

Meeting Minutes
Economic Development Committee
Tuesday – May 26, 2009 4:30 p.m. City Council Chambers

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

Also present: Henke, Hager, Kempen, Lee Rousseau, Nancy Ross and Kitty Johnson.

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Morack. Tate/Romberg to adopt the agenda. Carried 5-0.

2. First on the agenda was a discussion with Nancy Ross, Loan Fund Manager for the Jobs & Business Development office of CAP Services. Also representing CAP Services was Kitty Johnson, Business Development Coordinator. CAP Services was started in 1965 as part of President Lynden Johnson's "War On Poverty." CAP Services main office is located in Stevens Point with a branch office in Appleton. CAP focuses on long term solutions for social issues. Establishing successful self employment and creating good paying jobs in our communities creates more financially stable families and stronger local economies. CAP serves a five county area: Outagamie, Waupaca, Portage, Waushara, and Marquette. They largely focus on assisting those individuals that are under 150% to 200% of the national poverty level. For a family of four this is \$33,975 to \$44,100. They work with people to establish self employment, and private businesses that would employ low to moderate income individuals. They provide technical assistance with feasibility studies, market research and training needs. They assist with development of business plans and developing financing proposals. They also provide direct lending assistance and leased commercial space at below market rates.

CAP provides a range of other services principally to assist the low to moderate income family including the following: parent support services, Hmong and Hispanic services, skills enhancement projects, mental health services, family crisis centers, early childhood development services like Head Start, housing assistance and other services. The Committee thanked Nancy and Kitty for their informative presentation and assured them that the City is a willing partner in their efforts to improve our regional economy.

3. Next on the agenda was a discussion of the City web site as it specifically relates to economic development matters. Missy Kempen, Mapping and Electronic Media Specialist for the City demonstrated the current City Web site capabilities regarding economic development matters. Several observations were made including the following: we may want to add tax rates, along with water, sewer, and electric rates with a possible comparison

to other local communities; a suggestion to move the Economic Development Committee agendas and minutes to the "Economic Development" pull down menu while at the same time having them available elsewhere with other agendas and minutes; and take the "Business Assistance" flyer and put in links to the sites outlined in the document. The Committee then reviewed what several other communities do on their web site for economic development purposes. Gary and Missy will be following up on this matter and working on some updates and changes to our web page.

4. There had been a suggestion by our listing agent Stuart from Bomier Properties that the City develop a bullet point document identifying all assistance that the City may be able to bring to the table when a prospective client may be considering acquisition of the former Simmons property. Kent had prepared such a listing and took it before the Finance and Personnel Committee. This list was approved by the Committee and referred to the Economic Development Committee for review. The Committee reviewed the listing and agreed with its contents.

5. The Committee reviewed a memo prepared by Kent regarding his economic development contacts over the past month. The Committee also reviewed the minutes from the April 1 Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors meeting, the April 30th Forward New London group meeting, the April 30 Waupaca County Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors meeting and the May 6th Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors meeting.

A general discussion occurred regarding what questions should be made when Kent makes his visits to local industry. Questions such as these were suggested: what related businesses is the local industry aware of that may have an interest in locating closer to their supplier here in the City; how can the City be of assistance to the local business and are they satisfied with the services that they receive; is there anything that we can do differently to make their business more successful? It was also suggested that we interview businesses that have left the City and also interview new businesses locating here.

6. As part of the Waterfront Initiative planning project the consulting firm, Ayres and Associates, provided a very informative "gap analysis" that looks at retail demand and supply numbers for areas 10 minutes, 15 minutes and 30 minutes away from New London. The financial analysis identifies where there are "gaps" in local retail services. The Committee reviewed this material in detail and thought it would be very helpful for individuals considering opening a new retail business.

7. The Committee reviewed the "Paper Cluster" information as developed by the Fox Cities Economic Development Partnership. Identified as a target cluster to focus on was the "Specialty and Converted Paper and Plastics" industries of the Fox Cities. A "cluster" is generally defined as a geographic concentration of a group of interconnected businesses, suppliers and associated institutions. The Fox Cities group did a "Strengths, Weakness, Threats and Opportunities" analysis of the industry group. It was suggested that perhaps we could conduct such an analysis for one or more of our important local industries such as plastics, wood, dairy or food. All agreed that this was a good idea and that we need to look at this matter in more detail.

8. The Committee reviewed items for the next agenda. Several possible speakers were identified including the following: Fox Valley Technical College; Dave Thiel from the Waupaca County Economic Development Corporation; Mike Hendrick from the Greater Outagamie County Economic Development Corporation; the CANDO Committee; the Tourism Commission; or a Representative from US Senator Kohl's office or Congressman Steve Kagen's office.

Other agenda topics for next month included a discussion about business attraction and retention; general industrial park topics; to try and identify businesses that may need assistance; and to try determine a way to help educate our local constituents about what the City of New London is doing as the public may have a misconception regarding what is actually being accomplished.

9. There being no further business to come before the Committee, Schirpke/Romberg to adjourn. Passed 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Kent Hager
City Administrator