

Citizens' Advisory Committee

March 6, 2012

Present: Chris Able, Grace Brandl Janet Breuer, Jerry Censky, Pat Chermak, Roger Drape, Robert Elfner, Faiv Neng Her, Linda Hunter, Anthony Mack, Dick Weber

Excused: June Kramer

Guests:, Deanne Censky, Mayor Nickels

Speaker: Bruce Jacobs, Crime Prevention (Scams)

The meeting was called to order at 4:03.

Mayor Nickels reported that over 70 positions were cut at City Hall, a 10% increase in taxes were collected, and a 10 million dollar structural deficit this year still remains. We are approximately 70 million dollars in total debt. The loan from MPU of 5 million dollars passed.

On the positive side, the mayor has a new part-time assistant—Heather Sohlden. He has started work on a strategic plan for the city, a first for the city, the purpose being to decide what it is that we really want to do. LTC is helping us with that. LTC is also helping the city develop an employee evaluation tool, and thanks to a grant to LTC, the city will pay no fee. The absence of a union makes it important to keep careful records.

The Finance Director position is in the process of being filled. Mayor Nickels will work with that person to develop a financial plan for the city.

Four of the five alder positions will be contested. He has three proposals to put on the table:

1. Add a city position of Economic Developer to work with the EDC, a county-wide development group. This position is needed because of the restructuring that gave the City Planner too much to manage.
2. Adopt a Park program—citizens' groups could sponsor a park, particularly to fundraise.
3. Have a unified marketing plan for the Chamber, EDC, Mainly Manitowoc, and the Visitor Center. Two Rivers has also been added.

A question for the Mayor: Why is the treasurer's office closed over the noon hour when citizens want to do business (such as pay their taxes)? This situation will be addressed. There is just one clerk in that position since the mergers. Her noon hour could be changed.

Our speaker was Sergeant Bruce Jacobs from the Crime Prevention section of the Police Department. He described many scams perpetrated on Manitowoc citizens. He particularly emphasized identity theft issues. Most of the identity thefts happen to people between 20 and 45. However, the elderly are also prey for certain types of scams.

Marks of a scam: (1) Sense of urgency (“limited supply,” “act now or else,” or “don’t tell anyone.”) (2) Door-to-door scams that gain entrance to people’s homes in pairs; while one talks to the home owner, the other plants phony evidence of home problems or simply robs people. (3) Requests to send money through Western Union from scam artists who make up stories to persuade people to send money to foreign locations. (4) EBay or Craig’s List often produce scam emails.

Loneliness creates vulnerability.

Prevention:

1. Get a free credit report every year from a source like annualcreditreport.com/cra/index.jsp.
2. Don’t carry your Social Security card with you or include it or your driver’s license # on your checks. Medicare will issue a card without your SSN if you request it.
3. Sign up for the No Call lists.
4. Be on guard when answering the phone
5. Do not give out personal information.
6. Shred documents that have personal information such as preapproved credit card offers.
7. Be sure that websites from which you buy have a gold padlock on them and a beginning URL <https://> (note the s).
8. Do not put mail in your mailbox with a red flag—an invitation to thieves. Have your mail held when you will be out of town.

He had many illustrations and stories to illustrate his point.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15.

Our next meeting will be April 2.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Hunter
Secretary