

Meeting Minutes  
Economic Development Committee  
Tuesday – February 23, 2010 - 4:30 p.m. - City Council Chambers

Members present: Morack, O’Connell, Romberg, Schirpke and Dyreson (arrived at 5:15). Tate excused.

Also present: Hager, Ken Roberts, Professor Karl Nollenberger and Lee Rousseau.

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Morack at 4:30 p.m. Romberg/O’Connell to adopt the agenda. Carried 4-0.
2. Karl Nollenberger was introduced. Dr. Nollenberger is an Assistant Professor of Public Administration for the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, Masters of Public Administration program. Professor Nollenberger briefed the Committee on his professional work experience. For nearly forty years he has worked for local governments. He started as the Assistant Director of Finance for Iowa City, Iowa and worked his way up thru communities in Colorado, Minnesota, Texas and Illinois. He ended his local government career as the County Administrator for Lake County, Illinois in 2001. Lake County has a population of 650,000 with 2,800 employees and a budget of \$350 million. He retired and returned to college for his PhD. He received his PhD from the University of Illinois, Chicago Campus in 2008. Shortly there after, he was employed by UW Oshkosh. Professor Nollenberger described the UWO MPA program to the Committee and also described the classes that he typically teaches. He noted that the City of New London responded to an earlier request he had sent out thru the Wisconsin City Management Association requesting communities to come forward with projects that his class could possibly undertake. He noted that New London’s request was considered but not assigned to anyone. It depends largely on class size and the particular class structure as to what projects are selected for that particular class to work on. He prefers to have four students work as a group out of his class on a single project. Class are held all day Saturday as 75% of the students have full time jobs and the students come from all over the state to take the classes. There may also be an opportunity to have one student work on a project as part of their Masters Thesis.

When Professor Nollenberger was asked what attracts economic activity to a community, he stated that strong private/government partnerships work the best. It is best to have business out front representing the community. It is also important to have as many local people as possible networking with people outside the community. One on one contact is very important. A discussion of “cluster analysis” was considered where an important local industry such as lumber or plastics is studied to look for additional businesses to locate here that complement the local business. Professor Nollenberger was thanked for his time and asked to keep New London in mind as a potential community for his students to consider in their studies.

3. Ken Roberts was introduced to the Committee. Committee member O’Connell invited Mr. Roberts to come before the Committee. Ken described some of his experiences he has had in a number of the communities he visits on his considerable travels. Ken grew up on a dairy farm in Western Minnesota. He studied biochemistry and began his career working in a

laboratory for Kraft Foods. He went on to study food science and ended up in the agricultural education program. He taught agricultural science in Minnesota for a period of time and then worked for the Cenex Coop in market development in South Dakota. He now works for Archer Daniels Midland, one of the worlds leading agricultural processors. Ken and his wife are both active in the Forward New London group. Ken travels extensively to a number of smaller rural communities. His wife and children run The Print Shop here in New London. They have been residents here for 21 years. Ken has had the opportunity to travel extensively and has recorded a number of his travels with photographs that show the unique aspects of the communities he has visited. Ken shared these photographs with the Committee. Ken talked about value added agriculture and the ethanol industry and the roll that both play in smaller communities. He noted that economic development is all about relationships. People have to work together and develop a network of contacts. He observed that it is not all about the Internet. The Committee thanked Ken for his thoughtful presentation and asked him to return in the future.

4. The Committee had received a copy of the Draft Design Guidelines from the Planning Commission. Administrator Hager explained that as a result of the Comprehensive Plan effort, a number of future work items were suggested to be worked on. The Design Guidelines for downtown are one of these items. A general discussion of the Design Guidelines occurred and the Committee was asked to supply their questions and comments to the Planning Commission for their future consideration.
5. The Committee reviewed Administrator Hager's monthly update and his report on industry visits. Chairman Morack informed the Committee of his follow-up visit to Ms. Porath's School of Enterprise Marketing. Kent was able to accompany the Chairman on the visit to Ms. Porath's class. As you will recall, a previous visit had been made to the class asking if they would be interesting in undertaking an economic development task for the City. As a result of this visit, a student, Brook Fitzgerald expressed an interest in working on a gap analysis as well as a business plan if her time permits it. The Committee thinks it is great to have a local student work with them. Future status reports will be made to the Committee as Brook proceeds.
6. The Committee next reviewed the twenty tasks identified for a new business to get established and how the City can play a supporting roll. A matrix showing each step was reviewed up thru the 6<sup>th</sup> step. Chairman Morack distributed a further analysis of each of the steps including Key Questions, City Efforts, and Other Supporters. Each Committee member was asked to review this material in detail and to add their comments and observations to the list. The Committee will continue to work on this task at future meetings.
7. Kent Nelson, President of QuickStart out of Menasha was identified as a future speaker. QuickStart is a private business that specializes in helping businesses get started and grow successfully. Chairman Morack will invite Mr. Nelson to a future meeting.
8. There being no further business to come before the Committee, O'Connell/Romberg to adjourn. Passed 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 6:35 pm.

Kent Hager  
City Administrator