

WORK SESSION

A work session was held by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Norfolk, Nebraska, on Monday, December 10, 2012 beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the Training Room, 309 North 5th Street, Norfolk, Nebraska.

Mayor Sue Fuchtman called the meeting to order.

Roll call found the following members present: Mayor Sue Fuchtman and Councilmembers Shane Clausen, Dale Coy, Dave Fauss, Jim Lange, Rob Merrill, Josh Moenning (5:35 p.m.), Thad Murren and Dick Pfeil. Absent: None.

Staff members present were City Administrator Shane Weidner, City Attorney Clint Schukei, City Clerk Beth Deck, Economic Development Director Courtney Klein-Faust, Finance Officer Randy Gates, Senior Accountant Sheila Rios and Assistant City Engineer Mark Dolechek.

Also present were Madison County Commissioners Lee Klein, Marty Griffith, Jerry McCallum, Madison County Clerk Nancy Scheer and Engineer Dick Johnson.

The media was represented by Brian Masters, US92; and Greg Wees, Norfolk Daily News.

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 and accessible to members of the public.

Industrial Site Identification and Development Presentation

Courtney Dunbar of Olsson Associates, Omaha, Nebraska, gave a presentation on industrial site identification and development. Dunbar stated there are three basic types of economic development that bring in outside money to a community: 1) industrial, 2) agriculture, and 3) tourism. Dunbar explained that successful economic development hinges on the ability to effectively market land assets to prospective end-users. Economic developers work to attract primary companies and the companies provide taxable capital investment and job creation which collectively creates a multiplier impact that supports local retail and commercial development as well as quality of life factors, such as schools, parks and roads. Primary development is vital to promoting community growth and quality of life. As primary companies are directly involved in the mass production, distribution, handling or creation of goods and services that are sold, to a large extent, outside of the general local trade region, these companies have very specific siting requirements to consider when choosing to locate within an area. As such, it is entirely necessary to fully assess, underwrite and plan to mitigate risks to development to secure new users locally. When a local community is prepared and understands the attributes and capacities of industrial sites, benefits can be:

- Alignment of capital improvements budgeting to logical planning for build-out of sites
- An understanding of appropriate industrial/primary development targets to match site infrastructure capacities
- An ability to mitigate known risks to development before end-users inquire about the site
- A strategic position to understand barriers to a prospective end-user which could delay time to production

- Increased bartering position to better evaluate incentive requests and negotiate the cost/benefit of each development opportunity
- Maximization of site utility through effective planning

Dunbar suggested Norfolk look at developing three industrial sites and stated a comprehensive approach to economic development is four-phased, as follows:

Site identification/assessment includes location (development capacity, ownership, topography), availability of services (utilities, access, transportation) and environmental (floodplain and adjacent land use). Phase I considerations should include site control, unidentified utilities capacity, misunderstood permitting requirements, unclear transportation service and/or access, improper zoning and incompatible peripheral uses.

Planning includes site analysis findings (mitigate of encumbrances, consideration of options, review of economic targeting); master planning (creation of site plan alternatives, finalization of site master plan, assessment of zoning and land use policies, uncover anticipated permitting issues); and costing and phasing options (determine logical phasing patterns, assess costing for build-out and identify funding options.) Considerations should include no site plan, mismatched targets; unidentified timelines for build-out; lack of logical site development phasing; no alignment of infrastructure needs to CIP and lack of investment protection. Dunbar explained it is best to develop a master site plan but to wait on actual platting of the land to allow more flexibility for companies. Dunbar stated the State Department of Economic Development is typically looking for sites of 50 acres or more to fund.

Marketing for site selection should include detailed information of a proposed site and a virtual build-out of the site. Olsson can work with architects on the virtual build-outs. Site videos can also be an important, effective marketing tool. Marketing considerations should be inaccessible site information, marketing efforts that precede diligence assessment, mismatched incentives, misidentified decision-maker, inability to visualize development on-site; and lack of polished presentation of facts.

Dunbar said land prices are not a real issue, with incentives being a bigger consideration for companies. Also, sites do not need to be developed but they do need to be planned and virtually ready. Companies generally will look at existing labor force first, then production costs and finally existing industries when looking at sites. Dunbar stated there are basically three hindrances to site development in most communities: 1) labor force, 2) access to property, and 3) funding. Dunbar stated Norfolk has rail access, good highway access, big nation-wide industries in place, a community college and an LB 840 program which are all good assets for a community. Dunbar said the willingness in the Norfolk community is great to move forward with the industrial site development process.

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Sue Fuchtman
Mayor

ATTEST:

Beth Deck
City Clerk

(S E A L)