

**City of Dunkirk**

**Economic Development Committee Meeting**

**Meeting Minutes**

Monday, December 2, 2013  
11:00 am, Mayor's Conference Room

Attendees: Stephanie Kiyak, Council Member-At-Large, Chair  
Bill Rivera, Councilman, Board Member  
Steve Neratko, Director of Planning and Development  
Lacy Lawrence, Deputy Director of Planning and Development  
Nicole Waite, CDBG Administrator  
Richard Halas, Fiscal Affairs Officer  
Anthony Gugino, Director of Public Works  
Gib Synder, Observer  
Susan Chipone, Buffalo News

Absent: Andy Gonzalez, Councilman, Board Member

*Call to Order:* 11:06 am

***Approval of Meeting Minutes***

Due to the absence of committee member Andy Gonzalez, meeting minutes for September and October, 2013, will be approved at the next meeting.

***Issues Discussed***

**Ongoing Business:**

**CDBG activity reports:** Nicole told the committee that she spoke to Lambros Touris (our HUD/CDBG representative) the previous week – he told Nicole that he was making progress on the monitoring report and the City can expect it within the next week or two. There have been two drawdowns (administrative fees) – one for Travis Gordon \$1,000 (the final installment on his \$5000 contract he had with the City). The second was in the amount of \$3,842. 83, payable to Harry Sicherman and Associates. This is the final installment of the \$15,000 contract they had with the City. Harry provided an invoice outlining the services his company provided. It was questioned if the services promised were indeed delivered, and Steve assured the committee that Harry did fulfill his obligation/services rendered.

**CDBG 1 & 5-year plan resubmission update:** No news from HUD yet regarding these plans. Steve believes we will be informed by HUD within the next week or two.

**Boardwalk Update:** Lacy informed the committee that all tenants are paid to date. Steve said that they would be advertising for applications for three tenant spaces that will be available in April 2014, and that a tentative due date schedule is planned for the second council meeting in January.

**Festivals:** Lacy said that work has begun on festival planning, and letters have already gone out for sponsorships for MOP and other planned festivals, and responses have already been received. Lacy also planned on sending out letters in the next couple of weeks that will address vendor's opinions on how to improve the festivals – what they perceived as strengths and weaknesses.

**Youth and Recreation Programs:** Tim will be providing updates of his department through the *Personnel, Judicial and General Welfare, Recreation, Library, Regional Planning* committee in the future, but since he attended this meeting, he provided this committee with an update. Tim told the committee that the Recreation Center will be opening January 1, 2014, and the City is accepting applications for recreation attendants – the plan is to hire six personnel. The plan is to offer kid and adult soccer, hockey, adult basketball, flag football, morning walking program, softball clinic, and birthday parties (which have been offered in the past), among other programs. Advertising to the community is being done through the City website and Facebook page, as well as the Observer. Special mailings are also sent to area schools – Tim is going to talk with them to see if they can include City information in their mailings they send out to the community. It was suggested that Tim provide flyers in the Clerk's Office, as well as advertising on Cable Access. Tim wants to also put together a Youth and Recreation Board to not only help foster ideas, but a formal board is also necessary in order to access any funding that may be available through the County.

**Landbank update:** Steve informed the group that the County/Dunkirk/Jamestown received a \$1.5 million grant for demolition of properties and the merging of some properties to enable the process of getting them back on the tax rolls, which is the main focus of the grant, among other aspects. We have yet to receive the packet of detailed information regarding this program outlining the rules and regulations. Steve told the committee that there will be a \$70,000 match of CDBG funds. Al Zurawski has been working with Mark Guise at the County to determine which properties will be affected and provided Mark with a list of 20 houses that should receive priority (extended vacancy, fire damage, dilapidated, etc.). Steve believes implementing the project will take about 2 years. It was questioned if these properties will need to fit the criteria of the CDBG 1 and 5 Year Plans, and Steve said they will. He assured the group that Nicole will be working with Mark to ensure eligibility.

**Grant(s) update:** Mainstreet Grant – Steve and Nicole had a meeting a couple of weeks ago and said turnout was good, with around 4-5 business owners and a few members from the community attending. He will be getting back with them regarding questions of eligible projects, which depends on the building and occupancy (residential, business or combination). Steve felt it was a good meeting, with plenty of questions being asked. Applications are still available and will be due January 15<sup>th</sup>. A committee has been formed to review and grade the applications.

**Marina project update:** Steve said that Jeff Gambino continues to work with the IDA to try and discover any tax breaks available. Work is still commencing down there, with the hope it will be completed by the spring.

**Start-Up NY program (SUNY):** Steve and Mayor Dolce have been attending meetings at the college. The program starts January 1, 2014. Final rules and regulations have not been issued yet. The main attraction of this program to attract new business is that new businesses and their employees will not be required to pay property or income tax. All applications will go through the college for review and approval, which will be decided upon within 60 days of receipt of the application – if the college does not respond within the 60 days, the business will be automatically granted the status (they must still meet the criteria). Since the area affected must be within 1 mile of a college or a satellite of the college (i.e., The Technology Incubator), the majority of Dunkirk falls within the affected area. Steve has been providing the college with a list of potential properties to market.

**Follow-up:** Tony Gugino gave the committee an update of ongoing discussions between Pro Quip and the City. Tony pointed out that Pro Quip changed out the two lighting fixtures outside City Hall about 10 days ago. Tony said

that he mentioned to Sam Tavernese (principal of Pro Quip) that something that could help the city and be a good marketing tool for them would be to donate and install a free standing solar lighting system, placed in a prominent place somewhere in the city. Tony went on to explain that they chose a location at the Boardwalk and it should be installed in a matter of weeks. Tony suggested to them that we change out the incandescent lights in Memorial Park and the pier to LED. Tony also suggested the new bike path (Phase II) at Point Gratiot would be a good location for solar lighting (since there is no direct illumination on the path, only what comes off of the street lighting). Tony is also discussing with them ways to improve energy usage at the WTP and WWTP with regards to solar panels – Tony pointed out that with Pro Quip being a manufacturer and not a distributor automatically cuts a large percentage of costs (perhaps as much as 30%). Meetings have already taken place between Tony, Sam, Sean Raynor (WWTP operator), Bob Lawrie (WTP operator) and Hill engineering to begin preliminary studies as to what can be done at both plants to reduce our electrical needs by installing solar. A preliminary study has already been done by Pro Quip regarding the roof space available and details of what can be realistically captured and utilized with solar panels. There's also a 40' pole that illuminates the back of the building (at the WWTP plant) that is probably 30 or 40 years old and rusting. Tony asked Pro Quip for a proposal to change out the pole with LED (since they last at least 20 times longer than incandescent lighting). Tony has also introduced Sam to other businesses around town that may be interested in what Pro Quip offers. Pro Quip may also be expanding their footprint in Dunkirk, realizing that the current building they occupy may not suit their needs for the assembly space actually needed as they expand their services in other states, and they've already reached out to Steve to discuss the potential for moving to a larger facility. It was pointed out to Tony to be aware of business that commences between the City and Pro Quip be done within the guidelines of the procurement policy. Tony encouraged that we continue brainstorming with this company, since they were introduced to us through the County IDA. Steve said he's made Sam aware of NYSERTA requirements, and Steve said he would have a representative NYSERTA meet with Sam to move forward with the application process. It was also pointed out that Start-Up NY would apply to this company should they expand their footprint in Dunkirk.

**Planning and Zoning Boards certification training:** Steve provided the committee with a copy of the resolution passed in 2007 by Council that rescinded the requirement of yearly training by the Planning and Zoning Boards, as well as a copy of the new resolution that will reinstate training as mandatory for all Board Members. The State requirement is 4 hours of training in a given year. Training is provided free on the internet, and can also take place at other municipalities that schedule it. Steve said that he's received positive feedback from most board members that currently sit on the Planning and Zoning board, and they welcome the training. It was questioned whether a time-frame should be imposed in the new resolution – Steve said he would look into it. Steve said he also found a resolution that the state uses and would pass it on to Ron for possible inclusion.

### ***New Business***

Steve told the committee that he met with the new owner of the property across the street from City Hall (that used to be the Masonic Lodge). Although he has no particular plans for the property at the moment, he's open to ideas. He was approached for using the site for potential activities in the spring/summer months, such as festival or farmer's market. It was questioned whether the city website is being utilized for listing area business opportunities, and Steve told the committee that he is in the process of compiling a database.

It was questioned where the farmer's market will be held this year. Dave Kleparek (with the Chamber of Commerce) is working with Nicole and Steve to figure out if the current location should be used again, or another location. Steve told the committee that the Chamber plans on discussing potential locations in January, and Steve is providing them with a list of locations to consider.

### ***Adjournment:***

Motion made to adjourn at 11:57 by Bill Rivera.