

WASCO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Thursday, October 17, 2013

Mosier Creek Terrace Community Room

500 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Mosier

**ATTENDANCE**

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Chair - Joan Silver, Mary Kramer, Dan Durow, Andrea Klaas, Kristin Chatfield, Michael Zingg and Donella Polehn.

GUESTS: Scott Hege (Wasco County Commissioner), John Roberts (Wasco County Planning), Maggie Hanna (MCEDD), Annette Liebe (Regional Solutions), Emily Reed (Mosier City Council)

EDC STAFF: Amanda Hoey and Sherry Bohn

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Joan Silver called the meeting called to order at 10:05 am. Round table introductions took place. No quorum was present.

**MOSIER UPDATE – EMILY REED:**

Mosier City Council member, Emily Reed, presented an update on activities in the City of Mosier, highlighting the following:

1. Mosier turns 100 on September 14, 2014. Plans to celebrate include downtown beautification and a 100 year celebration that will include:
  - Mosier stories
  - Website for Art
  - Parade
  - Pancake Feed
  - Concerts
2. MainStreet Mosier restarted with new board members and has plans for the totem area design.
3. A new building in downtown. Building construction plans for a business on bottom and housing on top.
4. The Thirsty Woman closed and is for sale.
5. Union Pacific negotiations are on hold because UP is considering building a second track
6. Mosier has a state of the art water and sewer system.
7. Updates on EDC project submissions including:
  - a. Bike Hub. A call for artist bike racks has been issued. They would all be movable given the uncertainties in the UP negotiations.

The EDC also discussed updates on an EDC project priority; the Mosier Groundwater project. The EDC discussed the issues and constraints. Scott Hege and Joan Silver stated that there are known well issues in the out lying areas that need to be addressed. John Roberts noted that he attended a community meeting and will send a link to materials for distribution to the EDC.

Mike Zingg joins the meeting at 10:20. Quorum now present.

### **APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 2013 MINUTES:**

Andrea Klaas moved to accept the September 19, 2013 minutes as presented. Mary Kramer seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Donella Polehn joins the meeting at 10:38 am

### **APPOINTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Amanda Hoey reported that there were two terms on the Wasco County Economic Development Commission which will end December 31, 2013: Frank Kay (Position 3) and Dan Durow (Position 5). Both Frank and Dan have indicated they are willing to seek reappointment.

Andrea Klaas moved to recommend candidates **Frank Kay** for Position 3 (southern) and **Dan Durow** for Position 5 for reappointment. Mike Zingg seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Community Analysis – Amanda Hoey reported that she, Frank Kay and Joan Silver had met and they will present that meetings' discussions in the Project Prioritization section of this meeting.

Zoning – Dan Durow stated that the committee did not meet his past month. Amanda Hoey reported that the University of Oregon had committed its Honor's Economic class to assist the commission with studying the economic impact of events in Wasco County. This class will begin in January 2014 and there has not been a scope of work set at this time. Dan Durow and John Roberts expressed interest in being involved in the detailing of the scope of work with the University. Amanda will arrange the meeting.

### **COMMUNITY PROJECT PRIORITIZATION:**

Amanda Hoey reported that annually the EDC conducts a process of analyzing projects in the County which have the potential to advance opportunities for economic development. Each year the EDC has sent requests to local governments, nonprofits and special districts to submit their priority projects through "Needs and Issues." The EDC then ranked projects to develop a priority "Needs and Issues" list for the County. The EDC is analyzing modifications to the process to further enhance the value of the process and to provide more analysis of infrastructure and needs for communities beyond project submissions. Amanda, Frank Kay and Joan Silver met to develop a recommendation for a revised structure.

Three Categories/Tiers are recommended:

- 1) Fully Defined Projects. This would be the only category prioritized and scored by the EDC. This category includes projects which have:
  - a. Leadership and capacity. The project is owned/sponsored by a legally constituted body/group that can guide and manage the project and is accountable to citizens and funder. There is capacity and expertise to manage the project.
  - b. Fully articulated vision. The project fits into a community's strategic plan or process.
  - c. Budget and financing. The project owner can articulate a financing need and has a defined budget and scope. The project owner has the some assets to the table to support addressing the project need.
  - d. Impact. The project has the potential to lead to additional commercial, industrial or housing development in Wasco County. *Discussion: The EDC added to the list "or enhance community stability."*

- 2) Projects requiring additional technical assistance or capacity support. These are projects that do not have one of the items in place above. For these, the EDC would support an assessment process. It requires additional outreach, education and coordination of resources. It may require brokering referrals to other resources, consultants and agencies.
- 3) Nonprofit projects impacting economic development. Joan Silver recommended adding this as a category.

*Discussion: Joan Silver stated that it is important to keep in mind that the philosophy is that the project needs to have the capacity, vision and budget/financial ability to move forward. Amanda Hoey asked how the committee thought the scoring of the project should be done. Joan stated that she felt it should be based on “Impact” and the project’s potential to lead additional commercial, industrial or housing development in Wasco County. Dan Durow stated that “Stability” needed to be included because if a community is not stable its project will not lead to Impact. Andrea stated that the projects needed to increase Wasco County tax base and lead towards more or new jobs. Kristin asked if the scoring should be quantitative or qualitative. Dan stated that the project’s timeline needed to be considered. Andrea asked if there was a problem with using the current matrix. Amanda stated that the prioritization process will look very similar to the ones in the past.*

In order to implement the revised process, staff recommends using the Agora Investment Platform to solicit projects under the first category/tier listed above for the following reasons:

- Dynamic process that provides opportunities to continual update the status of projects, versus an annual needs and issues process
- Promotes additional value of the process by offering direct matching for funding options.
- Provides increased recognition of community and county priorities to a wider audience through the “Badging” function on the Agora Platform.
- Allows for tracking of projects and their success in obtaining financing.
- Leverages EDC resources through the Agora RARE, Maggie Hanna.

In addition to using Agora, however, staff also recommends providing options for submitting projects on paper. A copy was provided and reflects the same structure as Agora. Staff could then use the paper copy to upload projects to Agora.

*Discussion: Amanda stated that in the past the committee had put a lot of energy into where the project fit - “Infrastructure” or “Technical Assistance.” She stated that in the modified proposal, there is no division between these two categories. Many projects fit into both categories and the identification of which category is not as critical as knowing the readiness of a project to proceed. Andrea Klaas stated that she felt if the process was to move to Agora it should move totally to Agora and not offer the paper input ability. Amanda stated that this is a transition year and not all individuals and communities may be able to use Agora, so the dual system is recommended. Joan stated that community leaders needed to be trained and this is a big transition. Kristen Chatfield stated that this is a trust building process.*

The EDC proceeded to discuss the name of the process as the EDC had requested a name change. Previously, the process was known as “Needs and Issues.” Commissioners Joan Silver and Frank

Kay met with staff and recommend the name of the process change to: “Community Project Prioritization.”

*Discussion: Dan Durow offered Community Projects and Prioritization or Community Projects and Priorities. John Roberts suggested Community Enhancement Projects as the name for the process.*

The EDC decided to move forward with “Community Enhancement Projects” as the new name.

Staff proceeded to present the proposed timeline for the process:

- October-December: EDC staff meets with community leaders to provide technical support in order to get projects onto the Agora Platform. For community leaders who prefer paper submissions, those will be provided to staff to upload.
- January: EDC Commissioners meet to review project submissions.
- February: Project Priorities finalized by the EDC and provided to the Board of County Commissioners for approval.

*Discussion: Joan asked if the committee agreed with the timeline and if they should invite project presenters. The EDC agreed that the group 1 project owners should be invited for a presentation. A narrowed focus will provide more time for discussion about projects and presentations. The EDC thought the presentations helped understand issues and showed community commitment.*

### **EDC STAFF REPORT**

Amanda Hoey presented the attached October Wasco County Economic Development Commission staff report highlighting the following.

- Staff met with a Conservation Planner for NRCS regarding projects in Wasco County, including the following:
  - Mosier Groundwater Study update.
  - Fire restoration needs resulting from the Government Flats Complex fire.
  - Antelope water system requirements.
  - A project opportunity to use LIDAR for more detailed mapping of the White River and Fifteenmile watersheds.
- In follow-up to the EDC’s broadband discussion in September, staff sent a letter to the Maupin City Council regarding plans for their library, the need to consider options for broadband and the opportunities the library will present for the City’s future economic development.
- MCEEDD was successful in its application for funding for the “Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership” project. The funds will allow MCEEDD to develop and complete a bi-state strategic implementation plan to support growth of autonomous system manufacturing businesses in the region, including in Wasco County. Staff will continue to participate in the project as part of their role with the EDC as this is a critical sector for the County’s economy.
- Staff has been engaging with Gorge Grown Food Network on a number of conversations around supporting agriculture and value added ag entrepreneurs.
- The November meeting of the Columbia Gorge Bi-State Renewable Energy Zone will be held November 1, 2013 at 10 am at the College Boardroom.
- MCEEDD and the Columbia Gorge Winegrowers Association are hosting a “Gorge Wine Country Economic Development” Tour October 22-23. EDC members were asked to let Amanda know if they had an interest to attend.

- A housing discussion will take place on October 17 from 1 to 3 pm at City Hall in The Dalles regarding a draft proposal for establishing a housing revolving loan fund.

*Discussion: Amanda asked if the EDC would be interested in a presentation by Gorge Grown Food Network at a future meeting. The EDC agreed that they were interested. Andrea Klaas asked if there could be a State of the Water in Wasco County presentation. Joan stated that it could be put on a future agenda. Amanda Hoey stated that staff will work on it, but it will take some time to pull together well. She also suggested including Hood River County which is in the process of conducting extensive studies on the state of water in their County.*

### **COMMISSION MEMBER REGIONAL UPDATES**

- Annette Liebe reported that a representative from the Oregon Department of Energy, Rob Del Mar, will be joining the Regional Solutions team. His focus is on renewables.
- Dan Durow reported that the Riverfront Trail expansion was temporarily delayed to review a parking impact at the Marina. He also reported that the downtown hotel project 120 day extension deadline is the end of December.
- Michael Zingg reported that Cottonwood Canyon was seeing a lot of interest.
- Andrea Klaas reported that while on the Oregon Cherry Growers Tour she learned that they are expanding their market. She also reported that the North Chenoweth RFP went out last week and that it was a \$6 million project. She was recently appointed to the Drive Oregon Board.
- Kristen Chatfield reported on the new trail to the Mosier Plateau.
- John Roberts reported that “What the Festival” was tied up in litigation and that Young Life legislation 30-98 was moving quickly. John also reported that the county needed to take a look at setting some policy for limited gathering, social gathering and tours.
- Donella Polehn reported that most of the harvests were over. She also reported that there were 500 new acres of grapes planted and that this was not a good year for cherries.
- Scott Hege described the Google expansion and deals reached for the Enterprise Zone.
- Joan Silver reported that The Dalles cruise ship dock has been very successful and that there were 15 more stops scheduled before the end of the season. She reported that the number of stops will increase next year. Joan reported on discussions with Shaniko, the historic highway bicycle end at Chenowith Creek and that the chamber economic development committee is working towards finding the right place for an RV park.

Meeting adjourned at 12:02 PM