

WASCO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2019
9:30 a.m.

WASCO COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
81849 FAIRGROUNDS RD, TYGH VALLEY, OR 97063

ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Kathy Ursprung, Gary Grossman, Bob Krein, Frank Kay, Mary Kramer, Matthew Klebes,

EDC STAFF: Carrie Pipinich, Tatiana Eckhart

GUESTS: Steve Kramer (Wasco County Commission), Kathy Schwartz (Wasco County Commission), Donna Ross (Maupin Resident), Denny Ross (South Wasco Alliance), Mike Davis (South Wasco Alliance), Terry Stark (Tygh Valley Rural Fire Protection District), Kate Willis (South Wasco Alliance), Zack Harvey (Wasco County Fairgrounds)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kathy Ursprung called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

TYGH VALLEY COMMUNITY UPDATES

Mike Davis gave an overview of South Wasco Alliance's Business Expo event and noted it was very successful. The event showcased various businesses, local governments, and non-profits that serve the area. About 36 businesses and organizations participated in the event to share information with the public and connections were made between job seekers and potential employers. The SWA hopes to make the Business Expo an annual event and are exploring the possibility of holding the expo at the Wasco County Fairgrounds next year to better accommodate the number of businesses and attendees. Mike also provided updates on his business ventures including information on septic tanks that require smaller drain fields, the Wasco 2040 planning process, and upcoming renewable energy investments in South Wasco County.

Denny Ross noted that SWA is continuing to explore opportunities to support specialty crop production in Wasco County. And Kate Willis noted that SWA is seeing a lot of energy and activity around community and economic opportunity in South Wasco County.

Terry Stark gave an update from the Tygh Valley Rural Fire Protection District. The District generates about \$8,000 to \$9,000 annually from donations but does not have a tax base. The District's firehouse was originally built in 1984 and does not have insulation or enough room to easily house all of their equipment. It also has a small office and training area but does not have lockers for individual members' equipment. The District cannot afford a new building, so they are seeking to renovate the current facility to allow for trucks to remain ready to respond to events in the winter and create more efficient operations. Terry has also been looking for grant opportunities to secure funding to start making the needed improvements.

Steve Kramer shared that the Wasco County Board of Commissioners approved a contribution of \$50,000 for Maupin's Civic Center, \$50,000 for the Deschutes Rim Clinic expansion project, and \$25,000 for the construction of the Parks and Recreation District's boat ramp in South Wasco County. He noted that the Deschutes Rim funding was contingent on them moving forward with the expansion project. Steve noted that the Maupin is the economic hub of South Wasco County and that these investments would support the community moving forward.

Steve also mentioned that Dufur is doing well. They have upgraded the pump in Well 1 and are starting to move forward with funding for their needed waste water system upgrades. The City is also starting in on their pedestrian safety improvements around the school site. Dufur's Recreation District is working to acquire funding to resurface the Dufur Pool at the City Park. The park's staff is currently putting on a fresh coat of paint on the inside of the pool before the summer swimming season begins.

Kathy Ursprung asked if Wasco County would be a potential funding source for the Fire District project Terry had reviewed. Steve noted that Wasco County is not a granting agency but was working to develop a process with EDC staff to vet projects for potential investment.

Frank Kay thanked the County Commission for their investment in the projects in Maupin and the EDC for the work they do to support projects through the Community Enhancement Projects process. He noted that incorporating into the criteria that readiness to proceed and community capacity for moving the project forward is critical to discussing potential investments moving forward. Denny noted that the annual project process is incredibly helpful in talking with funders.

WASCO COUNTY FAIR BOARD DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN

Tatiana Eckhart provided an update on staff's work with the Wasco County Fair Board to develop a strategic plan for the fair organization as well as Wasco County Fairgrounds and Hunt Park facility. The plan was focuses on ensuring Fairgrounds and Hunt Park facility is being used to its maximum potential to support a sustainable fair organization and increase its positive impact on the community. A series of stakeholder and similar facility interviews were conducted to identify current challenges and future opportunities. Two board planning retreats were incorporated into the process as well. Staff presented a draft of the strategic plan to the Fair Board at their Board meeting in May for review and feedback. Moving forward, MCEDD staff plans to publish the draft plan on the County's website for public comment and present the plan to the Wasco County Commissioners for their review and input before the plan is adopted.

APRIL 2019 EDC MINUTES

Frank Kay mentioned that he wanted to amend the minutes from the last EDC meeting by adjusting \$56,000 that the City of Maupin hoped to raise to fund their new Civic Center to \$50,000. Motion to approve the April 4 2019 meeting minutes then made by Frank Kay and seconded by Mary Kramer. The Motion passed unanimously.

POSITION 11 APPOINTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Carrie Pipinich noted that Stan Kelsay's term is ending at the end of June and thanked him for his service. She noted that Position 11 is an at-large position that focuses on representation from

the utilities sector. Staff received two interest forms for the position by Tonya Brumley of NW Natural and Justin Brock of Northern Wasco PUD. Carrie noted that the EDC

Matthew noted he has worked with Tonya on several committees and that she would be a great addition to the EDC. He also noted that the PUD's territory covers much more of Wasco County and that it could be valuable to have that engagement for the EDC. Mary Kramer and Frank Kay concurred with Matthew.

Motion to recommend Justin Brock for Position 11 on the Wasco County Economic Development Commission made by Mary Kramer. Frank Kay seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

OFFICER ELECTIONS

Kathy Ursprung shared that she will be moving to a new position in Salem at the end of July and so is resigning her position on the EDC. As a result, the EDC will need a new chairperson as well as Vice Chair. Carrie Pipinich thanked Kathy for her service on the EDC and noted that she has had a big impact on communities throughout Wasco County. Carrie let the group know she has been in communication with EDC members that were not able to join the meeting about willingness to serve in leadership positions. She noted that Joan Silver is willing to step in as the EDC's chair position on an interim basis, and that Megan Thompson was also willing to serve as vice chair.

Frank noted that Joan has a long history with the EDC and strong record of leadership. He stated that he felt she would serve well during this transition and noted that the full group needed to consider leadership development moving forward.

Frank Kay moved to elect Joan Silver as Chair and Megan Thompson as Vice Chair, Bob Krien seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

EDC COMMITTEE + STAFF REPORTS

Carrie noted a few highlights from the report included in the packet:

She stated that as a part of the Unincorporated Communities Committee, EDC staff has been working with the WW&SA to develop a draft RFP for engineering services for the study and are in the process of distributing proposals to engineering firms in the area.

Carrie shared that she has been working with RCAC to determine if they will be able to host a training on infrastructure planning and finance locally.

Staff has been working with the Park District in Dufur to develop a presentation for the Local Government Grant program Advisory Committee regarding Dufur Park's pool rehabilitation project. Carrie will be participating in the presentation with Park District staff to support the application.

Staff noted that the Maupin Economic Opportunities Analysis recommended continuing to monitor land availability as development continues as well as exploring opportunities to move the industrially zoned areas within their UGB to more easily accessible locations. It found that current employment land should provide adequate supply

Carrie stated that the broadband fiber project in Maupin is wrapping up construction and customer hook ups are well. Staff has also been working with Q-life to explore opportunities to increase connectivity building on the increased bandwidth in Maupin.

Carrie informed the group that the Open for Business Committee has continued to work on updating Business Siting Guides to incorporate changes in permitting, service provision, and the Enterprise Zone expansion and shared drafts with attendees. She noted that when they are finalized they will be shared again.

COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Matthew Klebes shared that the Tokala project is not moving forward due to a BOLI determination that prevailing wage applied based on the public investment. The Honald Building housing project has been moving forward and is hoping to start leasing units in the building within a year. The Dalles Recreation Center has been bought by Ted Carpenter who also owns the Last Stop Saloon next door. He has begun demolition on the inside to prepare the space for use again. Matthew also shared that the Columbia Gorge Regional Airport has three new flex spaces under construction by TacAero. He also noted that the airport has a new manager, Aryn Rasmussen.

The Dalles Brownfield project has completed its initial inventory of sites and held a meeting with representatives from the business community, property owners, and local government partners. Feedback was in support of continuing this effort with an application for an Environmental Protection Agency Brownfield Coalition Assessment grant of up to \$600,000.

Steve Kramer thanked the EDC for the work they do and the level of support the committees provide to communities and helping to get projects done.

Mary Kramer stated that starting in the fall CGCC is offering a three-course program on unmanned aircraft aerial systems with Mike Davis acting as the primary instructor. The first course allows participants to be FAA certified for UAS flight, the second looks at programming and the third looks at public safety applications. With this course, the college hopes to reach both students and industry professionals. The Skills Center is also moving forward with an anticipated 2022 opening. CGCC is still exploring the best strategies for programming the space and is considering an aviation maintenance program.

Bob Krein stated that the Deschutes River Outfitters group has formed a local chapter of the Oregon Guides and Packers Association to better organize the local businesses related to the river to address key issues impacting their business. Bob asked if the EDC could find information on the economic impact of river related tourism in Wasco County and staff noted that there might be resources available that quantify that broadly.

Frank Kay informed the group that the City of Maupin had hired its first City Manager. The City Manager would take over personnel management and many other duties that have been taken on by the Mayor previously. Frank also distributed information on the funding sources that have invested in the Civic Center project. He noted that the Hard Hats and Hors d'oeuvres event held recently raised approximately \$55,000 for the project. Frank also noted that housing has

continued to be a challenge for the City and that they were exploring strategies to support increased inventory, particularly for the seasonal workers that come to Maupin in the summer.

Tatiana shared that MCEDD is conducting a review of responses to recent economic shocks and natural disasters as they pertain to local businesses. As a part of this effort MCEDD interviewed local stakeholders in order to develop an assessment report summarizing effective practices in past disasters and areas for improvement as well as outlining opportunities for addressing gaps in business resiliency and various agency responses. This report will provide the basis for developing economic resiliency toolkits to support addressing future disasters or other economic shocks and incorporate lessons learned from previous responses.

Kathy noted that the Port is conducting a feasibility study for a potential food processing facility to be located in The Dalles. She requested support in getting the word out to anyone interested in this industry to ensure that broad feedback is captured. Kathy also noted that the new veterinary office is set to open shortly and will incorporate large animal services now. She also shared that GorgeWorks was getting underway for the year at the Chamber with continued support from the Port as the program transitions to the Chamber.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 11:35am.

Respectfully submitted by Tatiana Eckhart
