

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Finance Committee of the City of Norfolk, Nebraska met in the City's Conference Room, 309 West Madison Avenue, Norfolk, Nebraska, on Wednesday, December 27, 2006, beginning at 4:30 p.m.

Mayor Gordon D. Adams called the meeting to order.

Roll call found the following Committee members present: Mayor Gordon Adams and Councilpersons Brenneman, Coy, Fauss, Lange, Reeder, Saunders, and Wilson. Absent: Van Dyke.

Staff members present were City Administrator Mike Nolan, Public Works Director Dennis, and City Clerk Beth Deck.

The media was represented by Susan Risinger, WJAG/KEXL, and Greg Wees, Norfolk Daily News.

Present at the meeting were lobbyists Don Wesely and John C. Lindsay & Paul V. O'Hara of O'Hara Lindsay & Associates.

State Senator Mike Flood participated in the meeting via telephone conference call.

Notice of the meeting was given in advance by publication in the Norfolk Daily News, and notice of the meeting was given to the Mayor and all members of the Council prior to the meeting.

The Mayor presided and the City Clerk recorded the proceedings.

The Mayor informed the public about the location of the current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room and accessible to members of the public.

City Administrator Mike Nolan stated Councilman Van Dyke requested this meeting with the City's lobbyists.

Wesely, Lindsay and O'Hara each provided a brief biography of themselves for elected officials. O'Hara stated lobbying is a process and results take time.

Nolan gave a Power Point presentation on the various issues the lobbyists have worked on for the City of Norfolk, including:

- *Norfolk Regional Center;
- *LB 217 as it relates to the ONE Library Partnership (Norfolk Public Library, Columbus Public Library, Northeast Community College, Central Community College, City of South Sioux City, City of Way, and the City of Scottsbluff will join next year). LB 217 could also help fund improvements to Memorial Field;
- *LB 558 (Railroad Transportation Safety District legislation);
- *Corporation Gulch Trestle Replacement Project;
- *LR275CA (would have allowed the Legislature to extend the tax levy for redevelopment projects in blighted and substandard areas for property formerly owned by the state);
- *LB1199 (sex offender legislation)
- *Methamphetamine Treatment Facility

Senator Mike Flood updated elected officials on the University of Nebraska Medical Center progress to locate a nursing facility in Norfolk. Flood stated the UNL Board of Regents provided a favorable recommendation on the project and a preliminary vote will be taken in January 2007. Flood stated once a favorable recommendation is made, the City of Norfolk will need to raise money for the project. Flood stated this is a worthy project and it is anticipated that the UNMC campus will open in Norfolk in 2010. Flood told elected officials the City's lobbyists have been effective for Norfolk.

Nolan reviewed 2007 Legislative Objectives for the City of Norfolk, as follows:

Continue monitoring LB 1083 behavioral health system changes. Seek increased state funding for the Norfolk Regional Center for both staffing and capital construction.

Compete with Hastings, Lincoln and Omaha to locate a \$16.5 million Methamphetamine Treatment Center in Norfolk.

Establish a University of Nebraska Medical Center Nursing Facility in Norfolk.

Secure \$800,000 in State environmental funding to compensate Norfolk for groundwater contamination.

Work with Omaha, Lincoln and other municipalities for new local economic development initiatives.

Work with Senator Joel Johnson on his proposal for a Nebraska diagonal expressway from Norfolk to McCook and beyond.

Councilperson Coy questioned whether the League of NE Municipalities has a lobbyist and also questioned whether Mike Nolan is a lobbyist.

Nolan stated the League does have a paid lobbyist but the League works for municipalities as a whole. Many of Norfolk's issues aren't League-related. Nolan did not register as a lobbyist by choice. Nolan was forced to register as a lobbyist by the administrative staff in the Governor's office because of Nolan's presence in Lincoln to discuss regional center issues while the Legislature was in session. Frank Daly, attorney for the Accountability & Disclosure, called to ascertain whether Nolan's presence during the session in Lincoln was exclusively on the regional center issue and, if so, Nolan needed to register as a lobbyist. For that interval of time, Nolan was registered as a lobbyist. Nolan is no longer registered as a lobbyist and the Commission does not require that Nolan register.

Coy stated the lobbyist forms indicate Nolan received \$4,650 as a lobbyist. Coy questioned whether the money Nolan reported as income on the lobbyist report was above and beyond the City Administrator salary.

Nolan had to pay \$100 to register as a lobbyist at that time. Nolan stated the \$4,650 was the amount of time allocated towards the regional center issue and was a percentage of the City Administrator's salary. Nolan did not receive additional funds as a lobbyist.

Lindsay stated State Statute requires all professional lobbyists to register and pay a fee. However, some organizations have employees watch legislation for impact items which requires the employees to also register as a lobbyist and report a percentage of their time (as income) on lobbying reports.

Mayor Adams explained Nebraska municipalities must operate under Dillon's Rule which basically means that municipalities are only empowered by the Legislature.

Wesely stated the lobbyists and staff members for the City of Norfolk are "making a difference in Lincoln". It is a team effort.

Councilperson Saunders moved, seconded by Councilperson Wilson to adjourn the meeting at 5:25 p.m. Roll call: Ayes: Council members Brenneman, Coy, Fauss, Lange, Reeder, Saunders, Wilson and Mayor Adams. Nays: None. Absent: Van Dyke. Motion carried.

Elizabeth A. Deck
City Clerk