

Meeting Minutes
Economic Development Committee
Tuesday – June 29, 2010 - 4:30 p.m. - City Council Chambers

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

Also present: Mayor Henke, Hager, and Lee Rousseau.

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Morack at 4:30 p.m. Romberg/Steinhorst to adopt the agenda. Carried 6-0.
2. An update from Sandy Fleese of Century 21 Realty was first on the agenda. Sandy was unable to attend but reported to Chairman Morack and Administrator Hager that she had received a contact from an east coast businessman inquiring about the North East New London Business Center. Sandy will update us on this contact in the future.
3. Administrator Hager’s monthly economic development report was reviewed. Among several items discussed, Kent noted that the demolition project at the former Simmons property is coming to a close.
4. Chairman Morack updated the Committee on the work that Brooke Fitzgerald did for us as part of her Enterprise School of Marketing class at the New London High School. It was suggested that opening a Facebook page for the City could be a useful vehicle for the City to market our community. She has accomplished a lot with the development of the business guide. The business guide is a lot like our “New Resident Guide.” She has about fifty pages completed. In the guide, she has Internet links to direct business people to specific assistance centers. This document is something we can offer that other communities cannot. Brooke will continue working on this and will report back to the Committee in the future.
5. Mayor Henke reported that he is working with City staff to update the City web page and to utilize additional staff resources to assist with keeping the web page current.
6. As part of the gap analysis, over 250 business types were identified as not being available locally. The Committee had been asked to review these business titles and to identify several that each individual thought may have an opportunity to be successful in our community. The idea being that of these businesses identified, the Committee would suggest several for further analysis. The Committee members identified the following potential businesses: antique dealer, retail clothing, locksmith, sports store, a wholesale supplier to support local manufacturing, gourmet food shop, campground, crafts store, solar energy contractor, go-cart/miniature golf, furniture repair and finishing, truck stop, driving instruction, lawn/garden/landscaping, and boat rental/leasing. It was suggested by a public participant that a half-priced book store may also be considered for the local retail economy. The Committee will continue to review this list and narrow it down for further investigation.

7. The Committee reviewed the “Business Tasks” list which addresses the steps an entrepreneur takes in establishing a new business or actions taken to expand an existing business. The list includes key questions a new business needs to address and answers how the City can play a roll in assisting this business person achieve their goals. Several valuable observations were made by Committee members regarding the business tasks. The Committee will continue to focus on how we can be of assistance to the current local business community and help an individual develop a new business.
8. At the July meeting the Committee will discuss possible new verbiage for the City owned billboard out on Highway 45 behind Crystal Falls. Speakers scheduled for the next meeting include Steve Thompson along with Kelly Simonsen, the Community Relations Coordinator for Wisconsin Public Power. They will talk about how local electric utilities can be of assistance with economic development in the City. Also scheduled to speak will be Vicki Lobermeier, Director of the Small Business Development Center from the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point office.
9. There being no further business to come before the Committee, O’Connell/Morack to adjourn. Passed 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 6:22 pm.

Kent Hager
City Administrator