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“Joint Effort to Bring Event to Downtown Norfolk”



The result of collaboration and great weather on July 29 was a well-attended event in downtown Norfolk that looks like it will be replicated next summer.

Representatives from the Norfolk Art Center, the City of Norfolk Economic Development Division/Norfolk Area Economic Development Council (NAEDC), the Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce, the Norfolk Area Visitors Bureau, the Emerging Leaders and the Small Business Resource Team met Wednesday to discuss the event which was made up of lots of activities.

On July 29th, downtown Norfolk businesses started the day with sale items on the sidewalks and specials to passers-by. From 4:00 pm to 11:00 pm, the Hear Nebraska Concert,

sponsored by the Norfolk Art Center with the help of various donors, was the entertainment from two stages in a parking lot at Third Street and Norfolk Avenue.

The Small Business Resource Team organized the Norfolk Area Food Truck Rumble that ran from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm on Third Street between Norfolk Avenue and Madison Avenue with seven food trucks competing to be voted as the best in the competition. The Kiwanis Emerging Leaders group manned a beer garden that evening underneath the giant Johnny Carson mural next to the stages. It was also Cruise Night with classic cars being driven up and down Norfolk Avenue as spectators sat on benches or lawn chairs along the sidewalks.

The group Wednesday night discussed the successes of July 29th- many people and lots of economic activity for downtown businesses- and also the challenges – long waits for food.

“We didn’t know what to expect. We had planned on around 250 people and ended up with about 1,000. It was perfect weather and a great time to walk downtown, shop, eat and listen to music,” said Candace Bossard, Economic Development Coordinator with the City of Norfolk/NAEDC, and one of the organizers of the food truck competition.

The group already decided to host another downtown event next year with a few tweaks mostly having to do with additional seating and more vendors.

“We’re excited to hold this community event next year and invite anyone willing to be a sponsor for music or other activities to contact the Norfolk Art Center,” said Benjamin Baker, Operations Coordinator of the Art Center.