall, Larry Hewitt, Judy Hughes, Patrick
10 Keefe, Harley Korman, Cathy Lauria, Karen Roloff, Eric Schwager, Ammar Rizki, Brian Wegley

11 **ICDC Members Present:** Chairman Patrick Lederer, Jill Carlisle, MaryAnn Chambers, Tensley Garris (Joint
12 Member), David Gottlieb, Ron Goldblatt, Doug Mahute, Rich Rushkewicz (Joint Member), Curtis Wilens,
13 Mark Bernhard

14 **Staff Present:** Sandra Frum – Village President, Rich Nahrstadt – Village Manager, Tom Poupard-Director
15 - Development and Planning Services, Michaela Kohlstedt – Deputy Director Development and Planning
16 Services

17 **Guests Present:** Gina Speckman

18 **Public Present:** None

19 **Recorder:** Sue Anetsberger

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21 **Call to Order & Introductions:**

22 Chairman Jim Kahan (EDC) called the remote meeting to order at 7:34 a.m. He announced that the
23 meeting was being held remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

24 **Review of Minutes**

25 **EDC Minutes**

26 On a motion made by Member Roloff and seconded by Member Hall, with the following changes: (1) on
27 P. 2, line 17 “the base EAV was set and now the clock is running” and (2) a spelling change on P. 3, line
28 24 “hybrid”. On voice vote the minutes from the October 14, 2020 EDC meeting were approved with
29 changes.

30 **ICDC Minutes**

31 On a motion made by Member Rushkewicz and seconded by Member Garris, the minutes from the
32 October 27 2020 ICDC meeting were approved as submitted.

1 **Public Comment-Hear from the Audience-None**

2 **Special Announcement**

3 Kate Hall reported that Chad Raymond, former Director of Northbrook Public Library, passed away on
4 Monday, January 11, 2020. Members of both commissions were saddened by the news. Chairman Kahan
5 stated that Chad had made valuable contributions to the community and the EDC.

6 **Annual Report from the Chicago North Shore Convention and Visitors Bureau**

7 Gina Speckman, Executive Director of Chicago’s North Shore Convention & Visitors Bureau reported that
8 CNSCVB is the official marketing organization for the North Shore and their mission is to promote
9 Northbrook as a business, meeting, event and visitor destination. The organization as well as the entire
10 hospitality industry has been hit very hard by the pandemic. As a result, the Bureau has had to adjust
11 their marketing strategy. The Bureau is now promoting locally. Hotels have been hit particularly hard
12 with occupancy and have been forced to lower rates. Some have chosen to close for a period of time.
13 Full recovery to match 2019 levels is not anticipated until 2024. Cities have been harder hit than more
14 rural areas. Chicago has been hit hard as a meeting destination. Being in a big city and hosting large
15 events will take Chicago longer to recover. Regions closest to downtown are doing worse than other
16 areas that are farther out. The forecasted recovery will be slow and long. Ms. Speckman stated that
17 meetings will never go back to the way they were and will now always have a virtual component.

18 The Bureau allows marketing opportunities for any business, even if they are not in a member
19 community. The Bureau promotes on social media channels and offers paid advertising behind the
20 promotions. The Bureau has provided direct links to their pages. The Bureau introduced as an incentive,
21 a “deal of the day” program that began in September and lasts one week, and is heavily promoted. The
22 Holiday Light Show at Northbrook Court was also promoted by the Bureau and was considered a huge
23 success.

24 The Bureau will produce a Restaurant Guide in early summer when restaurants are able to fully open.
25 The Bureau is offering a zoom event on January 14, 2021 on Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and is
26 very involved with Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), and CARES ACT
27 money. Restaurant week will also occur, but focusing on carry-out opportunities. Director Poupard
28 stated that the Village has a hotel/motel tax and a portion of the tax proceeds fund the Village of
29 Northbrook’s contribution to the CNSCVB and the Chamber of Commerce.

30 **Recommendation to Village Board on Continued Support of CNSCVB**

1 A joint EDC/ICDC motion was made for the Village of Northbrook to continue the 2021 financial support
2 of the CNSCVB by Judy Hughes and seconded by Rich Rushkewicz. On voice vote, the motion was
3 approved unanimously.

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5 **Annual Report from the Northbrook Chamber of Commerce and Industry**

6 Tensley Garris, President of the Northbrook Chamber of Commerce & Industry stated that the Chamber
7 is a business association with 639 members and is the largest chamber on the North Shore. It is an
8 independent association governed by a board. Supporting members include Allstate, Underwriters
9 Laboratories, Barilla and many more diverse participants with separate needs. The Chamber is currently
10 focusing on the survival of the business community and helping them cope with COVID guidelines.
11 Information is being delivered on the most recent COVID package and the COVID vaccine. The
12 information is delivered through educational webinars over Zoom. The Chamber is highlighting the fact
13 that all of the programs offered have been free to any of the businesses in Northbrook.

14 The Annual State of the Village Address will take place on Wednesday January 27, 2021 at noon
15 featuring Village President Sandy Frum.

16 This past ten months the Chamber has served as an ombudsman for the business community and has
17 received countless calls for advice during the pandemic. The Chamber formed special groups for
18 restaurants and retailers. Business owners do not always know who to call for help. They often turn to
19 the Chamber. The Chamber has doubled down on its social media presence and invested in a special
20 holiday campaign. Over 22,000 copies of the Northbrook Community Resource Guide were published
21 and distributed. Businesses have been personally invested by connecting with some of the local
22 charitable organizations. Groceries are being delivered from the Northfield Food Pantry to Crestwood
23 Place. A Chamber staff member visited over 90 businesses/retailers over the holiday season.

24 **Recommendation to Village Board on Continued Support of Chamber**

25 A motion was made by Member Rushkewicz and seconded by Member Roloff for the Village of
26 Northbrook to continue in 2021 to endorse and support the Northbrook Chamber of Commerce and its
27 efforts towards the community and others. ON voice vote, the motion was approved unanimously.

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29 **Village Initiatives and Development Update**

30 Tom Poupard presented a series of slides. He noted that the Northbrook Unemployment number is at
31 6.4% through November 2020. That number has been coming down after increasing sharply due to the

1 pandemic. Director Poupard stated that things seem to be improving but cautioned that we have to
2 continue watching the path. Industrial vacancies are seeing a slight uptick at 8.5%. Industrial rent is fairly
3 stable. Office is an area of concern with a vacancy rate at 19%. Office rent has climbed a bit. Retail
4 vacancies are starting to creep up to 12.8%. This is an area of concern. Rent for retail space is also
5 dropping noticeably.

6 Sales tax figures year to date are negative numbers except for the following areas; grocery +8%, home
7 improvement +24%, and agriculture, which includes landscaping and nursery material. Numbers are
8 down year to date at 13%. However, the Village Finance Department has been extremely cautious in its
9 projections; hence, the Village is ahead of what they originally estimated for the budget.

10 Permit activity for single family homes is about the same as last year. District #28 is seeing the most new
11 home construction. Non-residential has the most significant drop in permit activity. Construction value is
12 about where we were in 2018. Inspections continue to be quite busy.

13 No permits have been pulled for the new phase of Northbrook Court, where the Macy's store had been
14 located. There is possible adaptive use for the former Lord & Taylor space. Brookfield is being cautious
15 but is fully committed to Northbrook Court.

16 There is no new news on what will happen with Green Acres from the property owner and perspective
17 developers. Nothing has been filed.

18 Five Seasons has closed. There is interest from residential developers, but no development proposals
19 have been submitted

20 The Village is completing a storm water analysis of the Grainger property area before it decides what to
21 do with the property.

22 The Village adopted a new Affordable Housing Plan and Housing Ordinance in December. Larger
23 developments of 6 or more units must have 15% of the total units be affordable.

24 The Village has begun work on a Climate Action Plan. It is wonderful that there is representation from
25 the school districts, park district, library and business community on the planning team. It will be critical
26 to have everyone working together to make progress. Chairman Kahan asked if the Village had any incite
27 about COVID vaccinations. Village Manager Nahrstadt stated that the vaccines have to come through
28 Cook County. The County is trying to gear up on terms of organization. 50% of the Village's paramedics
29 have received the vaccine. The Village is waiting for information on Stage 1b.

1 The Chamber of Commerce is offering an educational program on vaccines on February 9, 2021 at 2:30
2 p.m. The program is open only to the business community.

3 **Cook County Property Assessments and Complications**

4 Chairman Kahan spoke of changing trends with the property tax burden. Chairman Kahan stated that
5 66% is residential tax burden but in reality the underlining property tax value is almost 83% for
6 residential. The differential is a big break for residents on how much tax they pay. This is due to Cook
7 County in the unique way that they assess properties.

8 From 2018 to 2019 the Assessor chose to make changes to assess nonresidential property. Some
9 businesses saw their assessment going up 100% and more. On the market value side, nonresidential saw
10 a big increase. The assessment change had huge impacts.

11 If adjustments were not made, and if properties were taxed on the market value versus EAV, residential
12 property tax bills would have been 25% greater. Chairman Kahan stated that this shows what the
13 business community is doing for residents.

14 **Business Community 2021 Perspective & Outlook**

15 Chairman Lederer stated that property tax bills on average jumped 15-20% but rents are not increasing
16 to pick up that difference. Property owners are losing money. Prospective buyers are not interested in
17 purchasing in Cook County. The vacancy rate is climbing as a result and industrial and office markets are
18 seeing the impact.

19 Chairman Kahan stated that COVID is adding to the burden. Chairman Lederer added that we need to be
20 cognizant when thinking about adding regulations to businesses.

21 Member Rushkewicz stated that his industry has received thousands of inquiries on the next round of
22 PPP loans. He believes people will stay cautious with spending compared to one year ago.

23 **Updates from the Taxing Districts**

24 **Northbrook Park District** – The new activity center has opened. Due to COVID, recreational revenue is
25 down 45%. Expenses were reduced. Seasonal staff was reduced 76% at one point. Anetsberger Golf
26 Course had its highest record number of rounds played. Golf course construction is on track at
27 Sportsman’s. A planned opening for Sportsman’s is scheduled for late summer of 2021. The Senior
28 Center is providing virtual activities.

1 **District #27** – The District is conducting a search for Dr. Kroeze’s retirement. The District plans to resume
2 school on January 19th after an adaptive pause. Remote learning students that would like to seek re-
3 entry would begin on Monday February 1st.

4 **District #28** – Returning students will return to school January 19th. 96% of families decided to stay
5 where they were. 4% or 60 students will change from remote learning to in-person learning. The District
6 is receiving a second round of grant money from the Federal Government in the amount of \$200,000.
7 COVID expenditures for this year are approximately \$1.2 million. The District is watching the housing
8 developments in the area.

9 **District #30** – The District mourns the death of Dylan Buckner. Returning students will return to in-
10 person learning January 19th. The goal is to go through the rest of the school year without a pause. Three
11 seats are open on the School Board. There are three candidates for those seats. Wescott School will
12 receive eight new classrooms and a gym. Groundbreaking is expected this spring.

13 **District #31** – The District thanks the Chamber of Commerce for their support in helping families with
14 the Hunger Free Program. School resumed January 5th for the remote program and those in person
15 (60%) came back on January 11th. Registration may be delayed next year due to the unknowns and for
16 parents to make a choice between in person or remote.

17 **District #225** – The District is struggling with the passing of Dylan Buckner. Counseling is being provided
18 for students and staff members. The District will transition back to in-person full day learning January
19 19th. 750 in-person learning students are expected to return and commit to full day instruction. The
20 District will receive \$800,000 in grant money towards COVID expenses. COVID expenses are near \$1.2
21 million. Glenbrook North and Glenbrook South have signed up with the Cook County Department of
22 Health as possible vaccine locations. They are expecting to have more information within the next few
23 weeks.

24 **Library** – Virtual programming and curbside pick-up are going well. Take and Make Kits are popular. A
25 RFID construction project will begin in February. Equity, diversity and inclusion will include a
26 Conversation and Q&A with Frances Causey, Director of “The Long Shadow”. The Library received the
27 highest rating – 5 Stars from Library Journal. The Library is monitoring a date for re-opening.

28 **Resolution:**

29 Chairman Kahan read a resolution recognizing Director Poupard on his retirement. He stated that
30 Director Poupard has been a guiding force for EDC and ICDC. A motion was made and seconded with no

1 one opposed. A copy of the resolution will be sent to Director Poupard.

2 **Old Business – None**

3 **Adjourn**

4 On a motion made and seconded, the joint EDC/ICDC Meeting was adjourned at 9:07 a.m. The motion
5 passed.

6 The next ICDC meeting will be held on February 23, 2021. The next EDC meeting will be held on April 14,
7 2021.

8 Respectfully submitted

9 Sue Anetsberger

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