

Meeting Minutes
Economic Development Committee
Tuesday – January 25, 2011 - 4:30 p.m. - City Council Chambers

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

Also present: Mayor Henke, Hager, Sandy Flease, Bill Schmidt, and Laurie Shaw.

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Morack at 4:30 p.m. Steinhorst/Romberg to adopt the agenda. Carried 6-0.
2. Sandy Flease addressed the Committee. There has been no activity regarding the North East New London Business Center. Some existing commercial buildings are drawing interest from buyers, and a few sales have occurred. Most of the sales are bank owned buildings. She observed that there is a glimmer of economic improvement out there and all is not “gloom and doom.” She will report back to the Committee at a later date.
3. Bill Schmidt and Laurie Shaw were welcomed by the Committee. They updated the Committee regarding the New London Tourism Commission and their activities. They presented a brief Power Point presentation to inform the Committee of the “vision” and “mission” of the Tourism Commission. Revenue from the room tax is approximately \$33,000 a year. The room tax was put into place in 2003. The Commission intentionally started slowly building up a fund balance of about \$60,000. Now the Commission expends about what their revenue is every year in order to benefit the community and specifically the lodging businesses that pay the tax. They help market community events to attract people to the City. They distribute a questioner to each entity that receives funding from them in order to determine what impact the event has on the City and how successful the event has been utilizing Tourism Commission funding. Probably one of the more successful events they have participated in is the “Guts Frisbee” event. They also partner with baseball events, the power parachute weekend, and many others. They are happy to sit down with any group and talk about how the Tourism Commission can partner with them to make the event more successful. The Tourism Commission will not work to conduct an event, rather they will help financially to market and promote the event. The Committee discussed several additional items with the Tourism Commission representatives including the following: developing a “brand” for the City, trail system promotion, disk golf opportunities, moving visitors to our area among all communities in the County, and promotion of our local businesses to the people who come here to golf. It was noted that we have a lot of groups of people conducting events and activities in the City as well as the County, all of which are very independent. It may be beneficial to bring these groups together. The Committee thanked the Tourism Commission and the Chamber for all the work they do to improve the economy of the City of New London.
4. Along with Bill and Laurie, the Committee briefly reviewed a DVD from the Waupaca Chamber of Commerce that was prepared to market the City of Waupaca. It was noted that there is a possibility of a “county-wide” DVD being prepared and also an option to pay to

have Discover Wisconsin come back to the City to create one of their productions. The Committee reviewed what a private company is currently marketing with Waupaca County support. They sell ads to private businesses and then provide a series of brief marketing videos for your local Internet site. The Committee viewed the LaPorte County, Indiana web site to see how this marketing proposal looks. It was noted that the private company is charging a considerable amount annually for private businesses to participate. It was suggested that perhaps City of New London staff could do the same video marketing scenes for the City and we could post them ourselves on the City web site. The mayor will be following thru with this. The Chamber of Commerce and the Tourism Commission are both willing to partner with the City in this effort.

5. The Committee reviewed Kent's memo regarding his economic development activities over the past month. It was noted that Kent attended the "In Development-Connecting Commercial Developers In The New North" event in Green Bay where he was able to participate in a "speed networking" event. He met over 100 developers and consultants in just over an hour and fifteen minutes during the networking event. He handed out a flyer promoting the City downtown river front property and the North East New London Business Center along with his business card to each participant. Kent noted that he had briefly talked to a representative from Rogers Cinema regarding the Grand Theatre and expected to get more details regarding the status of the property in the near future.
6. Chairman Morack reviewed the draft "Business Guide" that started out as a project undertaken by a student in the High School Marketing program. The guide is intended to help a current or prospective business expand or get established in our community by providing them with as many informational resources as we can. There are twenty individual steps identified, each with their own informational resources. This document will evolve over time, unfortunately, it appears that we have not been able to attract another student to follow thru with this specific project.
7. Chairman Morack also reported on his recent attendance at the New North conference. He visited with many people at the meeting including the economic development representatives from the University of Oshkosh. They talked about their plans for a new business incubator at the college and the creation of a second center for entrepreneurship. They also are working on a technology transfer project where private business can take better advantage of college resources. The New North conference addressed the promotion of renewable energy businesses including the importance of wind energy and their supporting businesses.
8. Kent will be checking with Superintendent of Schools, Bill Fitzpatrick about the idea the Committee previously discussed with him about having a contest with New London students to design a new billboard layout for the City billboard that is on Highway 45 North, just east of Crystal Falls.
9. The Committee reviewed two options that the Mayor designed to replace the "For Sale" sign that is currently on the City downtown riverfront property. The sign with the wording "6 Acres Available for Development," giving the City web site address and the City Administrator's phone number was chosen. Kent will arrange to have the sign replaced.

10. It was suggested that the Committee research a business plan contest similar to the one that is being undertaken by the Northeast Wisconsin Economic Development Partnership. Kent will research this and get back to the Committee.
11. Chairman Morack asked the Committee members to promote a free seminar on starting your own business that will be held February 8th from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm at the Waupaca High School. The event is being sponsored by the SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) organization in co-operation with the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Small Business Development Center. For more information and pre-registration, call 715-346-3861.
12. The program for the next Committee meeting in February will be Karen Harkness, Director of Community Development for the City of Appleton along with Jim Van Dyke, Economic Development Specialist for Appleton.
13. It was suggested that the Committee contact a representative from the Appleton “Angel Network” to see if they would be willing to visit with the Committee about this form of financing a start-up company.
14. A motion was made to adjourn by O’Connell and seconded by Schirpke. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:12 pm.

Kent Hager
City Administrator