

Meeting Minutes
Economic Development Committee
Tuesday – April 27, 2010 - 4:30 p.m. - City Council Chambers

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

Also present: Mayor Henke, Barrington, Herter, Hager, Lee Rousseau and Sandy Flease.

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Morack at 4:30 p.m. O’Connell/Tate to adopt the agenda. Carried 7-0.
2. Chairman Morack began the meeting by thanking the Committee members for their efforts over the past year and welcoming Ron Steinhorst as a new Committee member.
3. Sandy Flease from Century 21 was next on the agenda. She reported to the Committee that the North East New London Business Center is now on several real estate web sites. She reports that the commercial real estate market has gotten quiet lately. If people are in the market, they are looking at existing buildings and they are not making plans to break ground for new facilities. There is now a sign advertising the property that is visible from Highway 45. She will contact Kent Nelson, President of QuickStart to assure that he is aware of the availability of our industrial park land. Mr. Nelson appeared before the Committee last month. His firm specializes in assisting start-up companies with their business plans. Sandy will also inquire with the surrounding communities regarding recent activity in their industrial parks and report back to the Committee.
4. Kent updated the Committee on his recent activities and reminded the Committee of the schedule of upcoming meetings. A number of business activities are in the works including the possible expansion of an established local franchise and the construction of a new auto parts store.
5. Chairman Morack reported on the progress of Brooke Fitzgerald as she works on several economic development projects as part of her High School, School of Enterprise Marketing class. She has started a “gap analysis” where she compares a list of business we currently have to a list of businesses that we don’t have. Next month the Committee will review this listing. A follow-up to this process may be a survey of the community to determine what businesses people would like to see in New London that we currently don’t have. Brooke is also working on obtaining example business plans to determine what information may be of value for a start-up business. She is also working on a “Business Guide” much like our “New Resident Guide.” This guide would identify all the important local contacts a prospective new business owner may need such as utilities, zoning, building permitting, and inspections. The Committee is encouraged by Brooke’s enthusiasm for her class.
6. Chairman Morack updated the Committee on the status of the Grow New London group. The group is composed of eleven different community organizations including the Jaycees, Chamber of Commerce, Art league, Ministerial Alliance, the hospital, the City and several others. They are working on “community development” rather than “business development.” Rather than having all the various local civic organizations going completely their own way, it was thought that it would be good to have a common goal or brand for everyone to work toward. The Grow New London group has been working on a “brand statement” for our

community for the past few months. The group has determined among themselves that it would be best to have a person employed to implement this community development branding effort. It was understood by the group that the possibility of obtaining City funding for a full-time position such as this is slim to none. The group is considering approaching the other communities in the county to see if a partnership could be formed to implement a regional community development position. It was also suggested that private funding may be an option that could help fund this proposal. The concept is being further developed by the group as they go forward. Chairman Morack serves on the Grow New London group and will keep the Economic Development Committee informed of their progress.

7. The Committee reviewed the Draft Request for Proposals document as prepared by Kent for the City owned downtown property that was formerly the Wolf River Lumber site. It was suggested that Kent clarify in the draft document that the property is not truly river front property as the City will maintain ownership of an approximately 45 foot wide strip along the river to maintain the trail and public access to the river. It was noted that the following statement is in the draft to protect the private nature of the proposals submitted: "The City of New London will honor requests of confidentiality to the extent possible. Please indicate any proprietary information as "Confidential." The Committee plans to further review the Request for Proposal next month. They will also review a memo Kent prepared when he researched what other communities are doing to market their vacant land. The list of prospective developers to receive the RFP will also be reviewed by the Committee in anticipation of sending out the document in the near future.
8. The Committee discussed possible projects for Dr. Karl Nollenberger's class at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. Dr. Nollenberger spoke to the Economic Development Committee at the February meeting. He teaches for the Public Administration Department at UWO. One of his classes undertakes analysis for various communities in the state. The Committee would like to have his class consider doing a study for New London such as a "cluster analysis." It was agreed to keep in touch with Dr. Nollenberger.
9. Given time constraints for the Committee meeting, it was agreed to forgo the agenda item where the Committee was going to continue their review of the business steps and assistance items.
10. Amy Pietsch will be the speaker at the May Economic Development Committee meeting. Amy is the Director of the Venture Center at the Fox Valley Technical College. Chairman Morack has also been in touch with a representative from the Wisconsin Public Power, Inc. They have an individual that assists communities with economic development initiatives. Arrangements are being made for this individual to speak at a future committee meeting.
11. It was suggested that the Committee keep track of franchises that are looking at our area for a location and see if we can be of any help for a franchise to locate here. Recent advertisements were observed for Cousins Subs and Sears.
12. There being no further business to come before the Committee, O'Connell/Tate to adjourn. Passed 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 5:25 pm.

Kent Hager
City Administrator