

**MAYOR'S NEIGHBORHOOD ROUNDTABLE SUMMARY**  
**July 11, 2011**

Jon Carlson, Mayor's Aide for Stronger, Safer Neighborhoods, started the meeting at 5:35 P.M. Monday, July 11, 2011, in the Mayor's Conference Room, County/City Building, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Eighteen citizens and eleven staff attended:

Jeff Schwebke	Arnold Heights NA	Matthew Roque	College View NA
Alice Epstein	Country Club NA	Carolyn Brandle	Eastridge NA
Ruth Johnson	Hartley NA	Dianna Wright	Highlands NA
Myrna Coleman	Highlands NA	Scott Richert	Indian Village NA
Larry Evermann	Irvingdale NA	Dennis Hecht	Meadowlane RA
V. T. Miller	Meadowlane RA	William Carver	Near South NA
Scott Zager	Southwood NA	Fred Freytag	Witherbee NA
Jayne Sebby	Woods Park NA	Russell Miller	Lincoln Neigh-hood Alliance
Mike Renken	NeighborWorks - Lincoln	Stephani Ruiz	10/11 News
Jonathan Cook	City Council	Laurel Erickson	Health Dept.
Wynn Hjermsstad	Urban Development	David Ensign	Urban Development
Travis Davis	Urban Development	Alex Leonard	Stronger, Safer
Justin Lowndes	Cleaner, Greener	Rick Hoppe	Mayor's Office
Lin Quenzer	Mayor's Office	Jon Carlson	Mayor's Office

Mayor Beutler

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Jon Carlson opened the meeting and asked participants to introduce themselves. Attendees checked in on the sign-in sheet.

Cleaner, Greener Lincoln announced they need volunteers for a Light Bulb Swap, Saturday, July 16, Noon to 4:00 P.M. (See [www.cg@ ^} c](#))

Jon announced the proposed draft Comprehensive Plan (LPlan 2040) is available: <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/lplan2040/plan.htm>

**MAYOR'S COMMENTS**

Mayor Beutler presented his rationale for the proposed budget then fielded questions and comments from the Roundtable. (See [www@ ^} c](#))

City Council Public Hearing on the proposed budget, August 8, 2:30 - 10:30 P.M.  
The City Council will vote on the proposed budget on August 10, 2011.

<http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/finance/budget/mayor12.htm>  
<http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/mayor/media/2011/071011.htm>  
<http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/mayor/media/2011/071211.htm>

### **MARKETING SPONSORSHIP FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES – MAYOR’S OFFICE**

Rick Hoppe, Chief of Staff for Mayor Beutler, presented information on marketing sponsorships for public facilities. His discussion is separate from the Haymarket Arena. A trend in government in various places is initiating marketing agreements. Such an agreement allows the private sector to use public assets as a communication means with government generating revenue. Late last year, the City initiated a Request for Proposal for a city marketing firm. Of the five proposals, four companies clearly handled facility naming rights, but one stood out as a sponsorship-marketing firm – Active Network. The owner, Don Schulte, conceived the idea in Huntington Beach, California. Could a community generate revenue if they engaged in marketing agreements? Pepsi gave the community \$500,000.00 per year for being the exclusive soft-drink provider for that community. This marketing agreement developed into Pepsi logo trash barrels on the beaches and Pepsi products in their public facilities. Huntington Beach has engaged in more marketing agreements and generates significant revenue. The City of Lincoln selected Active Network as the City’s marketing agent largely because they had the experience, but also they expressed sensitivity to community values. Additionally, they developed My City web page that involves people in their city – supporting projects and making donations for civic causes, e.g., Union Plaza. The contract pays a one-time flat rate of \$50,000.00 plus 10% of revenue generated.

After signing the contract, Active Network visited Lincoln to conduct blue-sky sessions to discover community assets they might package and present to private vendors. Some locales market potholes – fill the pothole and stamp a logo on it. An employee identified this opportunity during a blue-sky session. In the blue-sky session in Lincoln, department directors and other employees brainstormed city assets, e.g., the municipal services building on I-180, water bills, the City web site, etc. From the blue-sky sessions, Active Network learned much about our community. They also met with community organizations currently involved in fund raising to develop a good working relationship and to avoid conflict of efforts. In another meeting, Active Network met with several community leaders to identify community standards – how far is too far in marketing sponsorships. Citizen groups will have opportunities to evaluate the various aspects of the marketing plan so Lincoln maintains community integrity.

The City of Lincoln impressed Active Network. They thought Lincoln was larger – about the size of Austin, Texas (pop. c. 790,000) – based on the number and depth of amenities and services Lincoln offers. Also, the quality of our neighborhoods stunned them compared with places they have visited. Even when Rick drove them to some neighborhoods who are not doing so well socially-economically, they kept asking, “When are we going to get there?” They felt our neighborhood quality is an excellent marketing sell for the various corporate offices Active Network will visit to develop a marketing plan. It means Lincoln not only has the target audience to buy the products, but they are not robbing Peter to pay Paul, so to speak.

Currently, Active Network is developing and packaging a marketing plan by looking at Lincoln's assets, our vendors and talking with their national contacts. When they return August 12, Active Network will offer their sponsorship plan – identifying various packages. The packages will include various parts, *e.g.*, at pet licensing the owner receives a coupon for products at a pet vendor; that vendor sponsors the dog run park; and animal control vehicles display that vendor's bumper sticker. By mid-September, Active Network will present Lincoln's marketing plan. After approval, they will market the packages to the local and the national business community.

This year's budget identifies \$100,000.00 projected revenue generated from this marketing plan. The potential is truly unknown. Lincoln is attractive to many vendors. This marketing effort is very positive and can grow – generating revenue in a non-traditional way. The notion is to keep these newly generated revenues in the areas that have generated them; however, they have not decided that yet.

Contact Rick Hoppe at 402-441-7511 or [rhoppe@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:rhoppe@lincoln.ne.gov)

- to sign up for the citizen comment group
- to ask questions or make comments

Rick fielded questions and comments from the Roundtable.

### **SET AUGUST AGENDA**

The next meeting of the Mayor's Neighborhood Roundtable is Monday, August 8, 2011, 5:30 P.M., in the Mayor's Conference Room, County/City Building, 555 South 10th Street, **3<sup>rd</sup> floor**. Next month's agenda will include a presentation on the draft Comprehensive Plan (LPlan 2040).

### **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 P.M.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR LIGHT BULB SWAP

The Lincoln Energy Challenge is seeking volunteers to replace regular light bulbs with compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) and to educate renters on energy efficiency Saturday, July 16. Volunteers will meet at noon and work in central-Lincoln apartment buildings until 4 p.m.

The goal is to install at least 2000 energy efficient CFLs, which use one-fourth the energy of incandescent bulbs and can last up to six times longer. Organizers estimate the replacement of 2,000 bulbs could save landlords and tenants up to \$7500 on energy costs per year and have the same environmental impact as planting 2000 trees.

Volunteers will be trained on the safe installation of CFLs, and landlords will accompany all volunteers into rental properties. Volunteers will receive a free meal after the event, and a limited number of t-shirts also are available. Volunteers must be 16 years or older to participate, and groups are welcome. To volunteer for the Lincoln Energy Challenge Light Swap, contact Stephen Hassler at [shassler@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:shassler@lincoln.ne.gov) or 402-441-7658 by July 13.

In addition to receiving the free lighting upgrade, residents will receive educational information on the Lincoln Energy Challenge. The Challenge, which ends in August, is coordinated by Mayor Beutler's Cleaner Greener Lincoln initiative in partnership with several community organizations including Stronger Safer Neighborhoods, Community Action Partnerships, AmeriCorps and Lincoln Electric System (LES). Residents have several options for participating in the Challenge:

- Sign up online at [green.lincoln.ne.gov](http://green.lincoln.ne.gov).
- Call 402-441-7658.
- Mail a postcard available at many locations throughout the community.
- Stop by the Lincoln Energy Challenge office at 2143 "O" St.
- Contact a partner agency.

Everyone who pledges will receive a free "Powerkit!" full of information, ideas and resources. The website also lists easy and cost-effective improvements and will have information on upcoming workshops and programs. Those who share their progress with the campaign are eligible to enter weekly drawings and win prizes donated by local businesses.

**Mayor Chris Beutler**  
**2011-12 City Budget Summary**  
**July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

**Attachment 2**

**Projected deficit: about \$9.3 million**

*Causes:*

Declining and/or flat revenues - Lincoln's primary sources of revenue - sales and property taxes - have been flat or declining for the past several years. In addition, the City property tax levy has not been raised since 1993 for anything except voter-approved bonds. The national recession exacerbated this trends.

The City has little control over employee costs due to State-mandated salary and benefit comparability.

For nearly a decade, the structural imbalance has been addressed with one-time revenues that solve the problem short-term but create deeper deficits in succeeding years.

The State has eliminated aid to cities and other revenue sources, adding \$1.8 million to the City deficit and forcing greater reliance on property taxes.

***As a result of these trends, Lincoln's per-employee cost has risen 11.6% while revenues have risen only 2.8%.***

**Lincoln's city property tax levy:**

Lincoln's levy is 28.8 cents for the current 2010-11 budget compared to 49.9 cents for Omaha.

Lincoln's levy is 11<sup>th</sup> of the 15 largest Nebraska cities.

The City levy is 14.4% of your total property tax bill.

The City only uses 51.4% of its State-allotted levy authority compared to 99.3% for LPS and 83.3% for Lancaster County.

**Mayor Beutler's past four budgets have relied primarily on budget cuts to close the structural imbalance.**

***Mayor Beutler has cut 116 jobs net (more than any Mayor in City history) and decreased services by \$4.5 million during his first term.***

**General Fund Budget Increases 2007-20011**

2007-08:	1.60% (CPI was 1.96%)
2008-09:	1.34% (CPI was 5.39%)
2009-10:	.04% (CPI was -1.51%)
2010-11:	3.63% (CPI was 1.16%)

**Four year average: 1.87% (four-year CPI was 1.77%)**

***Since public safety is 50% of the General Fund budget and the area most highly prioritized by the public, cuts have fallen primarily on other areas such as parks, senior services and libraries.***

### **Reorganizations:**

- ◆Parks and Recreation
  - Community Learning Centers transitioned to nonprofits
  - Before- and after-school programs transitioned to nonprofits
- ◆Aging Partners - severe programmatic cuts
- ◆Library- restructured to eliminate 5.2 positions
- ◆Public Works and Utilities - middle management reorganization
- ◆Planning Department - management changes
- ◆Health Department - middle management reorganization
- ◆Human Rights/Affirmative Action - eliminated positions and moved to Law Department
- ◆Women's Commission - eliminated

### **Examples of major program cuts:**

**2010-11:** 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration; Star City Holiday Parade; StarTran bus routes; Police middle school resource officers; cuts in Fire (\$75,000) and Police (\$375,000); privatized downtown parking enforcement

**2009-10:** Cuts in non-General Funded areas: 3.5 net FTEs in Building and Safety; 8 net FTEs in Water and Wastewater; General Fund cuts: Police Victim/ Witness assistant; Community Outreach specialists and parking officers; 5 net FTEs in Parks. Total FTEs eliminated – 22.94

**2008-09:** StarTran cut by \$589,000; Bennet Martin Library hours cut

**2007-08:** Closed Calvert senior center and ended Aging Lifetime Health program; CIP contribution cut to only \$64,000; Parks community forestry cuts; Parks lose over 8,000 hour of seasonal labor; Health Department dental program and air quality service cuts; Police lose 5 positions including an Assistant Chief; Fire cut by \$350,000

**● Mayor Beutler reduced the 2-to-1 retirement match for the first time in 40 years (now 1.29-to - for new employees in 3 of 4 unions) and has slowed the growth of employee salaries.**

## 2011-12 Budget

- **“All Cuts” Budget- if the City relied on an “all cuts” budget based on the City program prioritization (lincoln.ne.gov), the following would occur, along with many other cuts:**

- ◆ Over 90 parks would close.
- ◆ 12 Firefighters and 6 Police Officers would be cut.
- ◆ 7 swimming pools would close.
- ◆ 3 libraries would close, and all libraries would lose an entire day of service.
- ◆ StarTran would end Saturday and mid-day weekday service (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.)
- ◆ Aging Partners would have to slash programs that keep seniors healthy, active and independent.
- ◆ New roads that bring jobs and growth would not be built, and older streets would not be rehabilitated, increasing potholes and wear and tear on vehicles.

### Mayor Beutler 2011-12 Budget Goals

1. Fix the historic structural budget imbalance.
2. Save the quality of life services that would be decimated under an “all cuts” budget.
3. Make progress on roads.

### General Fund budget solutions:

- **Program cuts                      \$2.2 million    (35.5 jobs)**

Major cuts: Close fire station; close libraries one-half day a week and 3 hours Sunday as well as middle management cuts; StarTran Saturday service cut by one-third; Aging RSVP program ended.

- **Lincoln Electric System Shift              \$2.7 million**

LES will become responsible for street lights and related items in the General Fund, freeing up money to save other programs.

- **User fees/fines                      \$1.0 million**

New fees for Parks and Health services and parking tickets

- **Revenue increases              \$4.0 million**

The property tax levy would increase to 31.6 cents from the current 28.8 cents. Lincoln's levy would remain 11<sup>th</sup> of the 15 largest Nebraska cities.

The increase would have a 1.38% impact on your total property tax bill.

Key programs would be saved for \$3.49 per month on a \$150,000 house

● **“Rainy Day” or cash reserve fund**

\$500,000 would be placed in the fund as part of the LES shift.

**New streets built and current streets repaired:**

\$3 million in new construction (part of LES shift)

\$4.1 million in rehabilitation (three-year ramp up of wheel tax in increases of \$10, \$5 and \$5)

**Total LES shift** **\$6.0 million**

General Fund to save programs

New street construction

Rainy Day fund