

WASCO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
THURSDAY JUNE 21, 2012
WASHINGTON FAMILY RANCH YOUNG LIFE CAMP
1 Muddy Road, Antelope, Oregon

ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Chair Joan Silver, Donella Polehn, Carina Schmidt, Mary Kramer, Mike Zingg, Frank Kay and Fred Justesen

GUESTS: Annette Liebe

EDC Staff: Jessica Metta and Anna Tompkins

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Joan Silver called the meeting to order at 10:30 am. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MAY 17, 2012 MINUTES: Mike Zingg moved to accept minutes as presented. Carina Schmidt seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT UPDATE

Jessica Metta gave an overview of the upcoming Economic Development Summit for Wasco County on July 10th at the Columbia Gorge Community College. She reviewed the basis of the summit. Barbra Briggs will facilitate the summit and the focus will be on collaboration opportunities in Wasco County. She asked which WCEDC members planned to attend the summit. Joan Silver added that the desired takeaway from the summit is a better sense of understanding all community efforts in the County.

STAFF REPORT

Staff Jessica Metta highlighted projects from her staff report. Expand in Oregon (expandinoregon.com) is the new property inventory sight for the State of Oregon, replacing Oregon Prospector. The new site has an updated look and has a lot more information; however it is missing workforce data which was seen as a valuable tool on the previous site. Jessica has also been working with a group in Tygh Valley on the Community Center, and decided it would take \$210,000 to complete repairs for the building. She is working to find grants for the project but is first working with the group to find opportunities to raise funds for a cash match. Jessica has also had discussions with Charlie Mitchell of Josephine County in regards to their Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program and will have more details in regards to BRE at the next WCEDC meeting.

REGIONAL UPDATES

Joan Silver stated that she is on the advisory committee for the Development Review Improvement Process (DRIP) of Wasco County Planning Department. The aim of the process is to improve customer relations. The proposed revolving loan fund program is on hold until there is capital to start. The fund will need about \$100,000 to start and looking for unique and untraditional funding options.

Frank Kay updated the group on Riverfest which was a success. There was an increase in sponsorship and registration of the walk/run event. This was the first time the event was held on Memorial Day weekend and may look into the future to extend it to a two day event. Splash for Pink is the next upcoming event.

Carina Schmidt voiced her concerns in regards to National Marine Fishery Service (NMFS) regulations that may be very crippling to future development. More discussion from the board in regards to wetlands regulation. Annette Liebe stated that her background is in storm water mitigation permitting and offered to come and present to the board. Joan Silver agreed it would be beneficial to have experts come in to explain the process.

Annette Liebe gave an update from the Regional Solution Advisory Committee in which they desired to design a system that meets wetland mitigation and storm water treatment. In regards to the project in The Dalles she has been involved in the wetlands issue and working on a summary of work completed like this in Willamette Valley. Currently, the Wal-Mart consultant is drafting a new proposal.

Fred Justesen reported that the rain in June made for a good crop and especially good for cattle. He suggested getting a list of permits given in the last year to track changes throughout Wasco County.

Donella Polhen stated that the cherry crop will be coming soon but uncertain if there will be enough labor to bring in the crop.

Mike Zingg stated that Columbia PhytoTech is beginning to move into the Port of The Dalles and will be in full operation by the end of July. They are now beginning to hire production working staff and will give on job training. A charter flight service out of Dallesport is asking for quotes for a small hanger at the Columbia Gorge Airport.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 11:15 am

NEXT MEETING- July 19, 2012

*Submitted, Anna Tompkins
EDC Staff*