

## WASCO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

THURSDAY, April 17, 2014

Maupin City Park Community Building

208 Bakeoven Road, Maupin, OR

### ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Joan Silver, Frank Kay, Andrea Klaas, Donella Polehn, Mary Kramer, Gary Grossman and Terry Moore

GUESTS: Rod Runyon (Wasco County Commissioner), Scott Hege (Wasco County Commissioner), Kate Sinner (Regional Solutions), Steve Kramer (Wasco County Commissioner), Michelle McGrath (Gorge Grown Food Network), Bridget Bailey, Sue Knapp (City of Maupin Councilor), Karen Dupuis (City of Maupin Mayor), Jeff Nicol (Maupin Business Coordinator/SBDC), Layla Davis, Mike Davis, Jon Helquist (City of Maupin Councilor) and Loren Shultz (IFA)

EDC STAFF: Amanda Hoey and Sherry Bohn

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order at 10:00 am.

### WELCOME FROM MAYOR DUPUIS

Mayor Karen Dupuis welcomed the commission members and guests. She reported that she, the city council and the community as a whole were actively working on ways to increase the area's population and economy. Mayor Dupuis stated that there was a lot of economic development taking place all over the county. She also reported that she was excited about the start up of the South Wasco Alliance. Mayor Dupuis stated that this was important because it would give everyone involved the ability to work together in order to get more accomplished.

### APPROVAL OF MARCH 13, 2014 MINUTES

Donella Polehn motioned to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2014 meeting. Frank Kay seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

### GORGE GROWN FOOD NETWORK PRESENTATION

Michelle McGrath thanked the commission for the ability to give an update on the Gorge Grown Food Network and she stated she was very excited to present about the local food economy. Michelle thanked the local partners present including Jeff Nicol, Scott Hege and Amanda Hoey. She explained that Gorge Grown's goal was to build a resilient and inclusive regional food system that improves the health and well being of the Columbia River Gorge. Michelle stated that goal included a healthy and self sufficient Columbia River Gorge.

She presented the history of the network and its programs. These included the following:

- Rural Farmers Markets
- Mobile Farmers Market
- Need help spreading the work that can spend food stamps and WIC
- Food Business Incubator
  - Technical Assistance
  - Value Added products
  - May 19<sup>th</sup> Food Safety Protocols for Value Added Production

- May 28 Food and Law 101
- Commercial Kitchen Guide
- Value added needs assessment showed a need for commercial kitchen in Hood River and Klickitat counties. Recognized that CGCC kitchen is under utilized but location a issue
- [www.gorgevalue](http://www.gorgevalue.com) added.com
- Food Access Program: SNAP Access Incentive, Food Deserts & CFA, Food Literacy, and Food Bank Partnerships
- Community Food Leaders
- Local Food First
- Consumer Education
- Farmer-Buyer Networking
- Farmer Training

Michelle also highlighted the staff and board of directors and she asked the commission members to “like” Gorge Grown Food Network on facebook and/or to sign up for their e-news.

*Discussion: Mike Davis asked if it was a correct assumption that Gorge Grown could help with creating food chains for new businesses. Michelle said yes. Scott Hege asked about the dollar figure for money spent on food in the gorge. Michelle stated that if you spend \$100 at a local gorge food business \$72 stays in the gorge and \$32 at the large corporate chains. Amanda Hoey asked about the community food leaders program planned for The Dalles and applications elsewhere in the County. Michelle highlighted the FEAST one day facilitation option for other communities.*

#### SOUTH WASCO COUNTY COALITION UPDATE:

Mike Davis reported that there were currently about 45 people involved in the alliance. He stated that the goal was to bring in new businesses. Mike reported that there were two active committees.

- Broadband
- Creating an inventory of available properties

*Discussion: Frank Kay thanked Mike for taking the lead on the coalition. Joan Silver stated that if the coalition sends information to EDC staff, it will be sent to the commission.*

#### COMMUNITY LEADER UPDATES

Amanda opened the discussion about things happenings in Maupin.

Sue Knapp – Presented the Mack’s to Mouth trail plan concept. She reported that they are currently preparing a grant request to Oregon State Parks for a feasibility study and requested a letter of support.

Mayor Dupuis – Presented the new library plans and concepts

Frank Kay – Thanked Gorge Grown for their help with the Maupin farmers market that provided a source of fresh fruit and produce while the local grocery market was getting established. Michelle McGrath stated that Gorge Grown was researching and offered their assistance in order to change city policy regarding use of the park.

## STAFF REPORT

Amanda Hoey requested direction from the commission on the level of support for the Mack's to Mouth project. Joan Silver asked if the commission was willing to submit a letter of support.

Frank Kay moved the Wasco County Economic Development Commission provide a letter of support for Mack's To the Mouth feasibility study. Mary Kramer seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Amanda presented the April staff reports highlighting the following:

### **Oregon Business Council:**

Amanda thanked all involved for their support for the Oregon Business Council event. She offered special thanks to the local businesses which provided food, transportation and tours: Google, Griffith Motors, and Polehn Farms. Amanda stated that the intent to educate the Council on business activities and economic development investments in our rural area, and to discuss connections to the Oregon Business Plan was very successful. She reported that the Oregon Business Plan Steering Committee members were impressed with the activity taking place in The Dalles and were looking for means to remain connected. Amanda reported that staff had participated in a follow-up meeting with Jeremy Rogers, the day after the roundtable, in a discussion specific to the poverty agenda of the Business Plan. Jeremy reiterated the desire to set in place a process for regular communication with the Wasco County business community. Amanda asked the commission to discuss how it could move forward with that request.

*Discussion: Andrea Klaas asked the purpose of the Oregon Business Council. Amanda stated that it was to set the Oregon Business Plan and provide policy level participation. She stated that it also provides advocacy, leverage and lobbying activities. Joan Silver stated that the members take the Oregon Business plan and advocates and lobbies for policy in the state of Oregon legislature. Kate Sinner explained its relationship with the governor's office. Joan stated that as the relationship improves it will allow for better backing. Andrea Klaas stated that she thought that the Business Council members should come to the area again with a similar meeting format as was just done. Mary Kramer asked if that could be accomplished. Amanda stated that it could and that the Business Council steering committee members were willing to do it before the December plan. Joan Silver stated that it was important to be part of planning process. It was discussed that there should be someone designated as a liaison/contact. Amanda Hoey stated that if that was what the commission wanted, it should be one of the commissioners. Terry Moore offered to be that person because he is in Portland. Joan Silver suggested Andrea Klaas as well. Frank Kay suggested Terry Moore would also lend expertise. Terry and Andrea agreed to co-work with the Business Council together. Amanda agreed to let the Business Council know.*

### **University of Oregon Analysis: Economic Impact of Events**

Amanda reported that staff continues to provide information to the two students who are working on the events analysis. She reported that due to staff time limitations she has not been able to provide them as much direction as she would like. Amanda requested Commission member support. She stated that the more assistance given, the better the end product. Andrea Klaas suggested County Commissioner Scott Hege. Frank Kay offered his assistance regarding data in relation to events held in Maupin. Amanda will provide his contact information to the students.

## **Broadband**

Qliffe and the EDC held a WebWorks forum at the Balch hotel in March. It was well received. Amanda stated that Keith Mobley has been working on options to host the next forum.

## **Community Enhancement Projects**

Amanda stated that the Community Enhancement Projects ranking was approved by the Wasco County Board of Commissioners and updated on the Agora Platform including priority ranking. Amanda reported that a letter was sent to all entities related to the ranking of their projects and that the commission will be exploring means to support its top projects. In addition, Amanda reported the following actions were taken:

- Co-working center: Exploring an Economic Development Administration Technical Assistance application with the City of The Dalles.
- The Mid-Columbia Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy regional ranking includes two projects from the EDC regionally ranked. Regional Wetlands Strategy (#1) and Dalles Riverfront Access (#8).
- Macks to Mouth: MCEDD staff worked with individuals from the City of Maupin and others to submit an application to Oregon State Parks for a planning/ feasibility study for the Macks to Mouth Trail.
- Pine Hollow Boat Ramp and restrooms: Amanda reported that there is renewed interest from groups looking at this issue. It was on last year's Needs and Issues list. A working group had been formed under the direction of Sherry Holliday last year to identify means to move forward with the project. Commissioner Kramer reported that WyEast RC&D was looking at taking over the project.
- Mosier wastewater: EDC staff has been working with the City of Mosier to identify options to support their wastewater system. The City requested assistance in contacting nearby entities regarding the potential for engaging in a joint RFP for maintenance services.

## **General EDC Activities:**

EDC staff provided the following support services:

- Conducted an orientation for Gary Grossman and Terry Moore who were recently appointed to Positions 9 and 1 on the EDC.
- Presented to the City of Mosier with City of The Dalles Mayor Steve Lawrence to discuss regional housing issues affecting economic development. We are excited that the state authorized \$2 million for a regional attainable revolving loan fund for Sherman, Wasco and Hood River counties.

## **Activities of Interest to the EDC**

- The Ft Dalles Readiness Center Groundbreaking takes place just after the EDC meeting today at 2:00 pm
- Discussion continues on the roll out of the Agora Investment Platform with the State. The ability to highlight the early work by the Mid-Columbia region and Wasco County in this process is significant.

## COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Andrea Klaas - North Chenoweth is moving forward. She reported that the Drive Oregon goal is investing in manufacturing and that she has been working with the Dallesport airport on joint marketing. She also highlighted the Oregon aviation coalition will be meeting at WAAM

Donella Polehn – Cherry blossom season is winding down. She reported that it looks to be a heavy crop and stated that the ongoing problem of having enough labor continues.

Kate Sinner – Regional Solution team meeting will take place in a week. House bill 4015 passed leading to executive committee to establish an advisory committee.

Mary Kramer – The new Fort Dalles Readiness Center is also home to CGCC's new Workforce Training Facility. Mary also reported that Dufur comes to life in May. The Museum and log cabin will be open and the garden club has a garden center.

Gary Grossman – Urban renewal is going into budget process and re-prioritizing standing projects. Urban Renewal elected to modify the grant funds requirements to allow for profit building owners to participate and to jump start work on exterior improvements. There is still a loan buy down program available for interior improvements. Gary also reported that The Dalles City Council approved \$20,000 for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event with fireworks and a festival. He also reported on a refocus on the West Gateway projects and the concerns related to road infrastructure issues and fund availability.

Frank Kay – RiverFest in Maupin will take place on Memorial Day Weekend. Frank provided posters for the Commissioners to post in their places of business.

Joan Silver – Thanked everyone for the attendance and hard work. She reported that there were a 100 cruise ships stops scheduled to dock this season and that the Discovery Center seeing growth.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Bridget Bailey introduced herself as a Wasco County Commissioner candidate.

Adjourned 11:50 am

Next meeting May 15, 2014 in The Dalles at 10 am.

*Submitted by Sherry Bohn, EDC Staff*