

WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
SISTERS CITY COUNCIL
520 E. CASCADE AVENUE
DECEMBER 16, 2010

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lon Kellstrom Mayor
Bill Merrill Council President
Jerry Bogart Councilor
Pat Thompson Councilor

STAFF PRESENT:

Eileen Stein City Manager
Pauline Hardie Comm Dev Director
Brad Grimm Public Works Director
Lisa Young Finance Director

ABSENT:

Sharlene Weed Councilor

ABSENT:

Kathy Nelson City Recorder

GUESTS:

David Asson Councilor-elect
Wendy Holzman Councilor-elect
Mac Hay Economic Development Manager
Patty Vandiver President, Sisters Chamber of Commerce
David Crabtree President, Gutenberg College
Peter Weirenga Provost, Gutenberg College

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 a.m. by Mayor Kellstrom.

A. Economic Development Opportunity: Gutenberg College

Economic Development Manager Mac Hay introduced David Crabtree, President, and Peter Weirenga, Provost, of Eugene-based Gutenberg College, stating they were in attendance to make a presentation and answer questions about Gutenberg College and its consideration of a move to Sisters. **Mr. Crabtree** detailed that Gutenberg College is 30 years old, having first been established as a program of biblical exegesis at the University of Oregon (UO). He stated over time the college disassociated with UO and evolved into a “*Great Books*” institution. He stated Gutenberg is a four year, accredited college that offers a bachelor’s degree in liberal arts. **Mr. Crabtree** discussed the educational objectives of Gutenberg College and its curriculum.

Mr. Weirenga stated current enrollment was 27 students, a decline from the 50 students it once had, which he attributed to the recession. He reported the college will reach its maximum capacity in its current location, an old sorority house next to the UO campus when enrollment reaches 50 students and the college would like to expand to 150 students. **Mr. Crabtree** discussed the composition of the student body which includes several international students. He discussed the reasons the college is attracted to Sisters including the sense of community and how a move would enrich the educational experience of its students.

Councilor Thompson asked whether the move would allow Gutenberg to increase its enrollment and if so, how Gutenberg planned to market itself. **Mr. Crabtree** replied it would and discussed how the college already reaches out to prospective students. He stated the Internet and word of

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mouth have been the college's most successful means of attracting students to Gutenberg.

Councilor Thompson asked what other marketing methods would be helpful if Gutenberg had an unlimited budget. **Mr. Crabtree** replied that travel by faculty to speak to groups of students about the college would also be a useful marketing tool. **Mr. Weirenga** discussed the current debate within higher education about how to train students for the workforce in the 21st century. He stated that many are returning to the idea that colleges and universities should educate students in the classical liberal arts to help train them to be critical thinkers rather than training students for a particular profession. He stated Gutenberg looks for prospective students who are interested in the idea of a classical liberal arts education.

Councilor Thompson asked whether Gutenberg would expand its curriculum if it located to a larger facility. **Mr. Crabtree** explained that all students at Gutenberg take the same curriculum so if the college and facility expands, the curriculum would likely expand as well, but not necessarily with more electives. He discussed how their programs could blend in with community events and how the college could provide some community classes. **Mr. Weirenga** added another potential avenue of expansion could be in offering graduate degrees.

Councilor Merrill asked whether the college provides math and science classes on its own. **Mr. Weirenga** replied it does. He added that he could see the college as being a resource for Sisters School District by providing additional training opportunities for high school math and science teachers. He stated an education at Gutenberg instills a sense of unbelievable curiosity in its students.

Mayor Kellstrom asked the Gutenberg officials if they could flesh out the "*Great Books*" philosophy in more detail. **Mr. Crabtree** discussed the history of the "*Great Books*" educational curriculum originally written by Mortimer Adler of St. John's College. He explained it is based on the works of 142 authors of classical literature written throughout the ages with works that include the Gilgamesh Epic, Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Cassius, and books of the Old Testament. More recent works include Solzynitzen, Wolfe, Voltaire and Rosseau. **Mr. Crabtree** stated that Gutenberg students learn directly from these authors and thinkers, rather than learning about them through textbooks. He stated the educational outcome is radically different for students learning from the original source. He added that through this process, students learn about math, science, the arts, economics and other subjects.

Councilor-elect Wendy Holzman asked who accredits Gutenberg College. **Mr. Crabtree** replied that Gutenberg is accredited by the State of Oregon and by the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools, but it is not accredited by the more regional accreditation bodies such as the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. He stated this has been a limitation for some students going onto graduate schools but not a significant one as students have gone onto graduate programs at schools such as St. John's, Marquette University and Boston College. He stated Gutenberg's preferred smaller size would always be one limiting factor in receiving a wider accreditation and it was an issue the faculty discussed periodically.

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Mayor Kellstrom asked how many faculty members are employed by the college. **Mr. Crabtree** replied Gutenberg employs six full-time faculty members, two part-time faculty members and five support staff. **Councilor Thompson** asked whether the faculty would relocate to Sisters. **Mr. Crabtree** stated the faculty would come, but it is less clear about support staff as some work on a volunteer basis. He stated faculty relocation was an issue in Gutenberg's decision not to relocate to Sisters when it originally considered the move three years ago, but circumstances for some staff members has changed and made them more open to the possibility of relocation.

Chamber President Patty Vandiver asked whether students have a requirement for community service. **Mr. Crabtree** stated it is not required but many still do as it instills valuable real-world experience for students. He added he felt that would work well within Sisters with its strong sense of community. **Mr. Weirenga** discussed a recent experience where a group of students helped an elderly couple with a move. He stated Gutenberg students are clearly community-minded and he felt they would get involved where they could. **Ms. Vandiver** followed up by asking whether Gutenberg students have jobs while they attend school. **Mr. Weirenga** replied that typically students do have part-time jobs to help pay for their education.

Economic Development Manager Hay asked about Gutenberg's tuition and whether it would be seeking incentives to come to Sisters. **Mr. Crabtree** stated that Gutenberg's tuition is \$11,000 per year which does not include housing or meals costs. He stated the college does not accept federal assistance and would not be seeking incentives of any kind.

Councilor Merrill asked whether Gutenberg has a dormitory facility. **Mr. Crabtree** stated it does and that they would like to provide residential housing for students in Sisters. **Councilor Merrill** asked whether that was where part of the support staff was employed and **Mr. Crabtree** replied it was. **Councilor Merrill** asked about Gutenberg's facility on the McKenzie River. **Mr. Weirenga** replied the only facility Gutenberg has is its building in Eugene. He stated the college grew out of an organization called the McKenzie Study Center.

Chamber President Vandiver asked whether there were opportunities for Gutenberg to partner with Central Oregon Community College (COCC). **Mr. Crabtree** replied he was not sure but that there might be opportunities to collaborate. **Mr. Weirenga** added that Gutenberg has and can do community education classes. He stated they have also had students who've supplemented their education at other schools, such as the Fine Arts program, at UO and the Nursing program at Lane Community College.

Economic Development Manager Hay thanked the Gutenberg officials for their presentation and answering the questions from the City Council and others. He reminded everyone about a community meeting about Gutenberg that evening at 5:00 p.m. at the Sisters Library and invited everyone to attend.

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Stein, City Manager

Lon Kellstrom, Mayor