

1 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION OF THE**  
2 **VILLAGE OF OLYMPIA FIELDS**

3  
4 Minutes of the Economic Development Commission Meeting held on Wednesday, March  
5 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

6  
7 **CALL TO ORDER:**

8  
9 Chairperson Britt-Johnson called the Meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

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11 **ROLL CALL:**

12  
13 **Members Present:**

14 Chairperson Trinette Britt Johnson, Commissioner George Chandler, Commissioner Michael  
15 Lewis, Village President Debra Meyers-Martin, Commissioner Johnny Morris, and Village  
16 Administrator David A. Mekarski.

17  
18 **Members Absent:**

19 Commissioner Richard Gibb  
20 Trustee Arthur Byrd

21  
22 **Guests:**

23 Howard White, Resident.

24  
25 Chairperson Britt Johnson thanked Village President Meyers-Martin for allowing the Economic  
26 Development Committee to become a Commission. We are real excited. We have graduated.  
27 We've been elevated. We've been promoted. She stated that she saw Administrator Mekarski  
28 earlier today, but she wanted to publicly thank him on the record for his efforts in working with  
29 the Attorney to get the Ordinance work done so that it could be approved. She is appreciative of  
30 that.

31  
32 **SOUTH SUBURBAN RETAIL ATTRACTION PLAN:**

33  
34 **Discussion:** - Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated that the first order of business, she would like to  
35 talk about is the South Suburban Retail Attraction Plan. There are several documents. This is  
36 what the Retail Attraction Plan looks like. That is what today's Meeting is about. She wants to  
37 have a discussion and a dialog to go through this document and to talk about the other documents  
38 that we have on the table. We have a lot of different strategies out here. Some of them need to be  
39 reviewed, modified, and updated. As we move forward from our shift from a Committee to a  
40 Commission, she wants to figure out how we can start to begin working towards implementing  
41 this work. One of the things that she has heard recently, is that the community has asked for a  
42 Comprehensive Plan. We have the work that can be molded, and put together. We have already  
43 done some of the work. Some of it needs to be updated or modified. She would like to begin the  
44 process of having that discussion on how we begin to do that task.

45  
46 Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated that Commissioner Lewis has a concept that he mentioned to  
47 her quite some time ago. She believes it is called a "Blue Ocean Strategy." She isn't sure if

1 everybody has heard of that. She asked Commissioner Lewis to talk about the “Blue Ocean  
2 Strategy,” and maybe that is something we can keep in the back of our mind, and in front of our  
3 mind, as we begin to delve through this work. One of the things that she took away from this  
4 Blue Ocean Strategy is that Village President Meyers-Martin has always mentioned that we are  
5 in competition with Tinley Park or Orland Park. Some of the thinking around this Blue Ocean  
6 Strategy is that we create our own market instead of competing with other markets. When we  
7 think about the types of businesses and uses that we want in Olympia Fields, maybe there is a  
8 new market that we are going after, or a new strategy that we are going after.

9  
10 Commissioner Lewis stated that “Blue Ocean” is a methodology for analysis that they used  
11 during his career at BMO Harris Bank. It was a way of them not being limited by their existing  
12 constraints, and look at an opportunity that may be before their eyes but they didn’t take  
13 advantage of it because they were too busy being held back by their limitations.

14  
15 Commissioner Lewis stated that an example of a Blue Ocean Strategy is Southwest Airlines.  
16 Southwest Airlines took the whole concept of transportation, and rather than trying to compete  
17 against American and United, they stated that their competition is really Greyhound Bus and  
18 driving. If they can become competitive with what it cost to take a Greyhound Bus from San  
19 Francisco to LA, and make a flight as cost effective as that, then we can make a business of it. In  
20 that concept, they started taking away the things that were not value drivers. They took away  
21 meals, they took away a lot of the cueing you have to do with getting tickets that were assigned  
22 in advance and took it down to bare bones. Then they had a very successful business model,  
23 because they didn’t think about their existing constraints like we are in the airline business we  
24 have to compete against American and United. They stated that their target market is really the  
25 people who take the bus or who drive. What do we have to do to appeal to them?

26  
27 Commissioner Lewis stated that he took a look at the Town Center Plan, and a lot of the plans  
28 that we have done in terms of trying to come down this vast peak of Economic Development.  
29 Each of those plans individually seem like they are well thought out and have been well-done.  
30 We need a Comprehensive Plan that brings everything together. We need to start by finding out  
31 what makes sense for our community, and what makes sense from an economic development  
32 perspective, what is sustainable and long-term, and benefit, and then build our plan around that  
33 and execute that plan systematically over time as opposed to doing it in a fragmented manner.  
34 Blue Ocean is a placeholder. It is a real, disciplined methodology of having you go through and  
35 look at what you have and what you want to be. And how you get from where you are to where  
36 you want to be, and what are some of the necessary steps. It involves tradeoff. Some things you  
37 can continue to hold onto. Some things have to be eliminated because you just can’t afford to  
38 maintain that anymore. Commissioner Lewis stated that as he and Commissioner Britt-Johnson  
39 talked about it, as we think about the EDC and what we need to do for our community as we now  
40 have this Commission, with expectations to the President and the Board of Trustees, we have an  
41 obligation to report to them. It seemed to him that we should probably take a fresh start and look  
42 at all of our various elements in terms of reports that have been produced, and get some sense  
43 from the community, and some sense from the marketplace, build it all together and come up  
44 with a brand new, comprehensive long-term approach to economic development, which is  
45 consistent with the Blue Ocean Strategy and the Blue Ocean Model. That is how it all works and  
46 how it all pulls together.

47

1 Commissioner Lewis stated that his wife used this at Governors State with the Nathan Manilow  
2 Sculpture Park to advance them from being a non-directed organization that didn't have much of  
3 a mission or focus, to where now the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park has gone through a lot of  
4 success because they have been able to marshal their resources and focus on the things that really  
5 matter and drive their agenda forward. He believes that we can have the same kind of success. It  
6 doesn't have to be Blue Ocean. It could be something that is like that in order for us to truly  
7 succeed. As we start here on ground zero, he thought it was a good place to start. That is why he  
8 offered it up to Chairperson Britt-Johnson.

9  
10 Commissioner Morris stated that he was listening to what Commissioner Lewis stated. It is an  
11 outstanding start. The thing that came to mind to him was that definition. Since we are at ground  
12 zero, who we are, and where do we want to go, and what direction do we want to go in. Is that  
13 going to be an inward, outward type process? Are we going to look at what is happening  
14 internally before we go outside the marketplace? Since we are at ground zero we have to identify  
15 who we are and where we want to go.

16  
17 Village President Meyers-Martin stated when we begin to go through this process to create this  
18 comprehensive strategy, she thinks what has been part of the dialog previously, in terms of  
19 competition with Tinley Park and Orland, or what have you, it had to do with the tangibles that  
20 cause us to be in competition. For instance, if we come up with a strategy and you are reaching  
21 out to certain things, or certain types of entities, how persuasive will it be if you are dealing with  
22 density. You need density to create that. Or roof tops, or taxes, some of those tangibles that will  
23 stand in your way. Maybe Southwest did the same thing. Some people don't like to fly. So, we  
24 will never get them. They will always be on the Greyhound Bus. Is that part of the dialog in  
25 terms of going forward?

26  
27 Commissioner Lewis stated typically with Blue Ocean, at BMO Harris Bank we had the  
28 University of Rockland School of Business lead us through the discussion. Typically, you have  
29 an outside party that comes and helps you work through this. It needs to be a qualified outside  
30 party. They tend to draw out of the focus group those elements that speak to the issue. Cirque du  
31 Soleil is another prime example of the Blue Ocean Strategy. They looked at Ringling Brothers  
32 Barnum Bailey Circuses. What elements of the circus do we want to keep? What elements do we  
33 need to eliminate? Cirque du Soleil if anybody has ever been to that is a great example. They  
34 kept the big top. They kept a lot of the acrobats, and some of the acrobatic acts, and that element  
35 of the circus which people like. They kept the intimacy that people like. They eliminated live  
36 animal acts. They eliminated a lot of the other, men being shot out of a cannon. They raised their  
37 price to \$125.00 a person, which you could never get if you went to the circus. You would say  
38 you would pay \$20.00.

39  
40 Commissioner Lewis believes that in the dialog as you go through the methodology, these value  
41 drivers, things that add value and things that detract from value kind of come out. The constraints  
42 that you mentioned would be things that add value or be included, or things that detract from  
43 value that would be excluded, or you would have to build around those constraints so you have a  
44 model that is both sustainable, practical, and something that can be executed in our community.

45  
46 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that she certainly likes that school of thought, that it  
47 either adds value or it does not, as oppose to impediments because that's how they have been

1 viewed previously as impediments to moving forward. If we just say it doesn't add value it gives  
2 you a whole different perspective.

3

4 Commissioner Lewis stated that sometimes if you establish a hurdle, if you have an internal rate  
5 of return, if a Capital Project doesn't make that internal rate of return then it doesn't meet the  
6 model. You establish standards in terms of what do you want to see delivered, in this case for our  
7 community. If it matches up against that standard then you would include it. If it doesn't match  
8 up against that standard, you would exclude it, but you would also convey that so it would be  
9 transparent. Everybody would be able to know what was included and what was excluded, and  
10 what to expect and what not to expect.

11

12 Commissioner Morris inquired whether or not the discussion about Tinley Park was just an  
13 example, or are we saying Tinley Park is the Gold Standard.

14

15 Village President Meyers-Martin stated no. Tinley Park is actually in a lot of trouble.

16

17 Commissioner Lewis stated that it is interesting that you mention that. When he went through the  
18 material, he saw us marketing ourselves against communities that he doesn't consider to  
19 necessarily be our peers.

20

21 Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated that she needed Administrator Mekarski's help because she  
22 wasn't around when this was originated. She wants to go through it and talk about this. She  
23 thinks that there are some good elements that are still relevant. We need to figure out how to do  
24 the work on some of these items. She wants to understand what was the purpose of this  
25 document. What was its role?

26

27 Administrator Mekarski stated that the Plan was more than just a Plan. It was a Strategic Action  
28 Plan. The ideas of the goals, objectives and strategies, was to layout a step-by-step approach of  
29 the four communities of the Village of Matteson, the Village of Park Forest, the Village of  
30 Richton Park, and the Village of Olympia Fields. This was two Federal earmarks totaling close  
31 to \$230,000.00 that was initiated through Congressman Jackson's Office. It was a combination  
32 of a Planning Analysis, a Marketing Analysis, and an Academic Analysis. We had Teska  
33 Associates looking at the four communities and inventorying all of their commercial properties,  
34 both retail and commerce. Primarily, retail because it was a Retail Investment Study. We had  
35 Business Districts, Incorporated, (BDI) who is a marketing expert look at what we would need to  
36 do with the four communities in marketing our underutilized or vacant retail centers. The  
37 University of Illinois at Chicago at UIC looked at the constraints to economic development and  
38 to try to determine why economic development in terms of retail is slower than the northwest  
39 suburbs in particular. What came out was two factors. A green lining issue and a redlining issue.  
40 The green lining issue was the huge disparity in property tax between our leasable property or  
41 our property for sale. If you take the Dunkin' Donuts Plaza in front of Jewel, even though that is  
42 right now still in front of a plaza that has gone through foreclosure and it is 99% vacant, the  
43 property tax on that 9,000-square foot building was \$22.00 a square foot. When you look at what  
44 the marketable rents are, then you realize how disproportionate that ratio between taxes and  
45 leasable revenue is. The most expensive leased rate in there is \$18.00 from the dentist. The least  
46 expensive lease rate is \$9.00 from Game Stop. The entrepreneur that owned that was getting  
47 anywhere from \$9.00 to \$18.00 a square foot and was paying \$22.00 a square foot. If you

1 compare that to the northwest suburbs, or Tinley and Orland, you'll see that the taxes are usually  
2 no more than 30% of your Performa. In this case we are 110%, 120% above the leasable rate.  
3  
4 Commissioner Lewis inquired whether or not across the street in Flossmoor if the taxes are the  
5 same on the south side of Vollmer.  
6  
7 Administrator Mekarski stated yes. And our tax rates between the two communities are relatively  
8 the same.  
9  
10 Commissioner Lewis inquired when Flavors moved out of that plaza to Richton Park, the pizza  
11 joint moved in pretty quickly. That plaza is relatively full, whereas ours is relatively empty. It  
12 looks like a disparity between our two communities. That is hard to explain.  
13  
14 Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated that you have two different property owners. Property owner A  
15 on the Flossmoor side may only charge \$10.00 a square foot in rent. Property owner B on the  
16 Olympia Fields side may charge \$15.00 a square foot. If the taxes are equivalent she is going  
17 over where it is cheaper. If that is the answer. She doesn't know the answer.  
18  
19 Administrator Mekarski stated that the second answer is that they wanted to come across the  
20 street in our area. They wanted to go in Butterfield. The Butterfield Plaza was in receivership. It  
21 was going through foreclosure. That's why the dialysis center was threatening to leave the plaza.  
22 Other tenants have left that plaza. When you are leasing a space and all of a sudden it goes  
23 through a foreclosure process and it's in receivership, you don't know who your next landlord is  
24 going to be. You don't know what your lease structure is going to be. You don't want to go  
25 ahead and invest on the inside of your building to expand, because you don't even know if you  
26 are going to have an acceptable lease to hold it. When they were looking at both areas, one  
27 property is in question. The other property doesn't have any constraints. It was just the timing on  
28 that issue.  
29  
30 Commissioner Lewis stated but the taxes are the same. Administrator Mekarski stated that the  
31 tax rate is generally the same. The percentage of the tax bill for each Municipality is relatively  
32 the same. Home values and commercial values are pretty consistent. Commissioner Lewis stated  
33 that this is just for education of him. He doesn't know the real estate market that well. In looking  
34 at the Blue Ocean situation, if the taxes are the same, we have to manage the other variables. The  
35 taxes are six of one and a half dozen of the other. If you are in Flossmoor or Olympia Fields that  
36 part is the same. But then we have some other dynamics in terms of either a foreclosure or a  
37 landlord who might be more aggressive on the north side of Vollmer than a landlord on the south  
38 side of Vollmer. Is that a correct statement? Administrator Mekarski stated that you have other  
39 factors. For instance, when the Mayor was looking for Starbucks to go on Vollmer Road,  
40 Starbucks is looking for the AM side of the road. Starbucks is going to be opening up a drive-  
41 thru location in Flossmoor near the Meijer's location. Primarily, because that is where the traffic  
42 is going for I-57. We have the PM traffic. Nobody buys coffee in the PM. They are expecting  
43 people to stop at the drive-thru on the AM side. There are all kinds of location factors that affect  
44 it.  
45  
46 Commissioner Morris stated that the TIF is on our side of Vollmer. What kinds of revenues are  
47 we getting for that property? Administrator Mekarski stated the one that is in receivership, he

1 would have to look at the individual sales tax dollars. He hasn't looked recently at the property  
2 tax. He stated for commercial buildings, unless they are major commercial buildings that are a  
3 profit, property tax is not one of the big revenue producers for the Village. Out of your tax bill  
4 you are only getting 11% that is going to the Village. He stated in looking at residential property,  
5 in looking at a \$20,000.00 tax bill for a home, you are only getting \$2,000.00 from that home for  
6 residential purposes. The primary motivator for retail is sales tax, that 1% sales tax. And the 1%  
7 non-Home Rule Sales Tax.

8

9 Commissioner Morris stated what prompted that question, when we were talking about those two  
10 property owners, he would think this person on our side would want to fill this vacant space.

11

12 Administrator Mekarski stated that once that plaza comes out of receivership and is in permanent  
13 ownership, he believes the dynamics of Vollmer Road will be that will fill up real fast. We didn't  
14 lose the dialysis doctors. They were very insecure and they left Butterfield. They came to the  
15 Board and said that they liked Vollmer Road. They like Olympia Fields and they want to stay  
16 here. We want to show you that we want to stay here. We want to expand and we want to buy the  
17 Cardinal Building, but we can't afford the Cardinal Building unless the taxes are cut in half. The  
18 Board gave a Class 8 Property Tax Incentive. That allowed them to go from a Commercial Tax  
19 Rate of 25% to a Residential Tax Rate of 10%. It cut the taxes in half for a period of 11-years.  
20 That gave them the inducement to buy the building and to put the capital investment in. They  
21 moved their offices. They have another ancillary dialysis. They still have a vacant space for a  
22 potential retail.

23

24 Commissioner Morris inquired whether or not the model that was just described can be  
25 implemented with the dentist office and the Dunkin' Donuts where you talked about the square  
26 footage ranging from \$9.00 to \$18.00. Administrator Mekarski stated no. Cook County had  
27 allowed us to give a Class 8 for the vacant units. There are three that are occupied. There are  
28 three that are vacant. They did appeal to the Mayor and the Board. The Mayor and the Board did  
29 give the Class 8 which cuts the property tax in half for those three units. The other three units are  
30 still paying twice as high of taxes. By doing that she was able to get Dotty's. That will be  
31 moving in there. It isn't going to be a typical Dotty's like you see anywhere in the state. The  
32 Board required that they upgrade the interior motif. They dropped another \$100,000.00 in  
33 finishes.

34

35 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that she wanted to speak as to Flavors for a minute.  
36 When Rochelle was trying to look for a new space it was too small in Flossmoor Commons. She  
37 was interested in the old Governors Building. At the time, it was owned by the Ginolious Family.  
38 He wanted a Million Dollars for that building. At the time, it was covered in mold which is why  
39 we ended up demolishing it. That is the issue that we continually find ourselves in. There are  
40 property owners that for some reason feel that they can gouge the tenants. That wasn't feasible  
41 for her. Then she got an offer from Richton Park. Richton Park owns the plaza that she moved  
42 into. They could give her all kinds of incentives. This Village doesn't own any property. We  
43 can't give breaks because we are not the owners. That was an opportunity lost because she did  
44 end up in Richton Park. It was because circumstances just fell into place for her. She was looking  
45 for reduced rent. She didn't want to pay a lot. Richton Park gave her a lot of perks.

46

1 Administrator Mekarski stated that Richton Park gave her a lease rate way below market rates.  
2 He wasn't able to find out the actual dollar amount. He is sure that we could through a FOIA.  
3 They also subsidized the buildout. Her renovations to go into that building were subsidized by  
4 the taxpayers and her rent is below market rate. He isn't sure if they did any incentives on the  
5 taxes. They could have done a Class 8 on the taxes and cut the taxes in half.

6  
7 Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated that she wanted to piggyback on something that Commissioner  
8 Lewis had said and it is something that we are going to have to do too. People have a choice on  
9 where to spend their money. When you mentioned the north side of Vollmer versus the south  
10 side of Vollmer, and that side of Vollmer is filling up quicker than this side of Vollmer, the  
11 reality of it is people will have a choice on where they spend their money. I might like BP over  
12 Shell or whatever. When we are talking to the community about why and why not people choose  
13 to spend their money where they want, I like this dress shop better than this dress shop. I like this  
14 space better than this space, the way it looks, the way it feels. Sometimes people get a little  
15 confused as to some places are filling up faster, or some areas are filling up faster, but because of  
16 the type of business, or how the business operates, they typically pick whatever area fits in their  
17 mind where they think they will be successful. They look at their neighbors. There is a whole  
18 host of things that people consider when they decide to choose a space.

19  
20 Administrator Mekarski stated that the property in front of the Cardinal Building which is owned  
21 by Location Finders, the Rose Brothers, they are totally unrealistic to sale price and leasable  
22 rates. They are trying to get rates that are even higher than pre-Recession. That's why that spot  
23 has been vacant. They are very, very difficult.

24  
25 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that Starbucks wanted to be in that space. They just  
26 gouged them right on out of there. These are the owners that you have to deal with. They came to  
27 us and they wanted to close down the Muffler Shop because they own that too, and make it a  
28 check cashing place. We said, "No way."

29  
30 Administrator Mekarski stated that he is glad that you started out with the Vollmer Road  
31 Corridor. He stated that Chairperson Britt-Johnson asked him to bring some of the Conceptual  
32 Plans that we are working on with the Developer interested in what we call "The Meijer's  
33 Shadow Site." Timing is everything. This is probably above Lincoln/Western, the primary  
34 economic development opportunity. It is dependent on two things. 1. It will only happen if there  
35 are strong economic incentives to urge the Developer to get rid of back taxes into the Millions of  
36 Dollars. 2. Sufficient funds to demolish the vacant and derelict buildings which could also be  
37 into the Hundreds of Thousands of Dollars. And to assemble the additional land to move from  
38 five-acres to 14-acres. 1. Economic incentives have to be in place which is the big role of this  
39 Commission to recommend to the Committee. 2. The other thing is timing. It has to be on a fast-  
40 track because the minute we drag our feet on this opportunity, Flossmoor is going to be  
41 developing across the street. There can only be so much saturation of retail. If they develop that  
42 site to the east of Meijer's, you are going to set Olympia Fields back five, maybe even 10-years,  
43 and you will have less of a chance. Later on, in the Agenda he can outline two Plans. We laid out  
44 an initial Plan by our Planner. And then one that our Planner has refined through some  
45 discussions with Michael Brown, a Developer, who is willing to assemble the land and has been  
46 very excited about it when we were pursuing the TIF Strategy. Now it is on hold. We can talk  
47 about that later in the Agenda.

1 Commissioner Morris stated that going back to what Chairperson Britt-Johnson had stated that  
2 the residents have choices. Do we have a platform, or do we know what our residents desire in  
3 terms of Class “A” Retailers?  
4

5 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that it was probably 2011, 2012 when MPC, and we had  
6 the Grant to do the Charrette’s about Diversified Housing. We did it at Rich Central. We had  
7 focus groups come in. Their mission was to talk about diversified housing because MPC which is  
8 the Metropolitan Planning Council had already determined as a part of their 2040 Plan that huge  
9 houses like we have in Olympia Fields was not going to be sustainable if you are going to have  
10 young families coming out, because at the time they couldn’t afford to buy those houses. So, you  
11 needed to diversity your housing stock whether you are going to have townhomes, maybe you  
12 are going to have duplexes. She stated through MPC, we had gotten a Grant to do that Study. We  
13 did bring in residents. She remembers Helen Burleson was there. They broke out into little  
14 groups. People were writing down what they wanted to see, and what kind of businesses they  
15 would like. We did that way back then. We haven’t done anything similar to that since. Maybe it  
16 is about time to revisit that process.  
17

18 Commissioner Morris stated that he thought that would be a good idea. There is a lot of talk as of  
19 recent about transparency and community engagement. That would be a great thing to give them  
20 an opportunity as we go forward with these nice, Detailed Plans to take into consideration what  
21 they think.  
22

23 Commissioner Lewis stated that in addition to input from the community, we also need to take a  
24 business look at it too from the business perspective. He stated that as an example, someone may  
25 want a hair and nail place, but if that is not beneficial long-term to the community as maybe  
26 another kind of a business that will be there for 10-years, we should balance that out. That goes  
27 back to Blue Ocean about making tradeoffs between sustainable and non-sustainable but then  
28 conveying and communicating that. That is the other thing, to say that we considered a hair and  
29 nail place, and we looked at that, but this is a better option and here is why. Here is the economic  
30 benefit that accrues to us for making that decision, so that is what the basis was for the decision.  
31 Life is full of choices. We don’t have an unlimited ability to satisfy each and every constraint.  
32 That’s just his thought.  
33

34 Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated let’s get back to this document. We can skip through it where  
35 she has identified some things, or we can really go through them. She would rather briefly go  
36 through them. She is lumping one and two together. This is a point she would like to raise. She  
37 knows that you will have some discussion. She is putting one and two together where  
38 Commissioner Lewis was beginning to raise it. She understands regionally how marketing  
39 regionally would help the Village. She understands the three-miles to five-miles. She  
40 understands the rings. We need to focus on the needs of the Village. She understands when a  
41 business is coming here, the business is not only considering the residents of the Village. It is  
42 also considering others from outside that will come to the Village for the business. Part of her  
43 concern is that we tie ourselves to other communities that appear to be less than. That we tie  
44 ourselves to other neighborhoods when we market ourselves regionally.  
45

46 Administrator Mekarski stated that there is no real attempt to do that. These are the four  
47 communities that work together on SouthCom. We have an Intergovernmental Agreement. We



1 won this earmark through Congressman Jackson through the Southland Coalition, which are the  
2 four communities that participate in SouthCom. That's not to say that we associate ourselves in a  
3 marketing standpoint with Park Forest, Richton Park, and Matteson. If you look at our Retail  
4 Investment Study, and our cut sheets that he and the Mayor bring to Las Vegas, the Vollmer  
5 Road Corridor is only marketed with the trade area of Flossmoor and Homewood. We are  
6 identifying ourselves as an extension of the Homewood and Flossmoor trade area, specifically  
7 Flossmoor. When you go down to the corner of Lincoln and Western, you are right at the corner  
8 of Chicago Heights and Park Forest. It's almost impossible to leave them out of the trade area.  
9 We try to disconnect us from Ford Heights because it is one of the poorest areas in the United  
10 States. It is usually shunned upon by retailers.

11  
12 Chairperson Britt-Johnson inquired how often do we update our data. She looked at the website  
13 today and the demographic data was 2014 maybe. Administrator Mekarski stated that when we  
14 go to the International Council of Shopping Centers to market we will have BDI and our  
15 Planning Consultants update our cut sheets. We are in the process of doing those cut sheet  
16 updates right now because that conference is May 19<sup>th</sup>. Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated that the  
17 cut sheets are not on the website. Administrator Mekarski stated that they should be there. He  
18 will have to check to see if the link is working. Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated that she didn't  
19 see them this morning when she looked at the website.

20  
21 Commissioner Morris stated that he was speaking in regards to freshness, because he sees 2012.  
22 Are we going to try to work on items that we totally control within the Olympia Fields marketing  
23 perspective? We are linked to these other towns. He is not sure where they are in their progress.  
24 Will they hold us back?

25  
26 Administrator Mekarski stated no. The primary intent of these goals and objectives was to try to  
27 see if we can get implementation dollars from the Economic Development Administration to  
28 take it from a Planning and Research Study to a Market Implementation Study. In that case, we  
29 would go with the Southland Coalition to do that. You are obviously open to look at each  
30 strategic area and decide how you want to market it. That's what we are doing right now. We are  
31 developing new cut sheets for each of our areas. When we go to the ICSC Conference this year,  
32 the two primary areas we are going to try to market is to help Joe Salamone out with Lincoln and  
33 Western. He has come up with architectural renderings. He has some space planning for mid-  
34 boxes, anchors, and/or restaurants. He has two or three Conceptual Layouts. He completed a  
35 drone flyover. He highlights all the surrounding retail. He has a number of architectural visions  
36 for that center. The second one would be the Meijer's Shadow Site. Those are the two that are  
37 the closest to being shovel ready and the highest potential.

38  
39 Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated clearly, we will have not worked together to have a  
40 Comprehensive Plan by that point, May 21<sup>st</sup>. Do you think we will have enough time to put a  
41 Survey together, put it on the website, send a blast out, or NIXLE to ask the community to help  
42 respond? When we spoke earlier, we talked about Bizios. You had said that the community  
43 doesn't support Bizios. If Joe Salamone is going out and getting whatever businesses he is trying  
44 to identify, retailers, you guys are trying to market to identify retailers. In her opinion, she loves  
45 Bizios. She shops there. If we are putting in businesses that the community isn't going to  
46 support, should we try to tap into what we think the community will support before he brings in  
47 A, B, C business, and I am still not going to A, B, C business, I am still going to Tinley. I am

1 going to Orland. Do we have enough time to even try? She stated not a specific name of a  
2 business, but a type of business. She stated a book store. A wine shop.  
3  
4 Administrator Mekarski stated that the Mayor is very demonstrative with any Developer that  
5 comes in the door. Basically, she instructs the Developer to get the highest and best retail use.  
6  
7 Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated that Dotty's is not the highest and best use. Village President  
8 Meyers-Martin stated that it has to be a dual-track. We definitely need to do the Surveys/focus  
9 groups/Town Hall to talk about the things that residents do want. That is crucial to the process.  
10 On the other hand, there has to be a way to demonstrate that some things that are suggested are  
11 unrealistic. That has to be part of that dialog. Somebody wrote to her and wanted to know why  
12 we don't have more Oak Brook Stores, because we are not Oak Brook.  
13  
14 Commissioner Lewis stated that we have a chance to start at ground zero and really get input and  
15 have a strategy put together of the kinds of things that we want to target. He would rather go out  
16 with a rifle rather than a shotgun, or with a strategy. Hope is not a strategy. He is saying in an  
17 analytical sense, analyzing who we want to target. Maybe we go out and start soliciting based on  
18 our Plan who we want to come and fill-in. That to him makes a lot of sense.  
19  
20 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that if you structure this focus group so that they  
21 understand the realities and therefore customize their request based on what is doable.  
22 Commissioner Lewis stated that he agrees. Some things make sense and some things won't. We  
23 are transparent. We looked at this. We took your input. Here is what will fly. Here is what our  
24 demographic will support. The things that you asked for like a nickel and dime candy store,  
25 we're sorry, it doesn't pass the criteria. We will be very transparent. Some people will be  
26 disappointed, but at least they will know, as opposed to saying, "I have been asking for a Candy  
27 Store for five-years. Candy Stores make sense." It is never going to make sense. If we put the  
28 cart before the horse, we may lose an advantage of an opportunity. He is a big proponent for  
29 planning and you work your Plan. That is what he is suggesting.  
30  
31 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that it has to be structured. Commissioner Morris  
32 inquired going back to what we had said, what does the timeline look like. Is that possible to get  
33 that feedback in preparation for Joe? Were we able to get a date for Joe to come out and talk to  
34 us? Administrator Mekarski stated that he was coming today. Did you see my Memo about the  
35 family emergency? He's in the hospital. He was in the hospital all night. He will come to your  
36 April Meeting or a Special Meeting. He apologized. He has a drone flyover that he wanted to  
37 present to you. He has two Building Concepts. One for a large anchor, and one for a mid-box and  
38 restaurant anchors. He has strong demographics that Todd Cabanban laid out. He can talk about  
39 some of the targets that he is looking at, and also some of the retailers that won't look at the area.  
40 This Study looked at two constraints for retail development. One was the green lining issue, the  
41 taxes. The second one, and we can't forget it, is the retail redlining issue. That's the implicit bias  
42 or the unconscious racism that retailers will look in this area. That was documented with a focus  
43 group. Michael Brown who is an Attorney with Clark Hill, also a Developer, organized those  
44 focus groups. He had Bankers. He had Retail Investors. He had those who were making location  
45 decisions. He had Owners and Developers in a room. They couldn't distinguish any difference  
46 between marketing Dixmoor, Harvey, Flossmoor, Olympia Fields, or Matteson.  
47

1 Village President Meyers-Martin stated so we know that now. We have talked about that enough.  
2 We have to move forward. Administrator Mekarski stated that he is just answering the rationale  
3 for the Study.  
4

5 Mr. White stated that he hopes that you guys can forgive him for chiming in. He is chomping at  
6 the bit here. There are a couple of things that he sees as a neophyte. You guys have obviously  
7 been dealing with this for a number of years. He will put this out there and you guys can chew on  
8 it or ignore it. There are a couple things that he thinks would be very beneficial to some of the  
9 objectives that you have outlined on here. First and foremost, getting back to what Commissioner  
10 Lewis said, in terms of establishing a strategy for the Village, in his experience a strategy goes  
11 beyond just a Plan. A good strategy will focus on what an organization does best. What is it that  
12 allows you to excel over your competitors? Whether we are looking at a regional competition  
13 here, or we are looking at a neighbor competition, whether it be Matteson or Flossmoor, what is  
14 it that is unique about Olympia Fields that we can put out there to market the Village? He thinks  
15 without a clear vision in terms of what we want for the Village, and what the Village has to offer,  
16 that we will be kind of scatterbrained a little bit. Like the gentleman has a Plan and he is coming  
17 in with suggestions. He thinks it would be a better approach for us to say, "Okay. Here's the  
18 framework that you have to work with," versus he might be wasting time on putting  
19 presentations together that may not necessarily fit with what we want to do. He thinks it makes it  
20 a lot easier for retailers and businesses when they are looking at areas to have a clear expectation  
21 of what it is that they are going to be able to deal with.  
22

23 Mr. White stated in line with the Surveys, if you guys want to do that, he knows of some surefire  
24 ways that we can roll out some Surveys pretty quickly and get some pretty decent response rates.  
25 The main thing will be what are the questions and how are we going to ask them. He stated with  
26 some of the modern technology that is available now we can definitely get that done and get it  
27 done pretty quickly. It is just a matter of getting the questions. It really would help for us to come  
28 up with what is Olympia Fields. What are we offering? We have to figure out this is what fits in  
29 line with who we are and what the people want. Vollmer Road we are on the south side. What  
30 are some strengths of that that we may not necessarily be able to take advantage of that we are  
31 not on the north side of Vollmer? Those are the types of things that we need to have spelled out.  
32 He doesn't know if you have already done that. That needs to be put together in a bonified  
33 Marketing Plan. That will help us moving forward through all the decisions and issues that we  
34 face in the future and in the present.  
35

36 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that we talked about the hospital. Commissioner Lewis  
37 stated that Howard is articulating Blue Ocean in a different way. When we started out as the  
38 EDC, we said let's try to look at some of the obvious things. We had a three-point strategy. First,  
39 we said that Franciscan Healthcare Systems is the biggest employer in Olympia Fields and we  
40 should capitalize on that. The second thing we said was that we cannot ignore 227. If we don't  
41 deal with 227 we are basically spinning in the wind. The third thing we said was we need to  
42 support small businesses in our community. That's where Business Connections came out. That  
43 was our initial stab at a Comprehensive Plan. In all honesty, in looking at it now, it wasn't  
44 comprehensive enough. We need to go back to ground zero and start with input analysis and all  
45 the value drivers, and put it together in a composite form. He thinks it needs to be an  
46 independent, third party. Administrator Mekarski has some wonderful resources. It should be  
47 somebody who does this for a living, as opposed to us trying to do it piecemeal. We can get it

1 done quickly. We can look at it. We can use it as our guide so that we are doing the right thing  
2 every time. He think's Howard is right. If Salamone has a Plan where he is trying to put together  
3 things that he thinks might work, he would rather he put together a Plan built basically on things  
4 that we know will work. That would be his sense in terms of what we did before versus what we  
5 need to do now.

6  
7 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that drill down from that overall umbrella strategy about  
8 the hospital, the school, existing businesses, and drilling that down to what is it that we feel  
9 Olympia Fields says, a branding, she doesn't believe that we did that kind of brainstorming thing  
10 here.

11  
12 Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated that we didn't finish. We just started it. We touched on it. We  
13 didn't get to that point. That's what we are trying to figure out how to get to now. Currently,  
14 what we are doing, is doing stuff in pieces. We have a piece here. We have a piece here. We  
15 have another piece somewhere else. What he is saying, the overall thing is, this corner of  
16 Olympia Fields may have this kind of need. Over here there is some other kind of need. We need  
17 to look at the Village as a whole. We think we might need or want another grocery store. Maybe  
18 we do. Maybe we don't. She doesn't know. Where is the best location for that? Should it be over  
19 here, or should it be in the Jewel Plaza? Or should it be in the Town Center? If we understand the  
20 overall need of the community, then we can try to figure out where is the best location to put that  
21 and how we implement it.

22  
23 Village President Meyers-Martin inquired how do we come up with the strategy to get to that  
24 point. We've talked about it. And you are right. We have this going. We have that going. We  
25 have the hospital going. We have all of these different components. But is getting the input of the  
26 public first? Or do we figure out what we want to sculpt for the public?

27  
28 Commissioner Morris stated that he believes it is critical, and it is key that we have the public  
29 input, not necessarily that we will use it first. We are trying to build something for this  
30 community. He stated as Chairperson Britt-Johnson indicated earlier, the old deal was, let's build  
31 it and they come. He is not sure that is relevant today. We have a grocery store in Bizios. There  
32 was a point made that the community is not frequenting that. We don't want to bring in these  
33 businesses that the community does not want. We are building it for Olympia Fields. We want  
34 the outsiders to come in as well. That is a critical piece. We have to have that data and then just  
35 mold it into the Plan.

36  
37 Commissioner Lewis stated that he agrees with Commissioner Morris. The community needs to  
38 give input so their voice is heard. We may or may not use it in each and every instance, but at  
39 least they had a chance to put their view on. He believes that we have a fiduciary responsibility  
40 as an EDC to come back to the President and the Board of Trustees with the best chance for  
41 success for our community overall comprehensively. We probably need a Professional, outside  
42 third party assist us with that. Then we can react and guide it. Then we have something that can  
43 be sustained. The process is one where if the folks sitting around the table now weren't driving  
44 it, whoever else came out would be able to look at this and use this Plan to have success.

45  
46 Commissioner Morris stated that he agrees wholeheartedly. He stated even when we bring in the  
47 outsiders and we have done this already once. We still have to understand those basic questions

1 who we are and what is it that we want. They will use their expertise to build it. He stated that  
2 Village President Meyers-Martin raised that question. So, what is the mission? What is it that we  
3 want to try to do? We need to be able to at least address that. You are absolutely right, bring in a  
4 Professional Consultant. But we know what we want. That is what they are going to ask us.

5  
6 Administrator Mekarski stated that Comprehensive Planning is fabulous. He is a Professional  
7 Planner. He embraces Comprehensive Planning each and every day. The Commission also has to  
8 recognize the time schedule of commerce and also the uses by right by the Zoning Ordinance.  
9 We have two Developers that are in play. The one Developer on Lincoln and Western has put his  
10 money, a \$5.4 Million deal on the table. He has a one-year option left on that property. He can  
11 probably get an extension for six-months. So maybe it is 12 to 18-months. Right now, it expires  
12 in a year. He has laid out concepts. He is willing to come to you and share those concepts. He  
13 can't sit back and say, "I am going to go through a community focus group and planning  
14 process." You need to look at his Plans and this year make it your priority. What can we do to  
15 help Joe? What can we do to outreach to Mariano's, if that's one of his contacts? Can we do a  
16 letter writing campaign to help Joe with Mariano's? Can we call up Kroger Corporation?

17  
18 Commissioner Lewis stated that if we want a profile for Mariano's it is like fool's gold. If he  
19 can't deliver then maybe he is not the right Developer to have in that particular program. We  
20 know Nordstrom's is never going to come here. If he builds a big-box that is fit for Nordstrom's,  
21 we are basically spinning in the wind trying to get a Nordstrom's here. We are going to have an  
22 impossible situation. He would rather that he built something that we know we can sell. He will  
23 use Applebee's as an example. Maybe we can get an Applebee's because we profile well for an  
24 Applebee's. So, he builds a facility and Applebee's comes in. That's success as opposed to  
25 building something for III Forks and III Forks is never going to locate here.

26  
27 Administrator Mekarski stated that he is not going to build anything without a deal. He's going  
28 to ICSC with the Mayor, and myself, and he is working with Todd Cabanban. He has reached out  
29 to Lowe's. If he signed a contract with Lowe's he would be coming before this Board of Trustees  
30 to ask for a TIF Agreement and to close the deal on it.

31  
32 Commissioner Morris inquired whether or not we can get him in next month. Can we get him in  
33 for a Special Meeting, or next month to sit down and talk with us? Administrator Mekarski stated  
34 that he has indicated that he is happy to do that. He was going to be here today. Commissioner  
35 Morris stated that he understands that part of it. He hears what Administrator Mekarski is saying  
36 that there is a timeline with Joe. Administrator Mekarski stated that when you are talking about  
37 retail, you only have three, four sites maybe at the most in the Village. You've got the  
38 Lincoln/Western property by Olympia Corners. You have the Meijer's Shadow Site across from  
39 Meijer's. You have the CVS Site expanding to Speedway, which already has a Planned Unit  
40 Development Agreement, a written Concept Plan approved by the Board. We can't do a lot of  
41 tinkering around with that. That's locked in a Development Agreement. Then you have the Town  
42 Center Plan which has Mixed-Use Commercial and a layout for that corner right at Kedzie and  
43 Vollmer Road. That has been adopted by the Planning Commission and adopted by the Board of  
44 Trustees. Ultimately, you only have two areas that are not predefined already by legal  
45 instruments. Joe's site at the Jewel/Osco Center, and the Meijer's Shadow Site. You have two  
46 Developers. You have Joe with a \$5.4 Million deal on the table. You have Mike Brown that has  
47 purchased this section by Park and Vollmer. He bought that. He bought it under auction. He is

1 ready to develop that. We said instead of developing that, are you interested in helping us acquire  
2 the rest of the property. The IRS Building is right next to him. It's vacant. It's abandoned. It's  
3 flooded. It has a Million Dollars back taxes. No one is going to take that unless that is  
4 demolished and the back taxes are eliminated. We can work with the Land Bank. We can get rid  
5 of the back taxes. We could setup economic incentives to get him to purchase the IRS Building  
6 and to demolish it. Then he has acquired two tracts. He can do the same with that last building  
7 from Sunil that is underutilized. It is only 30% occupied. And again, utilizing like a TIF  
8 incentive to purchase that property. Then you have a 14-acre site. Now you have a site equal and  
9 competitive to Flossmoor. And you have a Developer that is laying out some concepts to put  
10 possibly a bowling entertainment site, a grocery store, a furniture store, high-end restaurants,  
11 casual sit down restaurants, and maybe some ancillary uses.

12  
13 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that we are going around and around. She thinks that  
14 having the public input is crucial to our next level. She stated with Joe Salamone, with Michael  
15 Brown, because even though Joe is working with this timeline, he needs to know what the  
16 community is feeling about the type of development they want. He may not be able to give them  
17 everything that they want, but he will never know if he hasn't listened to them. That is what we  
18 should focus on next. It does two things. It demonstrates that we have an interest in what they  
19 want. It gives us a roadmap of where we may be able to fit pieces into the map. She stated having  
20 Joe and Michael Brown come in either together or separately, however we want to do it, they  
21 need to get this input from the public. We need to provide that structure so that the public is not  
22 all over the map as well.

23  
24 Administrator Mekarski stated that he is not discounting that. He is encouraging to do it  
25 concurrently because one option is going to expire. And you are going to lose a Class "A"  
26 Developer with \$5.4 Million and the Land Bank.

27  
28 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that having the public input is not going to stop him from  
29 doing his thing. Administrator Mekarski stated that he is not suggesting that. He is saying to do it  
30 concurrently. He stated that Michael Brown is desperately wanting to discuss this with you, your  
31 ideas about both of these Plans, to see ultimately what this Commission, and the Planning  
32 Commission, and the Board of Trustees would like to see. Sure, it can go out to the public. If he  
33 is going to make a decision to expand from five-acres to 14-acres, he has the pressure of  
34 Flossmoor going with their Development Plan. It has to happen very fast. All he is asking is to  
35 work with the two Developers at the table in a fast-track manner.

36  
37 Commissioner Lewis stated that it doesn't seem like they have done very much for us. What's  
38 the downside risk if the timeframe expires? If we get the right Plan with the right long-term  
39 strategy and they go away, other Developers are out there who will come in and probably fill that  
40 project. Where is he missing something?

41  
42 Administrator Mekarski stated that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. The bottom line is  
43 you have a Developer with a signed Agreement with his money at the table. That's like gold. The  
44 one thing you always ask, "What can Olympia Fields offer?" Do you know what we offered to  
45 Wal-Mart and why they put a \$45,000,000.00 investment? We offered them the commitment of  
46 the Administration, and the ability to move on all other Permits fast-track. They anticipated the  
47 IDOT Permit to take a year and a half. We got it in nine-months. They expected the planning

1 process to take a year. We completed it in six-months. That's what we can offer. That saves  
2 money.

3  
4 Mr. White stated that he is a big believer that when you have a Meeting something needs to  
5 happen. It sounds like everybody agrees that there needs to be a Survey of the Village residents.  
6 How do you guys typically go about assigning a person, or a team of people to get that done?  
7 The other thing is, concurrently, he thinks putting together what the Village's capabilities are,  
8 and the framework by which whatever the residents decide they want, we can say, "All right. No  
9 this is a circle here. This is a square, and what you want to put in is a rectangle. It doesn't fit." He  
10 thinks that those are two things that can happen concurrently. He doesn't think that anything that  
11 we are talking about doing would necessarily preclude putting a stop on those projects. He stated  
12 that going forward for future projects, so that they can go a lot smoother, so that there is much  
13 more understanding of what is to be expected, we've got to get done what has been talked about  
14 here.

15  
16 Administrator Mekarski stated that he agrees that they are not mutually exclusive. They can go  
17 concurrently. He is encouraging the Commission to keep focus on the bird in the hand, which is  
18 a huge, huge, huge benefit.

19  
20 Mr. White stated so this Survey, we can get it out there to the public. Chairperson Britt-Johnson  
21 stated that it is relatively simple. Mr. White stated that if he has to handle it personally, he can do  
22 it. He just needs to know what are the questions. What's the framework? If you say, "Howard,  
23 take it." Trust him. He will handle it and come back with the results.

24  
25 Commissioner Morris stated that we went through it once before. He doesn't know if there were  
26 any questions involved the last time they did it. He stated that he and Commissioner Lewis, and  
27 Village President Meyers-Martin were trying to figure out how they could streamline the  
28 Surveys, as opposed to being name specific rather than industry specific. There was a grocery  
29 that was brought up. There was retail that was brought up. If we can narrow it down. If he knows  
30 that they want the crossings over there all to be retail, we kind of at least know that, they can  
31 maybe throw out some suggestions for consideration, but something to streamline it to get it  
32 going.

33  
34 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that it should probably be a separate retail/restaurant. It  
35 needs to be separate so it is just not all retail. We should focus on what they feel is important in  
36 terms of dining experiences as well. And maybe even services. Village President Meyers-Martin  
37 stated that when she and Chairperson Britt-Johnson went out they talked about eye care, Vision  
38 Works, Lens Crafters, or something like that. She stated or something related to pets. Everybody  
39 in this town has a pet, Petco, PetSmart. Maybe services, retail, dining to give them a framework.

40  
41 Commissioner Lewis stated that it has to be wrapped in an umbrella of the strategy that also  
42 makes sense. That has to be the underpinning to it. This is like icing on the cake. If we can fit it  
43 in that is great with what the community wants. Ultimately, we have a fiduciary responsibility to  
44 put forth a Plan that will sustain this Village and bring in sales tax revenue, and bring in property  
45 tax revenue over time that may be inconsistent with a Candy Store. We need to be transparent  
46 and say, "We looked. We gathered the information. We made choices. The choices are made on  
47 sound, economic principles and we are moving forward expeditiously to get this put in place."

1 Chairperson Britt-Johnson believes that he just said what she was getting ready to say. We know  
2 that we have two live fish on a hook. She has some things at home and she is going to dig it up  
3 and figure out how to work with you and the rest of the Commission to put together a Survey so  
4 that Joe will have some kind of concept. She stated that you mentioned Lowe's. Lowe's might  
5 not be a good fit. She stated that Todd is doing outreach now. They will have some kind of idea  
6 of what are some of the targets. We also need to think about the millennials. In a conversation  
7 that she had with our largest employer, she inquired of him how we can get some of his people to  
8 live here. She was told that his people live in Hammond, Burr Ridge, and other locations. How  
9 can I get them to come here? When we had our last Joint Meeting, think about the millennials.  
10 That's what you need to be thinking about. Olympia Fields, we are constantly aging. If we don't  
11 start bringing in the young folks, if we don't have amenities for younger people to live here why  
12 should they live here. We need to think about that and what we are bringing in. At the same time,  
13 she is still stuck on the Survey is a short, quick fix because the train is moving. We don't want to  
14 stop the train. We still need to deal with that. We still need to deal with an overall Consultant as  
15 well.

16  
17 Administrator Mekarski stated that he thinks what will help you develop the questions for that  
18 Survey, is to have the Special Meeting with the two Developers. They might be two separate  
19 Meetings. Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated that she thought that they should be. Administrator  
20 Mekarski stated that they have done their own Market Research. They have already done their  
21 outreach. You need to hear their perspective from the money they spent on what they are hearing  
22 from retailers that are opportunities and constraints. And which ones are realistic and which ones  
23 are totally unrealistic. That would help you in structuring the questions. If we structure the  
24 questions too loosey-goosey and we get back Nordstrom's, Macy's, and the Cheesecake Factory,  
25 it is not going to help. The Cheesecake Factory is not going to go in the Lincoln/Western Plaza  
26 or across from Meijer's. They are going to go in a Mall. That dialog will help you formulate the  
27 questions. Todd Cabanban has done Market Research for Joe's site.

28  
29 Commissioner Morris stated that he agrees with that. He wanted to know before we leave  
30 tonight, can we come to a consensus for a date to have these gentlemen come in. Administrator  
31 Mekarski stated that it is up to the Mayor's and the Commission's schedule. Commissioner  
32 Morris stated that you were talking about millennials. He would like to see an Apple Store. He is  
33 thinking about sustainability. Those things will be around. He doesn't know if they have stand  
34 alones. He thinks that they may be all in Malls. They might have a concept where they might  
35 want to have a neighborhood deal. If so, perhaps we can reach out for that. If we got something  
36 like that you will attract them. The one in Orland is jam packed. The downside to that is it is  
37 inconvenient. You are waiting, and waiting, and waiting. He believes the market would  
38 definitely bear technology, if you will, retailer or something in this particular area.

39  
40 Administrator Mekarski stated probably not Apple, but maybe one of their competitors. Gateway  
41 had that strategy back in 2000 where they would go in small centers. There was a Gateway Store  
42 in Matteson. That induced Starbucks to come to Matteson. It was right next door to Gateway. He  
43 doesn't know what computer company is locating in small, neighborhood centers. We don't have  
44 a synergy like Oak Brook or Tinley.

45  
46 Commissioner Morris stated that the commodity is not demographic driven. These young kids  
47 probably have more expensive equipment and they continue to buy it than he would.



1 Administrator Mekarski stated that he doesn't know if you saw the Orland Park, high-end xfinity  
2 Store. It is right across from Mariano's in Orland Park. You could probably induce a player like  
3 Comcast to put in a high-end xfinity Store. That is an experience of itself. You go there and sit  
4 down on the couch. You have control of the TV's. You get service in five-minutes. They give  
5 you coffee. Then you could put a technology store next to it.

6  
7 Commissioner Lewis stated that you guys are basically reinforcing his point. We need to have  
8 some recognized authority come and do this work in conjunction with the community interviews.  
9 And then we can meld that together to begin to know what we are shooting at. He doesn't know  
10 who these companies might be. He doesn't know who it is we might consider engaging to do this  
11 work for us, or to start us on this journey. He inquired of Administrator Mekarski whether or not  
12 he knows of any organizations that do that type of work.

13  
14 Administrator Mekarski stated that there are a number of them. He would first start off with the  
15 people that you hired in the past and see what their findings were even though they were dated  
16 from 2012. BDI, Bridget Lane, can tell you what she and UIC found when they did the 2012  
17 Study.

18  
19 Commissioner Lewis stated that he wants somebody to give him a way forward. Administrator  
20 Mekarski stated that they were going beyond that. They were developing the marketing cut  
21 sheets that we use today with ICSC.

22  
23 Chairperson Britt-Johnson believes that he is saying like a Camiros. This is supposedly for the  
24 Town Center, but it is more comprehensive. She believes that Commissioner Lewis is saying to  
25 take all of these pieces and put it in one doc. Let's create the Implementation Plan. Let's see how  
26 we attack who, where. If the Survey says that we want an Applebee's, maybe Applebee's is  
27 across the street from Meijer's. Maybe the Town Center is the best location to have an Apple  
28 Store. He is moving in that direction.

29  
30 Commissioner Lewis stated that Salamone rather than pitching balls can pitch some strikes for  
31 entities that we know we want and that will want us. This redlining piece we have to get beyond  
32 that. He keeps looking a little bit north. He knows that they are successful. He sees that drink and  
33 grape thing there. It is obvious that those are the markets we are comparing ourselves to. They  
34 seem to have overcome the same stigma that we have. We have to figure out what our  
35 community can support, put it there, and market it appropriately, and use our resources so that  
36 we are making progress. That's our charge.

37  
38 Commissioner Morris inquired of Mr. White how the Survey would be structured. When you  
39 look at Olympia Fields, the average age of the folks here are 54. In terms of feedback, is it going  
40 to be hard copy communication? Is it going to be solely electronic? Would it be telephone?

41  
42 Mr. White stated that when he looks at conducting Surveys, from a cost perspective you would  
43 be hard-pressed to beat digital. When he looks at the demographic we are dealing with, digital  
44 will not be the most optimum way to go. It's one of the ways we should go. We would have to  
45 take a balanced approach to it. One of the ways would be leveraging digital. We need to get  
46 some hard copies in front of people. He would want to take a look at what it would cost to hire  
47 people to go and solicit the results from people. He stated for a Survey to be truly beneficial, or

1 to get the type of response that you want, the first thing we need to do is cut to the chase quick.  
2 There's nothing worse than a long Survey. A good Survey should be no longer than 10-  
3 questions. Leveraging snail mail, leveraging digital. He inquired how many households are in the  
4 Village. Commissioner Lewis stated 2,000. Mr. White stated that if we find out we haven't  
5 gotten the type of responses that we want, make the third way go door-to-door. He stated like  
6 ComEd coming around to get your meter on. They did that by phone. They sent out newsletters.  
7 Ultimately, you had somebody showing up at your door saying they are there to change your  
8 meter.

9  
10 Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated that she never gets a chance to get through all of the things that  
11 she wants to on her Agenda. We need to create a separate Subcommittee to discuss the Survey,  
12 the mechanics, the outreach. Let's do it now.

13  
14 Village President Meyers-Martin stated that we tried to do a Survey of what businesses do you  
15 like in town. We do Awards. That was the hardest thing to get people to answer. The Survey was  
16 in The Villager. It was online. But nobody answered. She would be very interested in how you  
17 foresee getting those responses. We have not been successful so far.

18  
19 Administrator Mekarski stated to keep in mind that now that you are a Commission, under the  
20 Open Meetings Act, if you have three or four members you have to advertise as a Public  
21 Meeting, 48-hours in advance, and have it in a public setting. The rule is if you have a quorum of  
22 the majority, you have seven members, a quorum of the seven is four. The majority of the  
23 quorum is three. Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated so she has to post it. Administrator Mekarski  
24 stated that you have to post it 48-hours in advance. You can have two without posting it. It can  
25 be in the daytime or nighttime, but 48-hours in advance. Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated let's  
26 do it within the next two-weeks.

27  
28 The Subcommittee is comprised of the following individuals: Chairperson Trinette Britt-  
29 Johnson, Commissioner Chandler, and Commissioner Morris.

30  
31 Commissioner Chandler stated that Flossmoor had approved Starbucks and an AT&T Store with  
32 two other businesses in a building going next to the Meijer's Monday night. They bring other  
33 businesses and action to the area. He believes that the Mayor and Administrator Mekarski are  
34 getting ready for stuff. If they have a Developer for the property on Vollmer Road they need to  
35 get that other building torn down and get the thing ready, so that when it is time to strike they  
36 can make an offer to the Developer and it is ready to go. They will take that space over another  
37 space because there are all kinds of spaces all over, not just Olympia Fields. You have several  
38 big-boxes empty in Homewood. You have stuff like crazy in Matteson, Hazel Crest, and East  
39 Hazel Crest. If you are ready with your infrastructure and all your rules, then these people will  
40 come here.

41  
42 Commissioner Lewis stated that we are doing this concurrently. We are doing this real time. We  
43 are not stopping anything good. We are just making sure that we have something at the end of  
44 the day we can use as a Bible. He stated from his vision, we wouldn't impede any ongoing  
45 progress. If somebody has stuff going on, let it keep going on.

46

1 Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated that the Subcommittee Meeting will be April 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M.  
2 She stated that Mike Hoffman confirmed with her today that he will be at our next Commission  
3 Meeting. We would have to do a Special Meeting for Joe Salamone. She wants to dedicate a  
4 Meeting for Mike Hoffman. He is confirmed for the April 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting to discuss Olympia  
5 Corners and this information right here. She wants to see if Joe can come on April 25<sup>th</sup>.  
6

7 Administrator Mekarski asked Chairperson Britt-Johnson to call him tomorrow. We have to see  
8 if any other Boards or Commissions are utilizing this room for April 19<sup>th</sup>. April 26<sup>th</sup> with Mike  
9 Hoffman is our Regular Meeting. Let me check the availability of that. He will check the  
10 availability of the Board Room for April 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M. as well.  
11

12 Chairperson Britt-Johnson inquired what the Meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> is about. Administrator  
13 Mekarski stated it is on the proposed Medical District. The Medical District is a Mixed-Use  
14 Medical Zone. It's primarily to address the residential property that Franciscan St. James  
15 currently owns across from the hospital. They own the 79-acres here. They want to put an  
16 Ambulatory Care Facility across from their expansion here. There are some rumors that they are  
17 talking about purchasing the Tolentine Center. In order to get their Certificate of Need, they have  
18 to move this residential property to a Medical Zoning District, not a Medical Campus, a Medical  
19 Zoning District. We've drafted a Mixed-Use Medical Zoning District. The Planning Commission  
20 was confused of how their Mixed-Use Medical Zoning District fits in with this Commission's  
21 Medical Campus area. It doesn't conflict it complements it. Your Medical Campus is a  
22 Marketing District to encourage ancillary medical uses. The Medical Zoning District is a  
23 regulatory tool to regulate the development. It was suggested that we meet as a group, the Board  
24 of Trustees, the Planning Commission, the Economic Development Commission, and sort of  
25 break bread together so they have a complete understanding. They probably would want to hear a  
26 presentation on your Medical Campus, what your vision was, and why you want the Medical  
27 Campus, and the details of our resolution. Mike Hoffman will outline the Mixed-Use Medical  
28 Zoning District. That would go to a Public Hearing at the Planning Commission level after this  
29 Work Session. Ultimately, it goes for Board action. Hopefully, it will carry the recommendation  
30 of this Commission as well.  
31

32 Administrator Mekarski stated that the Meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> is a Work Session for the Board. The  
33 Mayor has some business for the Board which will start at 6:30 P.M. The Joint Meeting will  
34 start at 7:00 P.M.  
35

36 Administrator Mekarski stated that if you want to have that one-on-one Meeting with the  
37 Developers, he suggested having a mid-morning Meeting, early morning Meeting. He stated for  
38 your input with the Developers you could meet their business schedule, rather than having the  
39 Developers come out. Joe will be coming out from St. Charles for a 7:00 P.M. Meeting. You  
40 could meet with him from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M., or at 8:00 A.M. It would be the same with  
41 Michael Brown. Have them come down during their business schedule and you could spend two  
42 hours with them.  
43

44 Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated that it is almost 9:00 P.M. We have to figure out how to get to  
45 all of the rest of this work.  
46

1 Commissioner Morris suggested having the Meeting earlier than 7:00 P.M. Chairperson Britt-  
2 Johnson stated that the 26<sup>th</sup> is our Regular Meeting. It is at 7:00 P.M. After a brief discussion, it  
3 was determined that the Meeting with Joe Salamone on April 25<sup>th</sup> would be at 5:30 P.M. The  
4 Meeting on April 26<sup>th</sup> with Michael Brown will be at 7:30 A.M. Our Regular Meeting on April  
5 26<sup>th</sup> will be at 7:00 P.M. Mike Hoffman will be attending that Meeting.

6  
7 Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated that we had a good dialog. We didn't get through any of the  
8 documents. Please hang on to the documents and review the documents.

9  
10 **OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS:**

11  
12 **Budget** – Chairperson Britt-Johnson inquired of Administrator Mekarski what the status is of  
13 approving the Budget that was submitted. Administrator Mekarski stated that it formally will be  
14 going to the Board for approval at the second Meeting in April. The Budget has to be adopted.  
15 That will occur on April 24<sup>th</sup>. It will be adopted before May 1<sup>st</sup>. That includes the \$30,000.00 for  
16 marketing.

17  
18 **Website** – Chairperson Britt-Johnson stated that we are not doing justice to continue to tweak  
19 and edit the website. She asked everyone to look at the website. She stated let's start working on  
20 comments so we can make our portion of the website better. They have done good work. There  
21 are some comments that she knows we want to edit. She wants everyone to look at the website  
22 and write your comments down, and send an email so they can continue to make their edits. As  
23 far as the website, she looked at what the group has done. She is not too excited about a couple  
24 of things. 1. The font.

25  
26 Administrator Mekarski stated just the content only. We are transferring it over to CivicPlus.  
27 Don't worry about any of the design considerations. We signed the contract with CivicPlus. The  
28 Mayor executed the contract. CivicPlus came to the Board Meeting. They are assigning us a  
29 Project Manager. They are laying out an Implementation Schedule. As soon as we get the  
30 Implementation Schedule, the first thing they want to do is meet with the key stakeholders. We  
31 will have two Meetings, one with the Department Heads. Each Department Head has to  
32 contribute. We will have a separate Meeting with the Economic Development Commission to  
33 work exclusively on your page. More than likely it will be an interactive one over a conference  
34 phone and a screen, a Virtual Meeting. It is to get your input on the Economic Development  
35 Webpage. All you have to worry about is to look at the content. The content will be switched  
36 over to their platform. You don't have to worry about the font or the design considerations of the  
37 webpage. That's happening in the next few weeks. The overall implementation will be a three to  
38 a six-month process, closer to six-months.

39  
40 **ADJOURNMENT:**

41  
42 **Chairman Britt-Johnson adjourned the meeting at 9:00 P.M.**

43  
44 Respectfully submitted by Faith Stine.