

Norfolk Insider

City of Norfolk, NE

www.ci.norfolk.ne.us

April 23, 2014

“Norfolk 101: Citizens Academy Completed”

They watched a Taser deploy (on a cardboard cut-out), a computer hard drive shredded to bits, and toured many locations that most Norfolk citizens have never seen. The members of the first ever Norfolk 101: Citizens Academy recently told about their experiences from the eight weeks of seminars that covered all aspects of City of Norfolk government operations.

“I have lived in Norfolk all my life and I never knew all it takes to run a city,” said David Maggart. He and his wife, Becky, were two of 17 participants in the course that was held every Tuesday night from March 4 to April 15 concluding with a



special recognition at the Norfolk City Council meeting Monday night.

The Academy was put together last fall by Diane Becker, Communications Specialist for the City of Norfolk, as a way for Norfolk citizens to learn more about City government.

“I had seen where other communities around the country were sponsoring

these types of programs. Mayor Sue Fuchtman and City Administrator Shane Weidner were very interested in starting one in Norfolk as many times citizens aren’t aware of what’s going on behind the scenes to provide clean water, safe streets and recreation to citizens,” Becker said.

In the first session, participants heard presentations from the Mayor, Weidner, the Human Resources Director, the City Clerk and the Finance Director. The second session was on public safety and included a tour of the fire and police divisions. In the third session, the group toured the library and information technology division. At the fourth session, the group met at the West Water Treatment plant for a tour and learned about community development. At the fifth session, they had presentations from the housing and economic development divisions. The sixth session was at the water pollution control plant and transfer station and the seventh session covered the parks and streets divisions.

“The average citizen really has no idea how complicated it is running a city our size. Everyone should have the opportunity that I had to see first-hand how well our city is run,” said Scott Williams, one of the participants.

Participants in this first Norfolk 101 Citizens Academy were: Jim Brenneman, Mike Drahota, Duane Goff, Paul Hughes, Becky Maggart, David Maggart, Christian Ohl, Clarey Primm, Sherri Primm, Diana Rizzo, Pete Rizzo, John Schmitt, Tom Skaff, Steve Sothan, Jamie Wichman, Scott Williams, and Duane Wolff.

Another Norfolk 101: Citizens Academy is planned for this fall. Participants must be at least 18 years old and a citizen of Norfolk. There is no fee to participate although it's asked that every effort be made to attend all the sessions. There is a limit of 20 participants. For more information or to register, contact Diane Becker at 402-844-2034 or email cityofnorfolk@gmail.com.