

WASCO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

THURSDAY, June 18, 2015

9:30am to 12pm

Dufur City Hall

175 NE 3rd Street, Dufur, OR

ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Joan Silver, Fred Justesen, Frank Kay, Kathy Ursprung, Dan Durow, Terry Moore, Stan Kelsay and Greg Johnson

GUESTS: Robert Wallace (City of Dufur), Keith Mobley (Q-Life, Dufur resident), Nancy Gibson (Dufur Historical Society), Jack Henderson (Dufur School District), Jay Ashcraft (Dufur Park), Mike Davis (South Wasco Alliance) and Dennis Ross (Wy'East RC &D)

EDC STAFF: Carrie Pipinich and Sherry Bohn

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Joan Silver called the meeting to order at 9:30 am. There was a quorum present.

DUFUR PROJECT PRESENTATIONS:

Dufur mayor, Robert Wallace, welcomed the Commission. He explained that the city water source is an artesian well, but that it's pressure has been decreasing significantly. The City has some funds set aside to implement a pump system, but is looking for additional support to implement the project after engineering is complete. Robert reported that the City just accepted the new fire hall and are in the process of planning an open house in the near future. Mayor Wallace reported on the Methodist Church status stating that the city will purchase it in the next fiscal year. He reported that the city will continue to let the seniors use the space for their meal service as they develop a business plan and explore needed upgrades to make the rest of the facility accessible. Robert also reported that Dufur now has a gas station and that Dufur has been asked to participate in the one day workshop "Making Energy Work in Rural Oregon."

Dufur School Superintendent, Jack Henderson, presented an update on the Dufur School District. He reported that it is hosting the migrant summer program. The district has applied for and been awarded a \$51,000 energy conservation grant to replace a boiler heating system that they have used to heat water so that they won't need turn the boiler on purely to heat water . He also reported that the grant will also be used to replace glass windows with high efficiency glass. Superintendent Henderson stated that the school district was striving for academic excellence. They also host several sporting events that bring significant numbers of visitors to town during the summer and fall.

Nancy Gibson from the Dufur Historical Society gave an update on Dufur Historical Museum operations. She reported that the historic log cabin at the museum is in need of rethinking and that the Historical Society is seeking funds to support that project. She also explained that the society was researching the options for the downtown building they had purchased previously but are looking to sell to support downtown development.

Jay Ashcraft gave an update on the Dufur park wooden restrooms. He reported that they currently have \$33,000 of the needed \$50,000 and are working toward finding the balance to

replace them. Jay reported that they are working on the exercise/jogging path with money from a Cycle Oregon Grant.

Keith Mobley reported on the Confluence project and explained the “story stones” installation in the east end of the park

Joan Silver presented an announcement about opportunity to purchase “The Peak” by Roland Smith. She also announced the new SBDC Interim Director, Rick Lebovitz has started.

Greg Johnson asked about the status of the ambulance Dufur had listed on the Community Enhancement Projects list. Robert noted that they are still looking.

Greg asked the presenters from Dufur make sure to note money and volunteer contributions that are available when they upload projects to Agora for consideration by funders as well as the EDC for it’s prioritization efforts.

MINUTES OF APRIL 16, 2015

Greg Johnson moved to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2015. Fred Justesen seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Mosier – Terry Moore reported that he, Carrie Pipinich and Gary Grossman had met with the Mosier City Manager. He stated that the reception was very good, that contact had been made and graciously accepted. Terry reported that the City Manager has approached the committee for support for a Transportation Growth Management Grant, and that letters of support had been provided by the EDC and him individually. He also reported that the Mosier Fire District had a change of board and is focused on development of a new facility. Terry stated that he has been approached by the chief and is now chair of the siting committee. Terry stated that the idea is to work on development of the Union Pacific Railroad property in downtown Mosier as it has restrictions on it’s use that the fire station would fit within.

Wamic – Joan Siler reported that that there have been a couple of meetings in Wamic. She stated that Lauren Shultz, Infrastructure Financing, was working with the community. Joan stated that the community realizes that now is the time to move forward but they still don’t know how. She stated that there is planning in process for a meeting on a Saturday in July to tour the water facilities and to get questions and answers that will allow for forward movement.

Discussion: Frank Kay asked what has been done in Wamic? Joan Silver and Carrie Pipinich explained that they are moving forward with identifying funding for a system study, which will help lay the ground work for a potential system upgrade depending on results. Joan stated that they have knowledge about their needs but they don’t have anything formal.

Dufur – Carrie Pipinich reported that that she, Mary Kramer, Robert Wallace and Lauren Shultz had met to get a better understanding of the next steps on the water assessments. Carrie reported that they had also discussed how to better support Robert.

Discussion: Frank Kay asked about the volume of the well and regular use. Robert Wallace explained that he is in the process of learning the specifics of the system, and does not have that information with him currently.

Broadband – Carrie Pipinich reported that she and Stan Kelsay have been busy with the demand survey along with attempting to understand what assets are available to bridge the gap between the business case for a private provider and the investment needed to increase service. Carrie reported that they met with a variety of public and private entities to gather information about these assets but also their demand for service. She also reported that there were some funding opportunities available. Carrie reported that there was a conversation on the Regional Solutions funds and the south counties. Stan Kelsay stated that there are some really good opportunities to support increased service.

Discussion: Mike Davis commended the work that had been done.

Open for Business – Kathy Ursprung gave an update on the Open For Business committee stating that she, Carrie Pipinich and Fred Justesen had discussed where information currently exists for those looking at locating or growing businesses in the county. She reported that a number of people use the Chamber as a starting point and that they are working with the The Dalles chamber to link to additional economic development information. Carrie stated that the committee is working to identify gaps in the economic development ecosystem and find opportunities for the EDC to fill them as so many entities already do economic development work in Wasco County.

Discussion: Robert Wallace talked about the lack of efficiencies with of all the different websites. He stated that there was a need to discuss ways to improve and link all the various websites. Robert asked about funding for ways to improve websites. Joan Silver suggested putting together a working group tto study the issue in August. Dennis Ross stated that a grant writing class would also be useful.

Joan Silver thanked Dan Durow for his years of service to the EDC, and reported that Daniel Hunter the new Project Coordinator at the City of The Dalles will replace him on the Commission in July.

OFFICER ELECTIONS

Carries Pipinich presented an overview of the responsibilities of the commission Chair and Vice Chair. Joan Silver stated that position of chair is open to definition by the person who holds it.

Discussion: Terry Moore asked if Joan was interested in continuing. She stated that she has one more year on her appointment.

Joan Silver opened the nominations for Chair.

Kathy Ursprung nominated Joan Silver for Chair. Frank Kay seconded the motion Greg Johnson moved to close the nominations. Frank Kay seconded the motion. Motions passed unanimously.

Joan Silver opened the nominations for Vice Chair.

Discussion: Carrie noted that the Vice Chair position was one that should be filled by someone looking to learn about the duties of Chair with an eye toward stepping into the role at some point. Joan agreed.

Kathy Ursprung nominated Frank Kay for Vice Chair. Greg Johnson seconded the motion. Greg Johnson motioned to close the nominations. Fred Justesen seconded the motion. Motions passed unanimously.

The commission took a five minute break at 11:00 a.m.

Kathy Ursprung left the meeting at 11:19 a.m.

STAFF REPORT

Carrie Pipinich presented the WCEDC staff report highlighting the following

Community Enhancement Projects

Updates on Community Enhancement Projects:

- Staff reached out to Community Enhancement Project owners in the Dufur area to request their presence at the June EDC meeting to provide updates on their projects. This is part of the additional engagement the EDC requested through our update process.
- Staff has been researching funding options related to infrastructure development to better support projects identified to move forward in each of the committees. This has included both technical assistance resources as well as funding resources from agencies and non-profits.

General EDC Activities:

- **East Mt. Hood Forest Collaborative:** Staff attended the developing East Mt. Hood Forest Collaborative tour of the Rocky Burn area where they are working to identify opportunities to create projects that will meet the needs of a variety of stakeholders in the forest. The US Forest Service, Barlow Ranger District, hosted the tour, and the collaborative is in the process of creating bylaws and formalizing. The Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District is providing staff support for the effort.
- **South Wasco Alliance:** Staff attended the South Wasco Alliance meeting in Shaniko, Oregon. At the meeting Shaniko area residents discussed the need for jobs in the community to support the town. Additionally, the Alliance has officially filed for non-profit status and heard positively from the IRS about their application. They are also continuing to develop project areas around quality of life and sustainability in South Wasco County. Currently these project areas include, Community Arts, Economic Development, Educational Resources, and Internet Capacity.

Activities of Interest to the EDC

- **Gorge Economic Development Symposium:** The Gorge Economic Symposium was held Thursday, **May 14, 2015** from 9am to 12pm at the Columbia Center for the Arts Theater in Hood River. The Symposium focused on economic and employment trends in the regional economy. Presentations can be found at gorgesummit.org

COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

Frank Kay reported that the Library & City Hall Project was in the process of raising the money. He reported that local fundraising was on going and that they now have \$80,000 of the \$150,000

needed. Frank stated that they are looking to start the grant writing process shortly as they are on their way to having the needed local match in hand.

Fred Justesen reported that the drought was causing a number of problems in agriculture. He reported that wheat prices are down and beef prices are good.

Dan Durow reported that the Riverfront trail still has a lot of support but the committee is looking at alternative access routes given challenges with proposed routing of one of the unfinished segments.

Greg Johnson reported that the quality of cherries is all over the place and that it has been a tough year. He stated that there will be a lot of replanting. Greg reported that the price is good for fresh cherries if the product is good.

Joan Silver reported that The Dalles Chamber will appoint a new commission member. She reported that the Senior Center needs a 1/3 more funding to finish its project. Joan also reported that Design Structures has left The Dalles and that the Senior Center project is seeking a new contractor as a result.

Meeting Adjourn at 11:45am.

The next meeting will be September 17th at 9:30 am in Mosier.

Submitted by Sherry Bohn, EDC Staff