

WASCO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

THURSDAY, April 16, 2015

MCEDD Office

515 East 2nd Street, The Dalles, OR

ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Joan Silver, Fred Justesen (Teleconference), Dan Durow, Gary Grossman, Terry Moore, and Greg Johnson

GUESTS: Loren Shultz – Infrastructure Finance, Stan Kelsay, Jeff Davis and Kurt Conger

EDC STAFF: Carrie Pipinich and Sherry Bohn

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Joan Silver called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. There was a quorum present.

MINUTES OF MARCH 19, 2015

Gary Grossman moved to approve the minutes of the March 19, 2015. Dan Durow seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

COMMISSION POSITION #11 RECOMMENDATION:

Carrie Pipinich explained that during current efforts to revise the EDC's role, an additional EDC Commissioner position was created. Position #11 was created as an at-large seat. At the March EDC meeting, the Commission determined that it was interested in seeking a candidate with a utilities and infrastructure background. Staff conducted outreach related to the position opening and received interest forms from several very qualified candidates. Joan Silver explained that the Wasco County Economic Development Commission is responsible for making a recommendation for appointment to the Wasco County Commission.

Chair Joan Silver welcomed the candidates and explained the interview process. Each of the candidates were then asked to introduce themselves, explain their backgrounds and why they were interested in the position. Chair Joan Silver stated that following each of the candidate's introductions, background explanation and statement of interests, she would ask the commission members if they had questions.

Stan Kelsay introduced himself, explained his background and stated his interests including broadband. He noted he felt an engineer's perspective could be valuable to the Commission, and that he had strong experience in moving projects forward. Greg Johnson stated that water infrastructure projects were likely the focus of the group this year and asked if Stan experience in that area. Stan explained that water was not his forte and that his background and interests were in soil and rock. Dan Durow also expressed that the EDC has moved toward a more active role with its Commissioners, and that there was a strong need for attendance both at meetings and engagement with committee work. Stan noted that he was semi-retired, and that he had a flexible schedule.

Jeff Davis introduced himself and explained that he works for Wasco Electric Cooperative. They are 75 years old, and serve Maupin, Wamic, Tygh Valley, Antelope/Young Life, and North Warm Springs in Wasco County. He noted economic development impacts utilities significantly. Joan

Silver asked about his ability to participate in both the EDC meetings and committee work. Jeff stated that he did not see it any conflict or problem with that approach.

Kurt Conger introduced himself, explained his background, noting that he works for Northern Wasco County People's Utility District, and then explained his job responsibilities, interests and willingness to help the community. He noted that he was interested because he felt economic opportunity was key to strength in community. Dan asked about Kurt's ability to meet the commission time commitment and committee work time commitment. Carrie explained the amount of time. Kurt stated that he felt he could fulfill the commitment but wanted to be mindful of his work commitments as well. Joan explained that the committees set their own schedule and that each commission member serves on at least one committee.

The applicants were thanked and then asked to leave while the commission members discussed their recommendation.

Discussion: Terry Moore stated that there were two candidates with engineering backgrounds and that Jeff has a lot of community connections. He stated that Stan has developed a business and brings that background. Greg Johnson stated as he reviewed the applicants' submitted applications and considered them in light of the direction of committees. Dan Durow stated that he thought that working full time would make it more challenging given the additional time commitment being requested. He also stated that with the proposed changes of expecting committee work from the Commission members could cause issues. Fred Justensen stated that the Commission was fortunate to have three qualified candidates apply. Joan Silver stated that she was a little bit concerned that the committee should not give technical advice but work with the communities on how to engage that expertise and how to build consensus within the community related to sustainable system support. Dan stated that even with general knowledge it could be beneficial to further engage someone with an engineering background. Terry discussed the difference between political expertise vs technical expertise and which would be most beneficial.

Loren Shultz stated that he was happy that the discussions were including infrastructure. Joan asked Loren to stay in touch with Carrie about his visit to Wamic. Joan stated that it is often times money that drives success.

Fred Justensen **moved to recommend** to the Wasco County Board of Commissioners to appoint Stan Kelsay to the Wasco County Economic Development Commission. Dan Durow seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

EDC COMMITTEE IMPLEMENTATION

Carrie Pipinich explained that at the March EDC meeting, formation of several new committees and continuation of an existing committee was identified as an implementation strategy for this updated role. She stated that each committee would focus on moving projects in the county forward and that committee formation and focus would be revisited by the full EDC as needed. Carrie stated that the committees would be collaborative and in a working group style around efforts to support specific projects. She stated that the format would provide an opportunity for more active participation from EDC Commissioners as well as engagement with key partners on specific projects.

Carrie Pipinich asked for a review from the committee so that everyone was on the same page. Joan Silver stated that she would like to have a point person for each. Terry Moore stated that he thought it would be beneficial to use a "matrix management" approach to the committees. This would entail a point and sub-point Commissioner and then bring the various expertise from the

Commission to each of the committees as needed. Joan Silver reiterated the need for community involvement in the committees as well. Carrie noted that she had reached out to Mary Kramer about spearheading the Dufur Committee as she was their representative, and to Terry Moore about the Mosier Committee as he was their representative. She asked where others would like to engage.

- Dufur Water Systems Committee – Mary Kramer and ?
- Wamic Water Systems Committee – Joan Silver and Greg Johnson
- Mosier Committee – Terry Moore and Gary Grossman
- Broadband Access Committee—Stan Kelsay and Frank Kay
- Open For Business – Kathy Ursprung and Fred Justensen

Discussion: Dan Durow stated that there would be a number of changes starting July 1 at the City. He stated that he would be transitioning to hand off his current work, except the Riverfront Trail and it looks like this committee appointment would be included in that transition.

Terry Moore asked if there was a strategic operating manual. Dan Durow suggested writing down what each of the projects were, who was responsible and involved and the other details in order to give a better understanding of each project. Carrie noted she would work up a communication strategy to ensure that the committees were strongly connected to the EDC as a whole, staff, and other committees. Joan noted that at each full EDC meeting it would be good to share progress and discuss next steps.

FULL EDC MEETING CALENDAR UPDATE

Carrie Pipinich opened the discussion about the need to allow for more time for community engagement at the meetings. She noted that the feedback from both EDC members and community members was that five minutes during the Community Enhancement Project presentations was not adequate to understand projects and their role in addressing opportunities and challenges in communities. Joan Silver asked if the board was willing to start the meetings at 9:30am. The board consensus was to start the meetings at 9:30am and to the presented revised meeting schedule.

STAFF REPORT

Carrie Pipinich presented the WCEDC staff report highlighting the following

Broadband

Carrie reported that one of the strategic priorities for the EDC has been supporting expansion of broadband in our rural communities and promoting adoption of those services for businesses and residents.

- Staff conducted additional data analysis on the 224 survey responses collected in South Wasco County to better understand the information collected, and identify potential outreach that might be necessary.
- The South Wasco Alliance hosted a Community Forum at the Wamic Elementary School Community Center that staff attended to provide an update on the broadband demand surveys conducted. Discussion centered on the significant increase in demand for both internet access and cellular network access during the busy summer months. In addition to broadband challenges, the group discussed opportunities related to specialty crop production, additional lodging options for visitors, and community pride.
- Staff hosted a South Wasco Broadband Project Committee meeting April 7th, 2015. The meeting focused reviewing the demand survey data collected, and on identifying outreach targets for the assets inventory that supports identifying potential areas where a business case

can be found and areas where gaps in that financing can be addressed. Staff will work with the committees to gather this information and review it with the internet service providers to determine which areas are ready for next steps.

Columbia Gorge Bi-State Renewable Energy (CGBREZ):

CGBREZ met in April, and had a speaker to discuss Rute Foundation Systems and a potential test facility to be sited in the broader region with ties to CGCC's Renewable Energy Technology program. Through MCEDD, CGBREZ, has identified a consultant, David Van't Hof, to develop several pieces related to better understanding potential impacts from projects with permits initiated but not completed and opportunities related to the California market reopening. The regional Pumped Storage project's comment period has closed, and they are working toward submitting their FERC licensing application in October of 2015. Additionally, members of the Energy Supply Task Force are looking to visit in August related to the Pumped Storage Project. These would ultimately support moving the in-process wind energy projects in Wasco County forward.

Gorge Economic Development Symposium: The Gorge Economic Symposium is a half day event on Thursday, **May 14, 2015** from 9am to 12pm at the Columbia Center for the Arts Theater in Hood River. The Symposium will focus on economic and employment trends in the regional economy (Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Klickitat and Skamania counties). It is designed for economists, employers, workforce development experts, education professionals, community and economic developers, and those who use data to make informed economic decisions. Speakers will include representatives from both Oregon and Washington. For more information, or to register, please visit the website: gorgesummit.org. Hosted by MCEDD.

Meeting Adjourn at 11:40am.

The next meeting will be June 18 at 9:30 am in Dufur.

Submitted by Sherry Bohn, EDC Staff