

## **WASCO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

**Thursday, December 1, 2022**

**9:30 a.m.**

**Meeting In Person at MCEDD Conference Room  
And ZOOM TELECONFERENCE Remote Option**

### **ATTENDANCE**

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Megan Thompson (Chair), Jennifer Toepke Port of The Dalles, Nan Wimmers , Fritz Ellett, Rich Mays, Lisa Farquharson (Vice Chair), Justin Brock (NWPUD), Bob Krein, Brian McCormick

EDC STAFF: Carrie Pipinich

GUESTS: Scott Hege (Wasco County Commissioner), Nate Stice (Regional Solutions), Michael Held (Business Oregon), Jill Brandt (MCEDD Administrative Assistant)

### **CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS**

Megan Thompson called the meeting to order at 9:30 am. A round of introductions took place.

### **MARCH 2022 MINUTES APPROVAL**

Megan asked for any comments or corrections on the September 2022 minutes. None were noted.

Jennifer Toepke moved to approve the September 2022 minutes; Lisa Farquharson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **2023 COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS**

Carrie presented the project list outlined in the packet for discussion.

Staff reviewed info from the memo on priority projects and issues from 2022 with updates on progress discussed.

Carrie thanked all the Board members who participated in the community meetings that were held around the county through the month of November. Although the unincorporated area meeting was challenging to organize, individual input has produced a good list of projects from the unincorporated areas. Attachment A includes a compilation of all of the projects discussed or submitted from throughout the County.

After the meetings, Megan and Carrie met to put the draft ranking together (Attachment B). Carrie reviewed the criteria and additional considerations noted in developing the draft. Carrie noted being on this list helps with advocacy and generating letters of support. The group proceeded to discuss the ranking order.

### *Discussion:*

*Rich Mays brought up the new high school and Kramer field hospital projects. .*

*Bob Krein supported the 15 mile water storage project, noting that if it works, it can be installed in every watershed. He added that the RFP for drilling #2 Mosier well is happening soon.*

*There was discussion on the West Side Plan project and how it fits under the category of developable lands. “Developable land” involves much more than just property, it also includes developing all of the infrastructure for services; electric, sewer, roads, fiber, etc. This ties back to the urban growth boundary issues in The Dalles that conflict with the National Scenic Area restrictions. Carrie made note to add to the workplan to engage partners of EDC with the City on the Westside Development Plan. Also, she agreed to add a column to the list indicating funding needed, what funding is already secured, and any deadlines for the secured funding.*

*Lisa brought up considerations around the need to find matching resources for existing funds that had deadlines as well as upcoming resources that will be available and the group revised rankings based on discussion of this criteria as well.*

*Megan asked for a motion to accept the top 10 rankings.*

Rank	Project	
1	Columbia Gorge Childcare Center	CGCC
2	Cascade East Interconnection + Fiber	Qlife City of Mosier, Mosier
3	Mosier Center Joint Use Facility	Fire
4	Water System Improvements	City of Maupin
5	Water System Improvements	City of Dufur
	Aviation Maintenance Training Hanger + Industrial Land	CGCC, Columbia Gorge
6	Infrastructure	Airport
7	Dufur Rural Innovation Hub	Wy'East RC&D
8	Fifteen Mile Managed Underground Storage	WCSWCD
9	Sorosis Park Redevelopment Phase 2	NWCPRD
10	Pine Grove Water Source Development	Pine Grove Water District

**Justin motioned to accept the list** as discussed and amended. Lisa seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

## **STAFF REPORT**

Carrie provided a few highlights from her staff report.

- She gave a summary of the Broadband survey feedback noting additional use for remote work and home based businesses as well as continued concern over speed and reliability.
- She reviewed information on the FCC’s updated national broadband map and noted that information collected in our local process would not be able to be incorporated into that process.

- She noted that there was also a significant focus on infrastructure projects in the county include assistance for Pine Grove Water District, Tooley Water District, and Wamic's Water and Sanitary.
- Carrie thanked Tonya and Jennifer for their support and work around Dufur visioning process that is underway.

### **COMMISSIONER & PARTNER UPDATES**

Rich Mays informed the group that Google paid its first tax bills this year for the original data centers with no attempts to appeal. It was approximately \$15 million in additional taxes for local taxing entities. The City and County are also discussing their approach to using some of the community service fees from the Taylor Lakes.

Scott Hege thanked the group for their time, noting the importance of stakeholders actively participating in the county's growth.

Bob noted that the Bakeoven Solar farm was behind schedule due to supply chain delays with the panels delivery, which are now expected to arrive in April. The construction will be taking winter break and coming back next year. The pilings and cross pieces are in, and the next step is the panels.

Lisa shared that the Chamber has applied for some Travel Oregon Capacity building funding in partnership with the SBDC and The Next Door to support training and additional outreach focused on Latino businesses in the area. The announcement of the award will be coming up later in the month.

### **ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:16am.

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday March 2, 2023, and will be in-person at a TBD location.

*Respectfully submitted by Jill Brandt, Administrative Assistant*