

WASCO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Thursday JULY 21, 2011

Mosier Grange

900 Fourth St, Mosier, OR

ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Chair Joan Silver, Dan Durow, Frank Kay, Donella Polehn, Mike Zingg, Andrea Klaas and Carina Schmidt

ABSENT: Dan Spatz, Gay Melvin and Fred Justesen

GUESTS: John Roberts, Kathy Fitzpatrick, and Jill Baum

EDC Staff: Jessica Metta and Anna Tompkins

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Joan Silver called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF May 19, 2011 MINUTES: Andrea Klaas moved to accept minutes as presented. Frank Kay seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

MOSIER UPDATE

Jill Baum from Mosier School Team gave an update on their project to build a facility that would function both as a Middle School and a community center. The needs of the new facility have put the cost around \$4 million, and therefore the project has been broken down into phases. The goal is to acquire a vacant gas station site and then campaign to move the project onto the next stage. The team is currently working with MCEDD to explore Community Development Block Grant option and other community grant funding opportunities.

Kathy Fitzpatrick gave an update on other Mosier projects. The UPRR parcel purchase is moving forward after receiving an OIB grant to hire a consultant to do EIS and planning work on the property. The co-mingling wells in the community were rated the worst in the state so the City has been working to repair them and is partnering with the Soil and Water Conservation District. A recent failure and loss of water in the aquifer is under investigation and could require drilling a new well. Lastly, she gave an update on the quarry site, the only Industrial zoned property in Mosier, which the City is making steady progress with ODOT to gain control of property. They recently received grants to restore Rock Creek which will help. The Board passed along their congratulations to the perseverance of the City of Mosier for the long term projects that are seeing progress.

STAFF REPORT

Jessica Metta gave staff her report and updated the board on PubTalk which will be starting back up for the fall on September 20, 2011 at the Sunshine Mill Winery in The Dalles. She

requested that the board help get the word out about PubTalk to invite entrepreneurs to present, as well as encourage others to attend.

Jessica also proposed to the Board the opportunity to give the “Basics of Going Solar” presentation in Wasco County. She gave this presentation in Sherman County and had a lot of community interest. She requested feedback from the board on whether to move forward. The board responded favorably on the opportunity to present in the various cities in Wasco County and gave suggestions of organizations to present to in The Dalles. After discussion the board agreed to let Jessica move forward with solar presentations in Wasco County.

INDUSTRIAL LANDS PROJECT

To achieve the Industrial Lands Project Jessica Metta presented to the EDC an option to create a template of information desired by those looking for land which will be consistent countywide and easy to read. The goal of the project is to be value added and beneficial to the county, without spending funds. Jessica suggested utilizing OregonProspector.com, Oregon’s official online industrial land directory, to post available properties. She passed around a handout with an example of property posted on Oregon Prospector, and noted that only Industrial Zoned property, or commercial property that is suitable for traded-sector industries, can be posted in Prospector. She also handed out a matrix created by Hood River County of available land and Industrial property, as another possible option to list “B list” properties.

Discussion among board about the project focused on compiling a comprehensive inventory of Industrial lands that would be utilized by developers and maintained to stay current. John Roberts handed out different County land analysis plans from the State of Oregon. He provided a quick review of land findings from GIS analysis, that there are 21 Industrial zoned sites in unincorporated areas, about 200 acres total. Suggestions from the Board were to minimize print cost by posting information online, and to utilize current County GIS to make interactive viewing layers available to public. Jessica Metta had received a quote from GorgeGIS, a private GIS contracting company, to put GIS information online could cost between \$2,400 and \$2,800. Andrea Klaas made a motion to create a project team to explore options to get the County GIS information publicly accessible, Frank Kay seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

The board agreed the project team members to be Jessica Metta as team lead, with John Roberts, Andrea Klaas, Dan Durow and Joan Silver. Team will take comments and suggestions from the meeting to move forward with the project.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN DISCUSSION

Jessica Metta brought the board’s attention to the function of the Strategic Action Plan. Its purpose is to go beyond the needs and issues of the county and contain the Wasco County EDC’s goals, guidelines for action, as well as current projects. The board responded in favor of utilizing the Strategic Action Plan to sharpen the EDC’s focus and highlight the EDC’s work. Jessica Metta lead the discussion to the next steps, such as identifying a focus, establishing identity, and goals for the commission. The board discussed the possible outcomes of a structured action plan, and practicalities of keeping work within staff time.

A team was formed to make necessary additions to the Strategic Action Plan for the Wasco County EDC. The team for this project is Frank Kay, Mike Zingg, Dan Durow, Joan Silver and Carina Schmidt.

REGIONAL UPDATES

Joan Silver announced that federal funding for The Dalles Armory was approved through a bill recently passed. This is very good news as it has been over 15 years in the making to get funding for the project. The Dalles Business Team is a new formed group to be the “welcome wagon” for new businesses coming into the county.

Donella Polehn informed the board that the cherry harvest is almost over, though the rain did do damage there still was a good harvest and good prices for the fruit.

Frank Kay gave an update on the Vision Planning process happening in Maupin. He reminded the board that Riverfest has been moved from a fall to a spring event to extend the visitor season and set the tone for summer events. The volunteer group is partnering with the Maupin Area Chamber of Commerce to market and plan the event, next scheduled for May 2012.

Carina Schmidt gave an update for The Dalles Area Chamber, and focused on the concern of the vacant lots of downtown especially with Griffith Motors move from the east to west side.

Mike Zingg has been working with the Mosier design plan, and though he has recently moved to The Dalles he is still keeping contact with the City of Mosier as representative to the EDC.

Dan Durow shared his concern for the slow down of the City of The Dalles Dock project due to difficulties getting on the tribal council agenda. There is funding that is tied to a timeline and is concerned about losing funding for the project. He also mentioned that the new light display is set at the roundabout.

Andrea Klaas is working with businesses currently in the area that are getting ready to expand and working towards having those businesses locate locally on the industrial sites at the Port of The Dalles. She also noted that there has been activity at the aluminum site, because they are removing rock that had possible contamination.

John Roberts is working on the Wasco County Renewable Energy Plan to be released in September of this year.

Due to lack of a quorum at the next scheduled meeting, it was agreed by the board to move the meeting from September 15, 2011 to September 22, 2011 to have a quorum present.

Meeting Adjourned: 12:34 pm

-Minutes submitted by Anna Tompkins