

Meeting Minutes
Economic Development Committee
Tuesday – January 26, 2010, 4:30 p.m., City Council Chambers

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

Also present: Mayor Henke, Besaw, Hager, and Sandy Flease.

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Morack at 4:30 p.m. O’Connell/Romberg to adopt the agenda. Carried 5-0.
2. Sandy Flease, from the local Century 21 real estate office, addressed the Committee and presented an example marketing flyer for the Northeast New London Business Center. The Committee reviewed the draft flyer in detail and made several suggestions for changes. Sandy will finalize the document and provide copies for the Committee to review. She reported that she has had no inquiries regarding the industrial park. She noted that given the time of the year and the economy, this is to be expected. She mentioned that her commercial land sales in the area have picked up quite a bit. She also said that residential real estate transactions are doing pretty good. She will plan on coming to visit the Committee to provide an update on a quarterly basis. The Committee thanked Sandy for her work and the insights she provided.
3. Committee Chairman Morack next reviewed the notes he took while reading the book *Economic Development Strategies* and invited the Committee participants to review the book as well. The Chairman’s review of the book included several worthwhile observations including the following:
 - Studies have shown that incentives will not effectively influence firm location decisions. The truly important factors in business location are transportation consideration, labor quality and markets. The best way for governments to influence firm location is to create and sustain quality communities.
 - More jobs are created by expanding existing businesses than by attracting new businesses from outside the community.
 - Government leaders should ask what are the strengths and weaknesses of the jurisdiction? How can this jurisdiction build on strengths and minimize the weaknesses.
 - An MIT survey of 1,300 corporate founders discovered that when they determined the location of new businesses, founders rated quality of life, proximity to key markets, access to skilled professionals and access to universities as most important. Taxes and regulatory climate of the area played much smaller roles.
 - Lessons learned from the Dell Computers case study: collaborate with local colleges, provide assistance to entrepreneurs thru the development of business incubation programs, capital provision mechanism and other tools, feature quality of life amenities as a way of attracting workers, help complementary firms find land and buildings, and look for potential links between local public, private and nonprofit organizations that assist business.

4. The Committee reviewed City Administrator Hager's monthly update memo and the Chairman reported on his attendance at the annual New North Summit in Green Bay. One of the speakers at the Summit spoke about the boat building industry in the area. The ship builders utilize over 800 suppliers from the area. The Governor spoke and noted a decline of 35% in state revenue and that 10% of state employee positions have gone unfilled. Wisconsin is still one of the leading states in the manufacturing industry. The Governor also noted that the state needs to embrace the renewable energy industry. Chairman Morack got the opportunity to meet the Chancellor of UW Oshkosh, Rick Wells. It was noted that it is often just as important to attend events such as this for educational purposes as it is to network with the attendees of the event. Leroy Butler also addressed the gathering with an inspirational talk about his current entrepreneurial efforts and about his past with the Green Bay Packers.
5. The Committee reviewed the plan for actions to undertake in the year 2010. A series of topics were provided for the Committee to consider by Chairman Morack. The Committee reviewed each of these topics and selected the following as a draft of "high priority" topics for the Committee to work on in the year 2010:
 - Met with business leaders from the community and the state.
 - Review and analyze the steps a business takes locally to get established and grow and see how the City can assist businesses make it thru these important steps.
 - Conduct a "gap analysis" and perform a "cluster analysis" if we can secure the assistance of a college.
 - Do research regarding what other communities are doing for economic development and review what "Main Street" communities are doing in particular.
 - Support and help educate existing businesses.
 - Continue to coordinate with our listing agent on marketing the industrial park.
 - Update the City web site.
 - Review the plan for selling the City downtown river front property and consider a modified request for proposals process to solicit the private development community to improve the property.
 - Partner with schools to gain knowledge and resources.
 - Oversee the future development of the former Simmons property.
 - Meet at least annually with the Tourism Commission.
6. The Committee went over the list of speakers that appeared before the Committee last year and considered a draft list of possible speakers for the year 2010. This list will be further refined but will include at a minimum the following: all City Committee such as the CANDO Committee, and others; the Waupaca County Economic Development Committee; selected local elected officials, both state and national; local media; New North; local realtors; local schools and universities and the service corp of retired executives (SCORE).
7. There being no further business to come before the Committee, O'Connell/Romberg to adjourn. Passed 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 6:32 pm.

Kent Hager
City Administrator