

Economic Development Committee
Tuesday, April 30, 2013 - 4:30 p.m. - City Council Chambers

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

Excused: Dyreson

Also present: Mayor Henke, Administrator Hager, Dave Thiel, Executive Director of the Waupaca County Economic Development Corporation; Jane Mulroy, Karen Gething, Rita Thiel and Bert Lehman

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Morack at 4:30 p.m. O'Connell/Steinhorst to adopt the agenda. Carried 7-0.
2. Chairman Morack welcomed Jane Mulroy from Irish Acres Farm Market and Gardens. Jane described their organic farming operations and the fact that the farm has been in the same family for five generations. Their farm is not only a dedicated working farm; it is also a teaching farm. People have gotten use to going to the grocery store and buying food, particularly produce that is grown thousands of miles away. The new farmer is trying to be a local grower and distributor so that produce can be grown and consumed locally. Smaller size farms are what the organic, local market calls for. Jane went on to describe several initiatives that they are undertaking such as partnering with the new local business Amanda Cupcake. They are also working with the local DECA school group to consider establishing a farm stand on their property. They are looking at expanding their organic growing operations with raised beds that are handicapped accessible, while at the same time they are talking to the folks at St. Joe's about not only selling fresh, organic produce to them but having some of their clients come out to the farm to help with the growing operations. The farm utilizes all organic fertilizers and pesticides. They are also operating as a non-profit business. They are considering adding additional activities at the farm including wood working and candle making. Coming this Saturday, May 11th, they are having an open house at the farm which will include a "Quilt Walk" and an "Art Festival." All are invited to attend. The event will run from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm at Irish Acres Farm located three miles south of New London on Highway 45. The Committee thanked Jane for her thoughtful presentation and wished her well with the future plans for Irish Acres Farm.
3. Karen Gething was welcomed next. Karen presented an idea she has developed for the downtown river front property that the City owns. She asked everyone what our communities greatest asset is. We all agreed that the Wolf River is one of our greatest assets. It is one of the assets that we are not taking full advantage of. Karen suggested that a concept plan could be established for a residential development themed after a "fishing village." The developer she has been in communication with is familiar with a fishing village project in Florida. The development is known as Funky Fish Houses at Cape Harbor. Information about this residential project can be found on their web site at www.funkyfishhouses.com. Several ideas were shared among those present regarding how the fishing village concept could be implemented throughout the City waterfront to include areas down river. The Committee expressed interest in having Karen work with

her developer friend to further refine their concept for the City property and to talk to her contact in the construction field that she noted had a potential interest in following thru with the actual construction of the proposed village. Karen agreed to further explore the fishing village concept and report back to the Committee.

4. The Committee once again reviewed the proposal to have the City participate in the new regional revolving loan fund program with Dave Thiel and Administrator Hager. There was a concern expressed about how the county level loan review committee was to be appointed. The proposed implementation manual identified that where each of the ten participating counties has an existing economic development organization, that this entity would be responsible for appointment of the county level committee. Since there exists the Waupaca County Economic Development Corporation and the City has a voting representative on this committee, it was deemed sufficient to rely on this entity to represent the City's best interest when it comes time to appoint the county committee. O'Connell/Tate to recommend to City Council the adoption of the resolution authorizing the City to participate in the East Central Wisconsin Community Development Block Grant Regional Revolving Loan Fund program. Carried 7-0.
5. In response to a question, Dave Thiel briefly updated the Committee on the Waupaca County Tourism promotion effort. The City is a participant in this county-wide effort. Dave reported that great strides are being made. A state of the art web site has been constructed which will have an interactive map identify all tourism based businesses in the County. This map will allow people to obtain information from any one of these businesses at the touch of the computer screen. This effort is being target marketed to a very large audience in the southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois communities through a large TV marketing advertisement effort. Thru the generosity of Mad Dog and Merrell as well as Roger Radley, they will be utilized as the "faces" that will promote our tourism marking effort. All agreed that this is a very exciting opportunity. Dave will be returning to a future Committee meeting with an on-line demonstration of what this new internet based marking effort is like.
6. Administrator Hager reviewed his monthly report with the Committee.
7. Chairman Morack informed the Committee that the next meeting will be May 28th. At that meeting Joe Marquardt, Business Manager for the School District will present a program to the Committee regarding school funding and how our local district is faring. The June 25th meeting is planned to be held at Flease's Campground with Mark Flease giving the Committee a tour of their facility.
8. O'Connell/Schirpke to adjourn. Carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:03 pm.

Kent Hager
City Administrator