

WASCO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 2018
9:00 am
Dufur City Hall
175 NE 3rd St., Dufur, OR 97021

ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Joan Silver, Terry Moore, Mary Kramer, Frank Kay, Dean McAllister, Kathy Ursprung, Nan Wimmers, Matthew Klebes

EDC STAFF: Carrie Pipinich, Lauren Hernandez

GUESTS: Scott Hege (Wasco County), Nate Stice (Regional Solutions), Sharon Dehart (Deschutes Rim Clinic), Dan Spatz (CGCC), Terry Stark (Tygh Valley Rural Fire Protection District), Dennis Beechler (TVRFPD), Dennis Morgan (Civic Auditorium), Jack Henderson (Dufur School District), Robert Wallace (Dufur School District), Kathy Bostick (City of Dufur), Brandon Beacham (City of Dufur), Brandon Mahon (Anderson Perry), Lynn Ewing (City of Maupin), Sue Knapp (City of Maupin, Deschutes Rim Clinic), Jackie Pennington (Wamic Water and Sanitary), Tyler Stone (Wasco County, Q-Life), Shilah Olson (Wasco County SWCD), Brent Molesworth (Wasco County SWCD),

ABSENT: Gary Grossman, Stan Kelsay

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kathy Ursprung called the meeting to order at 8:59 a.m.

DECEMBER 2017 EDC MINUTES:

Motion to approve the December 7, 2017 meeting minutes made by Frank Kay. Dean McAllister seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS PROCESS OVERVIEW:

Carrie Pipinich provided an overview of the Community Enhancement Projects process and reviewed current criteria for prioritization as outlined in the memo. Carrie noted the technical assistance ready has been moved out of the ranking process and will be noted in a separate column of the ranking spreadsheet. Commissioners should make notes in areas that may be priorities to give a starting point for conversation in February. Nan Wimmers asked for clarification that Commissioners should consider their top three projects for technical assistance. Carrie explained this indication would just give a beginning to conversation. Kathy Ursprung encouraged the Commissioners to ask if presenters need technical assistance, as some projects have more need in this area than others. Terry Moore asked if this year's ranking criteria was different from last year. Aside from moving technical assistance out of the ranking process, Carrie noted that the rest remained the same.

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT PRESENTATIONS:

White River Health District (dba Deschutes Rim Health Clinic) – Sharon DeHart reported that the Clinic has been serving Wasco County since 2007. Recently, other service providers have been added to the district but there is need for space to support them and others interested in having office hours in Maupin. The current modular unit cannot be added on to, so the clinic is trying to build a new facility. It is necessary for business to offer as much as possible within primary care services to continue to succeed in

the current market. Deschutes Rim Health Clinic is requesting \$2.2 million to help construct an approximate 8,500 sq/ft building. The clinic received a \$1 million grant from the Department of Administrative Services and a significant local contribution to the project. Sharon also reiterated the importance of fiber.

Columbia Gorge Community College – Dan Spatz reported there is a high need for career and trades training in the Columbia Gorge. Currently there is no facility for providing this type training and a need for a skills lab. Additionally, the college has had to turn students away because there is no place to train them and many do not consider CGCC as housing is challenging to find. CGCC received a \$7.3 million allocation from the State several years ago. This must be matched by 2019 or it goes away. Some of this financial investment can be used for housing and the college is completing a feasibility study with support from the City of The Dalles to determine if this type of development is viable. Kathy asked if the project required technical assistance. Dan replied any feedback on skills for the skill center would be appreciated.

Civic Auditorium Theatre Renovation – Dennis Morgan reported the legislature authorized \$745,000 to support renovation of the theater. Funds will be received in March of 2019. They also received a grant from Urban Renewal a few years ago for \$300,000, a local family pledged \$200,000, and another family gave \$50,000. Part of the \$200,000 has been used for new drywall and paint. With these funds they have made significant improvements in the theater as well as added insulation, fix roof leakage, and repaired collapsed duct work. Griffin Construction has been a great partner in the renovations. The theater is open for business again after completion of these projects and a management plan is being created. Because of the slow process of funding, the project will be completed in phases. When the first phase is done and the lobby is complete, the balcony area can be addressed. Once the balcony is addressed, the theater will seat 800. Matthew Klebes asked if the \$745,000 authorized by the legislature requires a match. Dennis replied no. The next phase of the project is to complete the lobby and create ADA access to the theater.

Tygh Valley Rural Fire Department – Dennis Beechler gave a brief history of Tygh Valley Rural Fire Department. A new building is needed to house equipment as the current building only holds three of their six vehicles. Three must be drained and parked outside in the winter which extends response times. This is particularly important as when responding to calls outside of Tygh Valley, the fire department must haul all of its water. The current building has poor insulation, no working space, and no water. The fire department is funded through donations of approximately \$7,000 per year. Dennis stated wildfire behavior will become even worse than it currently is, and it is necessary to have a building and facility that will allow the fire department to respond to these events quickly. The fire district is looking for \$100,000 for the construction of a new building. No funding has been collected at this time.

Q-Life – Tyler Stone explained Q-Life is a locally owned fiber network in The Dalles. All network traffic in the PNW travels via fiber through Portland or Seattle and across the ocean into foreign markets or is distributed to locations around the country. If the Cascadia event happens at the magnitude anticipated, these connections will not function. Q-Life is exploring the feasibility of The Dalles providing a hub to aggregate traffic and developing path east out of the region. This would benefit the Mid-Columbia region, Q-Life as a business, and commerce in the state. Kathy Ursprung asked if Google has been involved in discussion about this project. Tyler replied they have not been. Kathy stated the region has seen examples of cellular and emergency service communications failing in emergency situations. Joan Silver asked for clarification on what Q-Life needed from the Commission. Tyler explained Carrie has played a main role with grant writing. Tyler clarified he is asking for \$150,000 for the feasibility study.

Wamic Water and Sanitary Authority – Jackie Pennington explained Wamic is a small district. The water system was put on line in the 1940s and had updates in the 1960s. A feasibility study was done and results showed an estimated 80% water leakage rate. Pipelines have been breaking on a regular basis, and many of those pipes are two inches or smaller and cause low water flow. The current reservoir holds only 12% of the needed storage. Jackie explained the district went to the One Stop meeting in June and the estimate for replacing the current system was \$2.2 million. A new water system would mean consistent water pressure, more water storage, a loop system, a smaller chance of contamination, and adequate fire flow, which does not currently exist.

Jackie explained the wastewater system was built in 2000 and was constructed as part of a community self-help program. DEQ has documentation from 2009, 2014, 2016, and 2017 that indicates both the septic system and ponds have an inflow and infiltration problem. Jackie stated the board is seeking funds for a feasibility study to address this challenge.

Joan asked if either the waste water system project or water system improvement project could be done without doing the other. Jackie was unsure. Jackie stated the water board is new to this type of project and that the size was overwhelming to such a small system of 85 connections. Joan stated more technical assistance may be needed. Nan asked if the improvements are to update the system or expand it. Jackie stated the system can service 95, but that the improvements are focused more on future water quality, not necessarily expansion of the system.

Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District – Mosier groundwater is designated special area for Water Resources as a result of the comingling well challenges. Mosier Creek will continue to decline and may disappear if the well system is not repaired. With 140 wells in the area there has been significant study to determine which are comingling as residents allow the SWCD onto their property to scope the wells. Shilah Olson noted they had received \$1 million from the legislature for well repair and replacement for the largest users with comingling wells in the Mosier area. The SWCD was also awarded a grant from the Oregon Water Resources Department to support addressing this issue. With funds from the State of Oregon and matching funds from the SWCD, the goal is to address 10-15 of the highest suspected comingling wells, if permission from the landowner is obtained. The SWCD has offered to drill wells for landowners at no cost and to replace any broken pumps, but it has been difficult to gain access to some property. There is a critical need to fund this project as without addressing this challenge, there could be a significant impact on the City of Mosier's water resources as well. Bryce Molesworth stated almost all of the \$1 million for drilling the exploratory wells has been used to address the well on his property but that addressing the second largest well is also necessary. Shilah stated Bryce also brings significant capital to the project. Matthew Klebes asked if the other largest user is as willing as Bryce. Shilah explained yes, and both have invested significant capital.

City of Maupin – Lynn Ewing updated the Commission on the Maupin fiber project. Engineering is done, and planning and rights-of-ways are done. \$500,000 is needed to complete the project. The city is leaning heavily on legislators, and Carrie has been working to find funding sources. This project is critical for economic development. Tyler Stone added the project went out to bid but because of fluctuating construction markets, the bids received were twice the engineer estimate. Some value engineering has been done to lower costs, and Maupin Public Works is installing conduit, but this is not enough to make up the pricing difference. Tyler noted if Maupin can be connected, it could be a jump-off point for Tygh Valley, Wamic, and Pine Hollow.

The Library and Civic Center project has been ongoing for several years. Property has been acquired downtown for the building. A successful local fundraising campaign was held and there is project support throughout South Wasco County. An architecture and engineering plan are underway and will be ready this summer. The cost of the project was initially over \$1 million, but because of rising construction costs and changes to the facility it is now over \$2 million. Maupin is eager to move to the next step with this project.

Kaiser Park was donated to Maupin several years ago. The park is directly in front of the proposed new Civic Center and is used by visitors and locals. Design work is almost complete, and cost estimates are expected shortly. Lynn estimated the cost could be around \$150,000. Frank Kay added the City has the City Hall portion of the funding secured, and the City has the capability to continue to maintain the park. Getting the capital to complete the park and library portion of the project is the main focus.

Lynn explained Maupin is working with ODOT on the Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety project. A proposed path will extend from the upper part of Maupin, to the downtown area. There is no path currently, and no shoulder on the highway for pedestrians to use. An old trail beside the highway is used by locals, but it is on private property. The land owner is willing to work with the city to improve the trail to hard surface. The project would also extend a designated route down to the river. On the river, there is no pedestrian infrastructure between access points. Because of the location of two federally owned access roads, it is possible to use FLAP money to construct sidewalks between them. Carrie Pipinich stated ODOT is able to do much of the work on the FLAP grant.

Joan Silver asked which project of the three Maupin projects is of the highest priority. Lynn stated that because the fiber project is shovel ready, it is the one most likely to move forward immediately. The Civic Center will progress soon after. The pedestrian trail will depend on ODOT and FLAP funding. Kathy Ursprung stated the fiber project ties in more with economic development. Carrie noted that Kaiser Park project may need support for applications to State Parks.

City of Dufur – Kathy Bostick stated the process for well upgrades has started, and she hopes for construction in April. Pumps will be installed. The project is in design phase. The City will pay for some of it from their Water Savings Fund, and more funding will be sought. The City has \$400,000, and the project total will be approximately \$470,000 to \$520,000. Kathy Ursprung asked if there were other potential funding sources between now and April. Kathy Bostick stated she will check with Port of The Dalles for a loan.

The waste water systems upgrade will incorporate a new evaporative pond and stop any discharge into 15 Mile Creek. The project is estimated to cost \$4.2 million with construction to begin in 2020. There is no money in the sewer reserve to support the project but a small loan from DEQ will be folded into the financing for this project when funding comes together so rates will be impacted less than otherwise. Carrie Pipinich noted the Dufur waste water system has been out of compliance with DEQ for several years.

Kathy noted that a comprehensive plan to manage stormwater runoff is necessary. Stormwater system upgrades will impact the community's ability to improve pedestrian infrastructure. The master plan should be in place before funding is sought. The total ask will be in the range of \$75,000-\$100,000.

A pedestrian safety project is in progress. ODOT has given \$400,000 to work with the intersection by Dufur School. Sidewalks also need to be installed down 5th street. The City is seeking additional funds to expand this project.

Dufur School – Jack Henderson and Robert Wallace reported Dufur School District currently has 317 K-12 students as well as 28 pre-school students. Growth has created challenges for the district, especially concerning transportation and the intersection out front. Dufur School is beginning a capital bond campaign focused on the November 2018 election. The bond will help fund some of the school's needed projects around heating/cooling, transportation and parking, and safety. The school is working to identify additional resources to bring to the table to support these projects so the impact on the local community can be reduced.

Robert explained Dufur School would like to participate in Bonneville Environmental Foundation's Solar4RSchools program. The application process involves a \$15,000 match from the school. Bonneville's portion would be around \$75,000. The solar project would feature a solar system on the roof and a kiosk inside providing how much energy is produced. It will be an education training mechanism as it produces energy. Joan Silver asked if the Bonneville project can be done before the bond project. Robert stated the public bond requires 1.5% clean energy to be included in the bond. Solar would make this qualification.

Port of The Dalles – Kathy Ursprung explained that a facility to support local food production and medtech manufacturing is necessary could support development of those industries in our area. Our region has extensive food production, but there is lack of affordable space for startups. The facility would provide a commercial kitchen and small, dedicated work spaces. In addition, the facility would provide an area for medical technology manufacturing. There are many product development facilities in Portland, but there are few places to manufacture the products in the Northwest. With a core metal industry locally, there is an opportunity for local development. The Port is seeking \$45,000 for a feasibility study. Matthew Klebes asked about the commercial kitchen space available at CGCC. Kathy explained the kitchen in its current format does not meet local needs. Joan Silver stated there are logistical issues. She also asked what the medical production facility would be producing. Kathy replied the facility would produce medical implements.

Kathy explained Gorge Works is a regional program working on matching paid internships with interns. The Port of The Dalles provides coordination during this pilot phase. There has been great support from employers of all sizes for the effort. There are internships at all levels, including in engineering, mechanics, and manufacturing. So far, this has been funded through staffing capacity. Staff will continue to organize the program but hope is to recruit a few paid interns to help manage the effort moving forward. The project ask is for funds to go towards two internships and a marketing campaign.

City of The Dalles – Matthew Klebes reported the Mill Creek Greenway was intended to provide a connector path along Mill Creek. The first phase they are exploring is the segment in the Thompson Pool parking area as well as exploring opportunities to connect a reimagined First Street improvement project to connect the pool over to Lewis and Clark Festival Park and the Riverfront Trail. Preliminary approval was received to change the scope of the First Street project. There is new momentum for this project as Blue Zones is taking an interest in moving it forward and the Parks and Recreation District is starting their Strategic Plan process. The intention is to incorporate the first phase of Mill Creek Greenway into that plan. The proposed plan is a 10-12 foot wide paved path on the slope of Mill Creek past the Thompson Park area behind Oil Can Henrys. \$97,000 has been allocated for the engineering phase from Urban Renewal. Using current funds, the project can go forward with engineering and scoping work to figure out the total cost. Having the project prioritized and listed would help with the search for funding.

Widening West Sixth Street is identified in the newly adopted City of The Dalles Transportation Systems Plan as a high-priority project. The street sees heavy traffic and a new turn lane would reduce opportunities for collision. The overall cost of the project has been reduced as the proposed light at Snipes Street has been removed.

The City is waiting on a NEPA decision to move forward with the Dog River Pipe Line project. The pipeline is a 100 year old, wooden pipe that supplies the majority of water from Dog River. This project is on the top of the City of The Dalles' list. Matthew explained grant opportunities have been explored and exhausted, and the project is at the point where it needs to move forward. He stated a high prioritization ranking could help see the project through.

Prioritization of the Urban Growth Boundary Expansion would demonstrate the how critical the need is for the community.

Nan Wimmers asked what a ranking on the Dog River pipeline would do for the project. Matthew stated it would help if additional funding is needed or if other complexities in the project come up. Frank Kay stated the Urban Growth Boundary is of significance to economic development growth in The Dalles and the County.

City of Mosier – Terry Moore reported on Mosier's projects. Team Mosier has agreed to an agreement with UP. All have received funds, including \$500 for the City Hall/Fire Hall project. Because this project was ranked #1 last year, it was able to secure \$500,000 additional funding from the Legislature. Mosier Fire is also exploring a bond to provide additional funding but fundraising will continue. Terry stated Mosier is working on a variety of other projects but he suspects they are newer and lower in priority. The joint use facility and Mosier Hub are the most important and ranked at the top of Mosier's priority list.

City of Shaniko – Carrie Pipinich reported Shaniko is starting the process of planning for their water system so that they understand potential next steps to improve the system. The request is on the technical assistance side to help work through that process.

OTHER BUSINESS:

The Commission discussed their thought processes as they conduct individual rankings of the projects. Kathy explained she bases her ranking on what is critical in terms of community functionality. Nan stated she ranks based on infrastructure need since if communities don't have necessary infrastructure, they cannot grow or thrive. Terry noted he considers the difference between economic development and community development as this is an economic development body. He noted that many things can be incorporated into economic development but that consideration should be made to the EDC's view of this in the ranking process. Frank stated he looks at community investment as critical to a project. He also noted he ranks projects according to economic impact throughout the County. Joan stated she looks at how ready a project is, how much the community is involved, and how much support it has given. Dean stated all communities need water, and he considers ensuring this access is most important.

Carrie noted that ranking spreadsheets are due back on January 25. The EDC will meet again on February 8 to discuss the prioritization.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:20 pm.

Submitted by Lauren Hernandez, EDC Staff