

WASCO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Thursday, June 20, 2013
MCEDD Conference Room
515 East 2nd Street, The Dalles, OR

ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Chair Joan Silver, Andrea Klaas, Mary Kramer, Dan Durow, Frank Kay, and Michael Zingg

GUESTS: Scott Hege (Wasco County Commissioner)

EDC STAFF: Amanda Hoey and Sherry Bohn

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

APPROVAL OF May 16, 2013 MINUTES:

Andrea Klaas moved to accept the May 2013 minutes as presented. Dan Durow seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

BOARD VACANCIES:

Amanda Hoey reported that there had been interest by potential candidates in the commission position recently vacated by Dan Spatz. She reported that a press release describing the position opening had been provided to local news sources and the application was available via the Wasco County EDC website. The closing date for applications is June 30th and she thanked everyone for their help and outreach.

EDC STAFF REPORT:

Amanda Hoey presented the EDC staff report highlighting the following:

- EDC staff provided support for a company seeking to work with the County on financing opportunities. Staff also coordinated with the State of Oregon Business Innovation and Trade Division regarding financing for Wasco County companies.
- Staff submitted a \$135,000 Investing in Manufacturing Communities proposal to the Economic Development Administration. This funding allows for strategy development to support manufacturers working in autonomous systems. It is a regional proposal, but a primary opportunity for Wasco County. Staff anticipates hearing the results by the end of the federal fiscal year (September 30, 2013). The scope of work included development and completion of a bi-state strategic implementation plan to support growth of autonomous system manufacturing businesses in the Columbia River Gorge.
- Staff supported projects on the Needs and Issues list. EDC staff reported that the Regional Solutions Team coordinated a state agency call to move the Barlow-Wamic project forward. The EDC's ongoing role may be in supporting the development of an intergovernmental agreement between Barlow and Wamic.

WASCO COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING REPORT:

Chair Joan Silver explained the Economic Development Commission's reporting history to the Wasco County Board of Commissioners. She stated that the latest report to the Commissioners was well received and that Amanda Hoey had requested a regularly scheduled reporting slot.

ACTION PLAN:

Amanda Hoey presented a draft summary for the Wasco County EDC 2013 strategic action plan. She stated that this was a summary document derived from previous action plans and the Wasco County EDC current focus and direction. She proposed it as a discussion starting point. Amanda requested the EDC review the summary goals and objectives, make appropriate changes and discuss the following next steps:

1. Develop detailed action plans for the strategies and objectives and determine specific activities for FY 2014.
2. Analyze the objectives
 - a. Provide time at EDC meetings to analyze our assets and identify additional areas for economic growth.
 - b. Provide time at EDC meetings to look at targeted industries.
 - c. Focus on the priority projects identified in the revised Needs and Issues process and systematically begin to address those projects.
 - d. Bring in outside resources as appropriate.
3. Establish Committees as appropriate to support the work

The commission spent time discussing the plan's vision and agreed to change it to the following: Wasco County and its communities are economically-robust.

The commission discussed the five goals presented in the draft strategic action plan and the role of the commission as a countywide economic development body.

NEEDS/ISSUES WORK SESSION:

Amanda Hoey opened the discussion and work session with a document describing optional revisions to the "Needs and Issues" process. The EDC recommended modifying the name of the "needs and issues" process as it does not describe the list or process very well. Amanda reviewed the revisions to reflect the economic importance of the projects ranked through the process.

Discussion:

Andrea Klaas asked if the commission was focused to infrastructure and community readiness or private employment business support. Joan Silver stated that the EDC had discussed this dual purpose. For needs and issues, she stated that the commission is not seeking private business projects but rather concentrates on what is necessary for businesses to succeed in the County and the underlying infrastructure requirements. Dan Durow stated that the past focus of Needs and Issues has not been exclusive to infrastructure, but rather a full spectrum approach.

Mary Kramer noted the resources constraints of the EDC and the impact that has to the ability of the EDC to support the currently listed projects. Andrea Klaas stated the commission does not have financial resources but does have political resources. Joan stated the commission resources are sitting at the table. She stated that if the commission agrees to widen the process the current members will have to be ready to take on additional work.

Scott Hege stated that, in his opinion, the Wasco County EDC should be more about economic vision than community development. It is about how to create jobs and business investment and determining if a project would lead to jobs and/or business investment. Dan Durow noted the "chicken or the egg syndrome" relative to infrastructure and economic development. He discussed the economic depression in the County in the mid 1980's and the bond measure to finance infrastructure at the Port which ultimately led to private sector investment and stability.

Scott Hege discussed the role of the Commission in advising the Board of County Commissioners as to how the County can better support economic development opportunities. Andrea Klaas stated that she would like to EDC to help identify barriers to economic opportunity and opportunities that may have been missed. She stated that the commission needed to be the voice of broader issues.

The Commission discussed the focus of projects geographically. Scott Hege stated that The Dalles economy is important to the survival of the outlying communities. Mike Zingg stated that he felt the EDC needed to concentrate on The Dalles as jobs in The Dalles will cause a ripple effect to the outlying communities. Dan Durow agreed that the The Dalles drives much of the economy of the county, but that the Wasco County EDC was created to become the voice of the out lying communities. He noted that the process needed to not be focused on The Dalles but more broad based. Mary Kramer questioned if small communities in the County really want the EDC's help and sought clarification on the future of these communities. Joan Silver noted the role of the EDC in working with communities to envision their economic future, identify basic needs and determine readiness to participate in economic development efforts. Joan stated that the commission needed to continue to do community outreach and ask what is needed. Frank Kay and Dan Durow agreed. Frank Kay discussed the Maupin City newsletter and inquired about ways to enhance communication and outreach to small communities. Frank also stated that Maupin plans to hire an individual to serve as economic development contact.

Andrea Klaas suggested that the commission needed to be project focused: pick one project and use its resources to get it done. Mike Zingg stated that the projects needed to be resource/synergy driven and they needed to include a mechanism to judge success. Amanda Hoey will draft options for project focus areas to support the EDC in determining project priorities at the next meeting

COMMISSION MEMBER REGIONAL UPDATES:

- Dan Durow reported due diligence continues on the hotel development project. He reported that the city is focusing on the RFP for the parking structure and that the design assistance package for the riverfront trail has been received.
- Frank Kay reported that five homes had been sold in Maupin for good prices. He also reported that Cycling Maupin wants to add to rafting and fishing in the area in order to expand the tourist season.
- Andrea Klaas reported that the Port of The Dalles has been very busy with business activities with a number of prospective businesses wanting to relocate to The Dalles.
- Scott Hege thanked the commission members for their service.
- Joan Silver reported the date and concept for The Dalles Chamber's "Open for Business." She also stated the Oregon legislature is still in session and in particular asked the commission members to note the Ways and Means Budget hearing.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:55AM

Submitted by Sherry Bohn, EDC Staff