



## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AUGUST 4, 2011**

**Committee Members Present:** Don Nicolard  
Mike Zita  
Scott Pelot

**Also Present:** Rick Ryland  
John Moss  
Karla Richards

The Economic Development Committee convened on Thursday, August 4, 2011 at 7:30 PM in the Council Chambers of the Safety Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Scott Pelot, Chair of the Committee. Following a salute to the flag and the Pledge of Allegiance, there was a moment of silent reflection.

### **General Topics of Discussion:**

#### **Director of Planning & Economic Development Position**

Mr. Pelot stated that this position has been vacant since Mr. Pritchard left and went to Streetsboro. We really need someone to fill this and to promote the city and bring in new business. Mr. Nicolard stated that the need is great as well as the need for our new Economic Development Committee of Council. If we fail we are just repeating the sins of our fathers. Mr. Zita stated he agreed we need to fill or recreate this position and we have a lot of opportunity to get the city growing and we need to be moving forward. Mr. Pelot stated this may not be the best time economically to be hiring with recent layoffs but we need to have this position filled in order to have someone actively seeking businesses to increase our tax base without having to go to the voters asking for more money. Mr. Pelot stated that we need to decide where we would like to see a true business corridor, rather than attempting to do spot zoning. Mr. Ryland stated that with the expansion of sewer and water we are really in the position to grow. Mr. Ryland stated that later in August he would be coming to Council with a comprehensive zoning plan and what this happens you will need someone in that position that can attend to it, in addition to all of the sewer and water improvements. Mr. Ryland stated we do have the funding now that can handle this position, and he recommended Mr. Moss for the position of Director of Economic Development/Deputy Director of Finance. Mr. Ryland recommended bringing back our former Deputy Director of Finance to fill the Finance Directors position at \$59,029.00, which is a \$16,000.00 increase in the overall budget for this year. This is still a saving from when that position was vacant from early January of this year.

Mr. Ryland stated that Mr. Moss has a great rapport with the contractors within the city, and if we continue to provide them with the tools they need such as water and sewer, we will continue to grow. Mr. Pelot asked if the funds would be there for next year without having to make any additional cuts? Mr. Ryland replied yes without any additional burdens. Mr. Pelot asked about the salary and Mr. Ryland replied it would remain the same as it is now. Mr. Pelot asked about the job classification and Mr. Ryland indicated that this would need to be rewritten, and some items would shift to Mr. Arters. Mr. Moss stated that economic development is something you need to have and to have it working with existing companies. It won't be easy but if successfully it will pull the burden off of the taxpayers. Mr. Moss stated that every year we lose economic development, we are loosing revenue and eventually we will have to make cuts in services we provide. Mr. Pelot asked Mr. Moss about his experiences in working with developers. Mr. Moss explained that he has been working with the developers all along, and he would continue to do that. Mr. Moss stated that in the past he represented developers in their construction of industrial parks. Mr. Ryland stated they both have been working with Summit County Economic Development Dept., on potential business leads for our city, and we have also been advised of our city's shortcomings. Mr. Ryland stated its been three (3) years since Mr. Pritchard left and we have been trying to all the positions, we tag team it when we can and try our best to stay on top of things on a daily basis. Mr. Nicolard asked Mr. Ryland if he would be rewriting the job description, and he replied yes, and that he would submit that to Council. Mr. Pelot asked if the former Dep. Director of Finance is open to this or interested and Mr. Ryland stated replied yes. Mr. Pelot asked about the Mayor and Mr. Ryland replied that he is aware of this and we have had discussions. Mr. Pelot questioned Mr. Moss about his position in another city, and Mr. Moss replied that if you want someone in the desk from 8-5 that's not going to work. Mr. Pelot stated he is looking for availability and flexibility for the businesses when they need your. Mr. Ryland stated that when I call Mr. Moss at odd times when he is out of the office, he would be in my office within minutes. Mr. Moss commented that at being at the desk from 8-5 means you are not out in the field reaching out to businesses. There was brief discussion about having the new job description ready for the Committee of the Whole meeting on August 15, 2011. Mr. Pelot discussed the Charter requirements (Section 5.08) and that the Mayor would need to confirm the appointments, with Councils approval, and that we would like to have him present for that meeting to make those official appointment of Mr. Moss to the Director of Economic Development/Deputy Finance Director. Mr. Ryland suggested that Mr. Pelot make contact with Mayor Koontz between now and then. Mr. Zita moved to place the job description change for the Economic Development Director on the August 15, 2011 Committee Work Session agenda, seconded by Mr. Nicolard.

Roll Call: Yeas: Zita, Nicolard, Pelot  
Nays: None

Motion passed 3-0.

**Unfinished Business:**

None

**New Business:**

None

**Public Comment-Agenda and Non Agenda Items:**

Ms. Charlotte Whipkey, a Norton resident, expressed her concerns of not calling any employees back to take up the slack in Administration with the minutes. There are minutes from several committees that are not available for the public; they are not even being prepared. This is putting the city in a position for a lawsuit. You really need to look at getting someone in here part time to get caught up. Mr. Ryland stated that Ms. Whipkey's comments are 100% correct, and we are looking at having a professional come in here and train the staff on how to properly take and prepare the minutes. Ms. Whipkey stated she was glad this is going to occur, however she doesn't want to see minutes like the Charter Review Commission prepared. Mr. Ryland explained that minutes do not have to be verbatim or 12-14 pages long. Ms. Whipkey stated that Mrs. Richards does a great job with her minutes, and Mr. Ryland replied, yes, but even her minutes are too long. Mr. Pelot stated the minutes are to be in compliance with the Ohio Sunshine Laws.

**Topics for the next Work Session:**

Mr. Moss stated that in the future he would like to see the members of Council going out with the Economic Committee and being more involved. Mr. Nicolard agreed and felt that this newly formed committee should be working closely with the Director of Economic Development to make the city thrive. We are a true gem in Summit County and we really need to be out there promoting this, and once this happens things will just explode here in Norton. Mr. Pelot noted that we are not looking to become a Montrose or Fairlawn, but we can grow in other ways. Mr. Pelot stated he envisions businesses to be in the center of town, along St. Rt. 21 and Rt. 585. Mr. Nicolard asked everyone when Rolling Acres closed down, why is it that not a single one of those businesses moved into Norton? That's something to think about.

**Adjourn**

There being no other business to come before the Committee Work Session, the meeting was adjourned at 8:17 PM.

---

Scott Pelot, Chairman

**\*\*NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM\*\***

**All Committee Meetings will be held at the Norton Safety Administration Building, unless otherwise noted.**