

Meeting Minutes
Economic Development Committee
Tuesday – August 25, 2009 4:30 p.m. City Council Chambers

Members present: Morack, Romberg, O’Connell, Tate, Steingraber and Schirpke.

Also present: Henke, Hager, Lee Rousseau, Sandy Flease, Missy Porath, Kelsey, and Lori Schneider.

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Morack. O’Connell/Tate to adopt the agenda. Carried 6-0.
2. The Committee invited Missy Porath, a Business Education teacher at the New London High School, and also the director of the Marketing Charter School, to address the Committee along with Kelsey, one of her students. Missy reported that the School of Enterprise Marketing will be starting their third year this school year. The charter school model for this class can be explained in a few words. A charter school is going from teachers telling, to students doing. It is project based learning where students engage in real world projects. Students learn what interests them. Last year, they had 24 students enrolled in the School of Enterprise Marketing. Several examples of student self-directed projects from last year are as follows: Movies and Directing, Pizza for Profit, Chinese New Year Event, Hua Hut, School Store Advertisement, and Culinary Arts. The School District is very proud that the Hua Hut project competed at the state level and won and was able to represent the State of Wisconsin and New London in the national competition in California. The Committee thanked Missy and Kelsey for their explanation of the School of Enterprise Marketing. There are several opportunities for the Charter School to partner with the Economic Development Committee to assist our local economy. Projects such as preparing a business plan for a prospective business or a plan for an expanding local business are good ideas. The school could help with a “cluster analysis.” They could help us market the City for a new business or assist a local business with their marketing efforts. It was agreed that the Charter School and the City Economic Development Committee will continue to work together and see where we can cooperate on future projects.
3. Next on the agenda, the Committee visited with Sandy Flease from the local Century 21 office. The City currently has a listing contract in place for the North East New London Business Center with Bomier Properties. This contract expires October 17th of this year and has been in place for two years. The Committee needs to consider how to proceed with a renewal of the existing contract, or put a new contract in place with another real estate firm. Sandy was at the meeting to discuss the option of retaining the local Century 21 firm to market the City industrial park property. Sandy informed the Committee that she is looking at what other similar communities are doing to market their industrial land and why some of them have been successful. It was suggested that our practice of offering land for free may not be an appropriate marketing strategy. It was suggested that perhaps New London has too many people involved in the process where a neighboring community, who does not utilize a real estate firm, can react more quickly and efficiently. The Committee agreed with Sandy’s suggestion that she follow thru with interviewing the individual industries in a local community industrial park and find out the reasons for their decision to locate where they

did. She will come back to the Committee meeting in September and report the results of her inquiries.

4. John Faucher, Editor of the Press-Star, had been invited to visit with the Committee about developing better communication of City activities with the public thru the newspaper. Lori Schneider from the Press Star delivered John's regret that he was unable to attend the meeting as he was assisting in putting this week's paper together. The Committee talked at length with Lori about how we can get the City's message out to the public. People want to know what is going on but it seems that City activities are not receiving the coverage that we have in the past. It was mentioned that the newspaper industry has changed substantially and that it is a very difficult economic environment to run a paper in now. It was noted that the sale of newspaper ads is what makes the paper. If they cannot sell enough ads, the paper is correspondingly smaller. We all need to work together and be positive. We need to see how the new format for the paper works. We all want the paper to succeed and be our "home town" paper that is friendly and informative. The Committee agreed that they would like to talk to John Faucher in more detail regarding this matter and will invite him to be present at the meeting next month.
5. The Committee reviewed a map with the City Administrator regarding what City utilities are located where on our downtown river front property. There is one of the larger sanitary sewer mains running east to west across the property that is 21 inches in size. There is also a 6-inch water main that runs across over half the distance of the property from the west to east. The pro's and con's regarding this situation were discussed but in general, having this large of utilities available on the property is more of a positive in the long run than a negative. The presence of these utilities is somewhat limiting for future development as you cannot build buildings over the top of these main service lines.
6. The Committee reviewed the April, 2007 memo prepared by the City Administrator regarding his research and recommendation on how to market the City river front property. Considerable discussion occurred. It was noted that a lot of work has been accomplished on the property. Developing this property is a once in a lifetime opportunity and we all want to do it right. It was also the intention to complete the Waterfront planning effort to assist with the development of this property. It was the consensus of the Committee to have the Administrator follow thru with his original recommendation and begin preparing an abbreviated Request For Proposal for the Committee's further consideration.
7. The Committee reviewed the monthly City Administrator's report. Kent was able to visit four local industries in the month of August. He visited with several potential economic development clients as well. He also supplied reports to the Committee from the Waupaca County Economic Development Corporation, and the Fox Cities Economic Development Partnership along with their respective budgets.
8. Arrangements have been made for Bill Ryan from the UW Extension office out of Madison to appear at the next Committee meeting to review the possibilities of conducting a "gap analysis" for our community to help us better define what economic sectors can best be attracted to our community.
9. The Committee reviewed the reply that was received from the current broker for the North East New London Business Center where he informed the Committee that he did not have documentation on potential clients for our industrial park and the reasons why they did not purchase that we had requested. He noted that some buyers had requested to be kept confidential.

10. The Committee reviewed future agenda items including the following: (September meeting) discuss the 2010 Economic Development Budget, Sandy Flease, John Faucher, Bill Ryan, review the City zoning regulations regarding the “Overlay Planned Development District” as the regulations related to the river front property, (October meeting) invite Pete Hensler from Economic Development Associates, and invite Department of Commerce, Area Development Manager Dennis Russell.
11. There being no further business to come before the Committee, O’Connell/Schirpke to adjourn. Passed 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm.

Kent Hager
City Administrator