

Development group dedicated to business

Norton City/County Economic Development was established in 2005 after local leaders gathered to form a collaborative organization to promote economic development in Norton County.

They began by creating a five-year strategic plan which recognized the community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The end result identified three primary goals: job creation, downtown development and housing.

A new five-year strategic plan is being finalized and the primary goals remain the same:

Job Creation/Business Development and Retention: Some accomplishments toward these goals are the Ag Valley Grain Terminal project, the new Sleep Inn Hotel project, and the Norton City/County Economic Development Business Education Scholarship Program.

Downtown Development: In partnership with the Norton County Community Foundation, Norton Downtown Restoration Committee, City of Norton, and local civic groups, Norton City/County Economic Development is assisting with many projects underway to improve downtown Norton. Current projects include Moffet Station Business and Visitor Center, Dr. Lyons Historical House, and the Heaton Building renovation. With the recent Downtown Norton Historic District designation property owners will receive tax credits for approved renovations to their property.

Housing Development: The most significant accomplishment in housing so far is the Norton County Neighborhood Revitalization Plan passed by the Norton County Commission. This plan aims to incentivize property owners to rehabilitate existing property or construct new property (residential or commercial) by offering a decreasing tax rebate for the amount of the improvement. Norton City/County Economic Development is researching housing grant money to create innovating housing solutions in collaboration with government, private business and local citizens.

There are currently 19 business retention and expansion projects the office is involved in. The list includes a business relocating to Norton, assistance with business plans for several new or expanding businesses, matching investors with proposed new businesses, businesses for sale, building renovation plans and business incubator space in several communities.

It is important in small town America for businesses to have the tools to succeed. Marketing your business to the public will increase

Foundation gives \$6,000 to DSNWK

Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas, was recently announced as the recipient of a \$6,529.00 grant from the Sunflower Foundation. The grant award will be used for a special project called "Living in a Wired World." The award will be used to purchase computers to efficiently train employees and enhance their skills. This grant will allow Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas the opportunity to have greater access to the free online program "College of Direct Support". The College of Direct Support is a program created by the University of Minnesota and offered by the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation that is designed to enhance the skills and knowledge of caregivers in the developmental disability field.

Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas is a private, not for profit organization serving more than 500 individuals with developmental disabilities in the 18 counties of northwest Kansas. Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas has been providing quality services and programs to the area for over 40 years.

For more information contact: Steve Keil, Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas, 785-625-5678.

City

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your customer base and put cash in your business. The Norton City/County Economic Development office and the Norton Area Chamber of Commerce have joined forces to bring business expert, Cinda Baxter, to Norton County for a free marketing seminar on February 15th at 5:30 p.m. at the Norton American Legion. This is the first business seminar planned for 2011.

On January 28th the National Historical Society approved downtown Norton as a National Historic District. The State of Kansas approved the application on November 20th, 2010, designating Downtown Norton a state approved Historic District. With the addition of the National Historic Registry business owners that are wanting to renovate approved buildings in the district will be eligible for state and federal tax credits.

The Norton City/County Economic Development office should be the first stop for anyone who wants to start a new business or has an idea for a new business. The office is a valuable resource for business plan or funding assistance and has many partners who can help the entrepreneur.

There are many exciting projects underway in Norton, with the promise of more to come. Scott Sproul has been the Executive Director since September, 2010. He said, "Norton County has so much potential. We're poised to become a regional hub for northwest Kansas."

Norton City/County Economic Development Mission Statement: The Norton County Economic Development Board is a countywide partnership dedicated to enhancing the economic strength of the county by recruiting new employers, retaining existing employers and improving the quality of life for all of Norton County.

Norton County provides this monthly column to keep county citizens informed about their government.

PUBLIC NOTICE

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NORTON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Published in The Norton Telegram on Friday, February 4 and Tuesday, February 8 (2T)

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NORTON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

To all qualified electors residing within the boundaries of Norton County Conservation District, notice is hereby given that pursuant to K.S.A. 2-1907, as amended, on the 12th day of February, 2011, at 6:30 p.m., an annual meeting of the Norton County Conservation District will be held at the Norton American Legion.

The meeting agenda shall include the following business items:

ONE: The supervisors of the Norton

and Susan, 613 E. Main, read out 7-29-10, \$490.00; Woodmansee, Carol, 613 W. Washington, read out 4-8-10, \$2,619.23. Total Utility \$11,611.47.

Daniels, Wanda, Weed abatement, 409 South, assessed in 2010, \$80.54; Harpst, John, weed abatement, 305 N. Second, assessed in 2010, \$236.36; Schlegel, Randy, weed abatement, 320 S. First, assessed in 2010, \$80.04; Speer, Gerald, weed abatement, 602 N. Second, \$65.04; Stoffregen, Fred, weed and property abatement, 408 South, assessed in 2010, \$1,701.04; Taylor, Allan, weed abatement, Echo Acres, 326 S. State, 313 W. Washington, \$196.33 assessed in 2010, \$403.87; Wilcox, Virgil and Donna, Landfill fee, 613 W. Washington, \$25.16. Grand total of utility and property abatements are \$14,203.52.

Adonation of \$350 will be given to Leadership Norton County to help pay for the 2010-2011 Leadership class trip to Topeka and the graduation banquet.

"We usually sponsor two class members and this year we did not sponsor anyone," said Rob Lawson, City Administrator.

Jeff Otter said the committee had met with Leslie Bell to discuss the Northwest Kansas Library System's lease that is coming up. The system is downsizing and will not have the talking books room anymore.

The Finance committee has discussed the possibility of using the talking books area for city purposes. Rob Lawson said he has estimated the cost for a separate entrance with handicapped accessibility and some walls to be \$4,083. The committee is considering utilizing part of the city owned building for the police department. The Finance committee will have further discussion on the use of the space.

Donna Foley reported on the Chamber breakfast. Brook Dix,

the new Chamber Director was introduced at the breakfast. The Public Safety Committee discussed the code enforcement issues and will address the three large abatement projects each year in addition to smaller projects. She said the committee met Wotan, the newest member of the police department. Wotan is the department's drug sniffing dog.

She said that video cameras have been installed at the Recreation Center. The cameras will

increase security at the center.

The Public Works Committee met with Holly Puga, Dennis Maybon and Jerry Jones regarding their ongoing drainage problems. Dennis and Holly will take steps on their own personal property to try to alleviate some of the problems. A motion was made and approved to have the Public Works crew proceed with checking with the County to address the drainage issues on the north side of Armory Drive.

Roberta Ryan reported that the Economic Development is having nationally known speaker, Cinda Baxter, come on Feb. 15 to the American Legion. This is a free seminar for all business owners.

Upcoming meetings are Feb. 7: Public Safety Committee, 5 p.m.; Utility Committee, 5:30 p.m.; Feb. 14: Parks Committee, 5:30 p.m.; Feb. 16: City Council Meeting, 5:30 p.m.; Feb. 28: Public Works Committee, 5 p.m.; Finance Committee, 5:30 p.m. All meetings are open to the public.

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HOURS — MONDAY-FRIDAY: 9-5
SATURDAY: 9-NOON

Happy Valentine's Day

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VALENTINE'S SPECIALS:

- Choco and Raspberry Was \$13.95, NOW \$11.95
- Tequila Rose Gift Set Was \$29.95, NOW \$21.95
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SWEET VALENTINE'S DAY SPECIALS SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12

♥12 Oz. Prime Rib Dinner for Two-\$34.95
(Includes a Potato and Salad Bar)

♥Surf and Turf-12 Oz. Prime Rib and Crab Legs Dinner for Two - \$54.95
(Includes a Potato and Salad Bar)

Come Celebrate on Saturday, February 12
Dinner Specials for Couples and Complimentary Champagne
Serving: Steaks, Salmon and Crab Legs
5:30 - 9:00 p.m. - Please call for Reservations

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