



NEWS RELEASE

GREATER FREEPORT PARTNERSHIP LAUNCHES AS NEW ORGANIZATION COMBINING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CHAMBER, MAIN STREET AND TOURISM AGENCIES

Organization to promote growth in region reveals new logo and adds two new board members

Freeport, Illinois, June 5, 2018—The Greater Freeport Partnership, which is designed to promote economic development, tourism, Main Street and business services to grow the Freeport and Stephenson County region, began operations today.

The Greater Freeport Partnership formed when the boards of directors of Northwest Illinois Development Alliance (NIDA), Freeport/Stephenson County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Freeport Downtown Development Foundation (FDDF) and Freeport Area Chamber of Commerce voted to create a new organization that brings together the four organizations and four boards of directors into one organization with one mission, one board and one voice.

Collaborate Freeport, which was formed in 2015, and the All In Freeport brand are part of the new organization.

The new organization revealed a new logo, brand and presence through social media and website at www.greaterfreeport.com. The theme line or tagline is "A collaboration to promote regional growth." The Partnership is located at 27 West Stephenson Street in Freeport.

The Greater Freeport Partnership added two new board members to the 17-person board of directors, Mark Gridley, CEO of the Freeport Health Network (FHN) and Jack Carey, Freeport Park District executive director. The board also includes three representatives from each of the four founding organizations, plus the Freeport city manager, Stephenson County board chair, president of Highland Community College and the superintendent of the Freeport School District.



"The two new board members are civic leaders who are passionate about Freeport," said Gary Quinn, chairman of the Greater Freeport Partnership. "Jack Carey of the Freeport Park District believes in the mission of our partnership. He is a great partner.

"And as an employer, Mark Gridley, the CEO of FHN, knows only too well the imperative of having a strong and ready workforce. The hospital in every way is a reflection of this community and the community's economic health is vital to the hospital. Mark is 'all in.'"

Last month Rebecca Motley was named executive director of the Greater Freeport Partnership and begins work June 18. Her first tasks include hiring a staff of seven including a planning and development director, a member service director, a tourism and marketing director, visitors center manager and administrative staff.

Business services and programs provided by the Chamber remain intact and provide greater value with all the organizations under one roof focused on growth. All current Chamber members are members of the Greater Freeport Partnership.

The consolidated organization will enter into three- to five-year Service Agreements with the City of Freeport and Stephenson County to deliver services and attain agreed upon performance metrics. In return, the City and County will compensate the new organization for the agreed upon services. The County Board's and City Council's approval of their respective agreements with the Partnership will represent their endorsement of the consolidation.

Funding will come from the City of Freeport, NIDA investors, Chamber members, FDDF sponsors and Stephenson County. Revenue will also be generated through co-op advertising programs, grants and revenue from events.

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