

## Don Merkes

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**From:** Steve Krueger  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 07, 2013 1:13 AM  
**To:** Kip Golden; Chris Klein; Michael Taylor.; Stan Sevenich; Mark Langdon; Daniel Zelinski; Jim Englebert; Kevin Benner  
**Cc:** Don Merkes  
**Subject:** RE: City of Menasha Common Council Members

Mr. Kip Golden,

I am responding to the email sent to all elected officials in Menasha regarding the Appleton Regional Partnership situation. I was one of three Aldermen who voted against the city's participation in the venture on several grounds, however, I would like to address the current state of affairs which you implore the council to continue backing.

When Larry Burkhardt and yourself came before the Menasha council on November 12, 2012 and gave your presentation, the venture was sold as the Fox Cities Economic Development Corporation using your campaign slogan Ignite Fox Cities. Our community developer, Mr. Burkhardt and yourself explained we were investing taxpayer money in Fox Cities Economic Development Corporation and all marketing information given to the Menasha council signified the same thing. Not at any moment did you, or anyone else, indicate the name was going to be changed to anything other than Fox Cities Economic Development Corporation even though your letter indicates "others" knew about the name change prior to the unveiling...I am also a bit annoyed on the declaration anyone on the council has implied the organizational name should include Menasha. You seem a little confused as to the issue so I will take this liberty to clarify the overall sentiment along with a reminder of what your organization sold to the council, which included a brand...not just the mechanics of an organization.

Through talking with Mr. Burkhardt and our community developer I was informed that the Ignite Fox Cities Advisory Council made the determination, prior to soliciting the city, the name was going to incorporate the word "Appleton" as part of its configuration. I advise you take the time to replay the Menasha Common Council Budget Hearing from November 12, 2012 on the City of Menasha website and pay close attention to the concerns Aldermen had involving this very maneuver and how you and Larry Burkhardt pitched the idea and the assurances you gave. As vice-chairman to Economic Development I will have to assume you were aware of the intended direction the organization was going to pursue despite the presentation we observed. The perception the organization has given me personally entails a bait-and-switch move where realization that informing the Menasha council to the intended use of the Appleton name would have prevented the access to our \$17,500, a deliberate omission of information tactic was used to garner the desired vote. Whether or not the Fox Cities Chamber likes it, the money our great city utilizes is derived from taxes and is accountable to our residents, and this council (as I would hope any elected body) is not appreciative of hidden primary objectives conveniently forgotten about that would have effected voting results. The way I am reading the situation, the anger is over a deception and not some suggestion it's a simple hang-up over a name. My first question to you would be if the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce is that obtuse in realizing such an implementation would ruffle feathers from one or more communities it represents, how can it properly embody that community and do it justice on a national or world-wide level?

As for the Fox Cities name...the "Fox Cities" Chamber approached us by means of "Fox Cities" Economic Development Corporation utilizing a campaign titled Ignite "Fox Cities". The media kit supplied to the Menasha council states by working together we can make the "Fox Cities Region" an even better place to live and work, the purpose is to aggressively market and promote the "Fox Cities" region, improve the quality of life for the residents of the "Fox Cities" region, and even the budget/staff comparisons listed "Fox Cities" as the entity. For anyone to assert the Fox Cities brand has failed is disingenuous at best, our Fox Cities is easily

found through Google, Mapquest and Google Earth...any lack of recognition is not the short coming of any community, rather it comes from those who are paid to promote it.

By yours and the Fox Cities Chamber's own admission there is not a single entity in the Fox Cities that is a draw, and for some to utilize Milwaukee or Chicago as a parallel example to what is trying to be achieved is a bit insincere since those municipalities are a natural draw because of size, population and history. What is being done here is attempting to make Appleton a draw instead of the proper entity (which was marketed to the Menasha council by your group) the Fox Cities. It is not a nationally recognized practice within the economic development industry to use the municipality with the largest population as part of the entity name. Mr. Larry Burkhardt did not take that direction in Colorado when he formed Upstate Colorado and neither did the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership (includes Fort Wayne), Research Triangle Regional Partnership (includes Durham, NC), Cedar Valley Regional Partnership (includes Waterloo, IA) and the Regional Economic Partnership (includes Milwaukee).

The Menasha City Council was asked to invest taxpayer money in a partnership, as you clearly stated in your letter a partnership is not supposed to give any particular municipality an advantage or preferential treatment and will not be tolerated by your organization and never will be. I highly suggest your organization abide by its own words and stop this hypocritical charade. It is extremely improper to solicit investment money and turn around manipulating the brand name into a completely different form without approval from the very people subsidizing your venture. I will stress one more time, the brand that was marketed and sold was "Fox Cities"...not Appleton.

The City of Menasha did not just invest into an organization's actions or mechanics, we invested in a complete concept and package which included a brand name...Fox Cities. Yes Kip, a name is important because it is the brand and a large portion of the marketing tool. I am very confident the total intent of the approved funding from Menasha was to further brand and market "Fox Cities"...not Appleton.

Lastly, for the sake of your organization I hope the intent is not to demonize Menasha for the chamber's shortcomings. All I have witnessed thus far is a strategic demonizing of my colleague's legitimate complaints deriving from the chamber's inappropriate actions after soliciting for, and being granted taxpayer money. This was not a simple name change, this was changing the entire brand. I voted against the investment and if the organization is unable to realize the inherent problem with the action taken it just solidifies the concerns I had from the onset.

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