

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
CITY OF WILLMAR, MINNESOTA
THURSDAY, JULY 26, 2012**

MINUTES

The Community Development Committee of the Willmar City Council met on Thursday, July 26, 2012, in Conference Room No.1 at the City Office Building. Chair Dokken called the meeting to order at 4:45pm.

Present:

Jim Dokken	Chair
Steve Ahmann	Council Member
Ron Christianson	Council Member
Bruce DeBlieck	Council Member
Bruce Peterson	Director of Planning and Development Services

Others present: Steve Salzer – MinnWest Technology Campus, Tom & Jean Lindeman – Pro 1 Realty, Steve NedreLOW, Eric Rudningen, and David Little – West Central Tribune

1. PUBLIC COMMENTS (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

There were no public comments offered at this meeting.

2. MINNWEST TECHNOLOGY CAMPUS UPDATE (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

Steve Salzer, MinnWest Technology Campus Manager, provided an update on development activities at the campus. There are currently 31 businesses with 365 employees on the campus. 55% of the space owned by MinnWest is currently leased. The major focus to-date has been agricultural technology, but the campus is zoned for various technology and support businesses. Mr. Salzer reviewed handouts depicting campus development over multiple phases (See Attachment A). NovaTech is the largest tenant on the campus. They started with 48 employees and have grown to nearly 160 employees today. There are 30 additional acres available for future development. Chairman Dokken asked how big a role a functioning airport played in the development of the MinnWest Campus. Mr. Salzer replied that the parent company leases a plane and uses the airport quite a lot. There is potential for other businesses to use the airport as they grow. Council member Christianson commented that the community was fortunate to have the MinnWest facilities. Mr. Salzer's remarks concluded with him advising the Committee of the upcoming animal science conference on the campus on September 4th and 5th.

3. INDUSTRIAL PARK LAND PRICING (MOTION)

Tom and Jean Lindeman from Pro 1 Realty presented information to the Committee relative to industrial park land pricing. Trends show land values decreasing, necessitating an adjustment in land prices for the Willmar Industrial Park. A 15% reduction in land price was recommended as a reasonable adjustment.

There were no suitable comparable sales in Willmar, but comps from the area were presented ranging from 49 cents to 60 cents per square foot. Staff said that the availability of land from the

Phase 1 land release requires that it be priced to stimulate development. Staff was recommending a reduction in price from \$1.50 per square foot, to \$1.25 per square foot.

A motion was made by Council member Christianson, seconded by Council member Ahmann and passed for the following:

RECOMMENDATION: That the land in the industrial park third addition be repriced from \$1.50 per square foot to \$1.25 per square foot.

4. FAA LAND RELEASE UPDATE (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

Staff presented talking points for the Phase 2 and Phase 3 land releases (See Attachment B). Chair Dokken raised the topic of non-compliance at the new airport relative to the easement and lease issues. Staff stated that significant efforts were underway to resolve those issues with the FAA and that those issues were a result of a previous mediated settlement for land acquisition.

Steve NedreLOW of the Airport Commission and Eric Rudningen of Maximum Cruise Aviation spoke about airport needs and the value of further airport development. They also offered comments relative to airport usage, marketing, and staffing.

5. ANIMAL ORDINANCE (MOTION)

Staff presented the City Attorney's draft ordinance dealing with the keeping and care of animals. The draft ordinance is based on language previously recommended by staff and the Committee (See Attachment C).

Following discussion a motion was made by Council member Christianson, seconded by Council member Ahmann and passed for the following:

RECOMMENDATION: That the Ordinance be introduced for a hearing to be held on August 20th.

6. MISCELLANY (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

Chair Dokken requested that staff try to arrange to have the mobile home parks manager at the next Committee meeting.

7. There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 6:20pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bruce D. Peterson, AICP
Director of Planning and Development Services