

WASCO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Thursday, May 17, 2012

Polehn Farms

2121 Dry Hollow Road, The Dalles, OR

ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Chair Joan Silver, Frank Kay, Donella Polehn, Michael Zingg, Mary Kramer, Dan Spatz and Fred Justesen

GUESTS: Bruce Sorte, Commissioner Scott Hege and John Roberts

EDC Staff: Jessica Metta and Anna Tompkins

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Joan Silver called the meeting to order at 10:03 am. A quorum was present.

BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION CONCEPT

Mike Zingg gave an introduction and background of the project and his desire to know from the commission if there is an interest to develop a program for Wasco County. Bruce Sorte gave a presentation about the history and objective of the concept as well as explained the time commitment, potential hurdles and costs involved. He showed a film that gave an overview of the program and examples from communities that have had completed a BR&E program. In 2001 the outreach portion of the program was completed in Wasco County; however after September 11, 2001 the program lost momentum. After the presentation, the board asked Bruce questions regarding the program. The board wanted to know if the program could work in association with projects already underway in Wasco County such as the Main Street Program and Stronger Economies Together. Bruce stated that it may be difficult to join with other programs since the programs have different areas of focus but that they could be done simultaneously. The board discussed more of the cost and time commitment necessary for the program. Mike Zingg suggested the WCEDC look into acquiring a toolkit to start the process without having to commit to other upfront costs. The board decided to make July a planning session to work out logistics of how to move the program forward.

APRIL 2012 MINUTES

Frank Kay made a motion to accept the minutes for April 16, 2012 as presented. Mike Zingg seconded, motion passed unanimously.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT UPDATE

Jessica Metta gave a brief overview of the proposed agenda for the up coming Wasco County Economic Development Summit on July 10th in The Dalles. Northwest Natural has committed \$200 to cover refreshments. Jessica passed around a form to be filled out by attendees prior to the meeting and asked the board for input. The purpose of the summit is to build coordination and identify gaps to better serve the community. It was noted that SBDC should be added to list of invitees.

LOAN FUND UPDATE

Joan Silver gave an update to the community loan fund concept. She stated that the framework for implementation is in place but funding is unavailable for the loan from private foundations and government resources. She asked to the board for input on resources or grants available to raise funds.

STAFF REPORT

Jessica Metta reviewed the staff report. She was very happy to announce the Wasco County GIS intern from Uzbekistan has offered to update the online GIS system. She gave a follow up from the Tygh Valley Community Center, that she will be working with the volunteer group to help with grant writing to complete necessary projects for the building.

REGIONAL UPDATES

Frank Kay announced that Riverfest is on Memorial Day weekend and only a week away.

Dan Spatz stated that that the dock and festival park projects will be completed in June. He is waiting to hear back on a request to use the Readiness Center as match for federal funds for their workforce training center.

Mary Kramer works under Career and Workforce Programs at the Columbia Gorge Community College. She gave updates from Dufur that the Parks and Recreation new three-year tax levy was approved and there are funding match opportunities for the Dufur History Museum through the Miller Family Estate.

John Roberts gave an update on the energy facility siting regulations vote for referendum, but may not affect region. There is a project starting the permitting process near Antelope and hopes to see it come through.

The next meeting is a tour of southern Wasco County with lunch at Young Life Camp. Jessica recommended the board dress appropriately for walking.

Meeting Adjourned: 12:04 pm

-Minutes submitted by Anna Tompkins