

Meeting Minutes  
Economic Development Committee  
Tuesday – July 28, 2009 4:30 p.m. City Council Chambers

Members present: Morack, Romberg, O'Connell, and Schirpke.

Also present: Henke, Barrington, Hager, Lee Rousseau, Mike Hendrick, Steve Dreger and Sandy Flease.

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Morack. Romberg/O'Connell to adopt the agenda. Carried 4-0.
2. Mike Hendrick addressed the Committee in his capacity as the part time economic development director for the Greater Outagamie County Economic Development Corporation also known as GOCEDC. Mike's official title is Planning Director for Outagamie County. The Greater Outagamie County Economic Development corporation was organized a number of years ago to get the outlying communities in the county to join forces for the non-Fox Cities area of Outagamie County. The group has a web page and produces some promotional material. Most recently they completed a new tourism map of which the City of New London is included. Mike delivered a case of the promotional brochures for our use and distribution. The intent of the brochure is to get local people out and about in the County and prove to people that there is more to Outagamie County than just the Fox Cities. The County is also an active participant in the Northeast Wisconsin Economic Development Partnership. NEWEDP is a collaborative effort of sixteen counties and one Wisconsin Indian Tribe to promote economic development within this part of the state. They run a business plan contest where the winner can claim up to a \$10,000 prize to help start their business. We all try to work together in order not to duplicate efforts. The Greater Outagamie County Economic Development Corporation also partners with the New North organization and the Fox Cities Economic Development Partnership because we all realize that we can get more accomplished by working together as a group. When asked about the economic development philosophy of the organization, Mike replied that we cannot be competitive in trying to attract new business; we need to focus locally and try and grow our own existing businesses. Lets help the people that have already made a commitment to our area and are here. Mike informed us that Outagamie County is just now getting a Revolving Loan Fund program up and running. The City is welcome to partner with the County on future RLF applications. Mike informed us when asked about the Fox Cities cluster analysis that a private firm was hired by the Fox Cities Economic Development Partnership to conduct the study. Perhaps there is an opportunity to work with the UW Extension people to accomplish a similar study for our area. When asked about marketing the area, Mike informed the

Committee that he has no budget for this very competitive field, rather we need to rely on networking as he is skeptical about the value of spending money on advertising for economic development purposes. The Committee thanked Mike for his discussion and work he and his group do on our behalf.

3. The next person to address the Committee was Steve Dreger. Steve is the Key Account Manager for the Business and Industry Services Division from Fox Valley Technical College. Steve's principal task is to visit local industries and determine what their training needs are and then create these training services at the college. Besides Steve, there are two other people doing the same work for the college. Steve reports that right now, enrollment is up about 6% at FVTC. In the recent past training requests were down. Given the state of the national economy, this is not unexpected. Recently though, Steve has started to see a little improvement. Steve reviewed a folder of information regarding the services offered by Fox Valley Technical College. These include a Human Resources Assessment Center, a book of all classes offered by the college, the Venture Center, the E-See Program, the Fab Lab, Criminal Justice Center, Bordini Center, Robotic Technical Center, and the Transportation Center. When asked about having students work with the City on research and marketing projects, Steve replied that this may be possible on a case-by-case basis. If we have a particular interest for the College or its students to consider, Steve would be willing to check into it. Steve was thanked for his informative discussion.
4. The Committee is considering how to proceed given the upcoming expiration of our two-year listing contract with Bomier Properties. The current contract is set to expire mid-October of this year. Prior to Bomier we had a contract with NAI MLG Commercial for three years. Both firms are large commercial brokers from the Fox Valley. The Committee invited Sandy Fleese, the owner of the only real estate brokerage in the City, Century 21, to visit with the Committee about her observations regarding marketing and sell property in our North East New London Business Center. Sandy noted that the commercial real estate market is very slow right now. There has been some progress in the retail commercial area. The residential real estate market is near record numbers for successful sales. This is largely due to the "first time homebuyer" incentives that are now in place. A general discussion was held regarding two questions: Are we better off utilizing a local broker who is more familiar with our community? Do Valley brokers have more interest in making sales at higher prices in the Valley rather than here locally? Sandy was thanked for her time and input. O'Connell/Romberg moved to invite Sandy back to discuss in more detail the options of listing our industrial park with her firm. Motion passed 4-0.

5. There has been a concern expressed that our covenants on the North East New London Business Center may be an impediment to development of the park. The Committee reviewed two examples of other surrounding community industrial park covenants from Waupaca and Hortonville. Each handles situations differently regarding construction materials, outside storage and other controlled matters. The Committee will research this matter further. City Administrator Hager was asked to contact the current broker for our property and inquire with him to see if our covenants have inhibited a potential buyer and also ask him to list the names of prospective purchaser's and why they did not come here.
6. The Committee reviewed the City Administrators memo updating the committee on his activities and providing the group with minutes from the various community and area wide economic development entities. At the August meeting the Committee will review the material that the City Administrator previously prepared regarding how to proceed with marketing the city river front property to the private developer community.
7. In an effort to improve communication with the public regarding City activities, it was suggested that we may want to talk with the editor of the Press Star about options that may be available to increase the coverage of City activities in the local paper. Kent will contact the John Faucher and invite him or a member of his staff to meet with the Committee at the August meeting.
8. The Committee reviewed the options of having a local "gap analysis" done and also what is the possibility of having an area cluster analysis completed. It was suggested that we contact the UW Extension to see if they can be of any assistance in this regard.
9. At the August Committee meeting we will have Missy Porath be our speaker representing the local Marketing Charter School. One or more of her students may join her.
10. There being no further business to come before the Committee, Romberg/O'Connell to adjourn. Passed 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 6:35 pm.

Kent Hager  
City Administrator