

**Forest Grove Economic Development Commission**  
**Thursday, August 8, 2010**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees:** Don Jones, Cindy Sturm, Teri Koerner, Elena Uhing, Brian Wilbur, Mark Frandsen, Lois Hornberger, J.J. Johnston, Guy Storms, Richard Matzke, Lisa Duncan.

**City Staff:** Jeff King, Michael Sykes.

**Also Attending:** Pete Truax, Mayor

**1. Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order by EDC Chair Don Jones @ 12:16 PM.

**2. Citizens Communications**

None.

**3. Approval of July 8, 2010, EDC Summary Minutes**

Cindy Sturm motioned to approve the minutes as presented. J.J. Johnston seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously.

**4. Additions/Deletions to Agenda & Staff Summary**

Jeff King reported that Old Trapper is currently expanding their building and adding 9500 sq. ft., and are also hiring at this time. Lieb Foods was able to take advantage of the State program named Boost as well as Federal Tax Credits which has allowed them to add 10 new employees which should get them a little over their pre-recession employment numbers.

**5. Business**

**A. McMenamins – Host Update**

None.

**B. Nominating Committee**

Brian Wilbur & Don Jones reported on ideas being considered within the Nominating Committee. Don expressed a desire to maintain diversity in nominees; a few ideas would be to consider a wood products company and a downtown business. Some suggestions were Stimson Lumber (which is hiring at this time), The Urban Decanter, and Safeway. Introductions will need to be made to the City Council once the EDC decides who they would like to nominate. Mark Frandsen asked Jeff King if new candidates would be required to fill out an application. Jeff responded that there is an existing application that should be filled out. Elena Uhing suggested that “home-based” businesses also be considered and/or represented within the EDC in the future. Jeff King agreed that often times business that begin as “home-based” end up expanding within the community and are vital to the City’s economy.

### **C. Wayfinding Update**

Jeff King passed around samples of the new Wayfinding signs. The goal or objective of the signs is to help direct people, whether they are citizens of Forest Grove or visitors, to places and events around the Forest Grove area. The Wayfinding Sub-committee is ready for the signs to go out to bid and they could be ready to install as soon as Fall 2010. Cindy Sturm asked if the signs could be manufactured to be graffiti proof. Teri Koerner mentioned that she had given Jeff King the name of material that can be used to construct the signs so that they are graffiti proof. At this time it is planned to have one kiosk sign downtown, one kiosk sign for each historic district, one at the Fernhill Wetlands, and one at Lincoln Park. Regional maps will be on the back of each kiosk. Lois Hornberger noted that quite a bit of time, energy, and thought were put into the signs by the Wayfinding Sub-committee. For example one meeting was devoted entirely to color scheme, and the signs were designed specifically to fit in with the new street lights & the historic district street signs. Michael Sykes thanked the sub-committee for putting forth so much effort into the Wayfinding project.

### **D. Subcommittee Reports & Feedback**

#### **Industrial & Infrastructure**

Mark Frandsen reported that the subcommittee developed a list the last time that they met of goals for the subcommittee which include: 1) Develop a contact list including the top 40 brokers to use for mailing out letters regarding the economic development opportunities within Forest Grove. Jeff is in the process of getting the list from Paul Breur 2) Jeff King is preparing to send out another round of mailings very soon. 3) Develop written copy. 4) Investigate a marketing plan. 5) Take steps to learn from other cities & the state of how to best improve the economic development in Forest Grove. Jeff King noted that he really likes the tag line on the website, “Where business & family thrive”, and that it captures what we are trying to promote in Forest Grove.

#### **Workforce Partnership**

Jeff King provided an update stating that there has been a major funding drop by WSI. Per capita Forest Grove has the highest need for a workforce center in Washington County since the City has the highest poverty, and highest Hispanic/Spanish speaking population. It services all of western Washington County and the closest center to the east is at 185<sup>th</sup> Ave. in Hillsboro, and there is no center west of the City until the Oregon Coast. The center is under threat of closure by the end of the year and is currently operating half time. Other centers have been reported as struggling in the current economy, but none are under threat of closure at this time. On August 18<sup>th</sup> Mayor Truax will meet with Andy Duyck to discuss the current situation. There may be hope of some funding coming from the second stimulus package that has passed as well.

#### **Branding & Marketing**

Brian Wilbur spoke about the subcommittee’s greatest challenge which is how to get the brand out. The question looming is, “How do we support the brand?”, and the

weakest link in the branding strategy has been the wine piece. Bill Baker is scheduled to parade out the brand to as many people as possible in the very near future. Another challenge facing the subcommittee is how to sell the brand to the community and how to help people see what is in it for them. Teri Koerner asked if there can be an electronic version of the branding strategy. Jeff King replied that that could definitely happen. J.J. Johnston suggested the NewsTimes possibly running a continuing story for 8 – 10 weeks to generate interest within the community. It was suggested that a good time to run a story about branding would be once the Wayfinder signs have been installed since that way the community could actually see something tangible and that would provide an example of how it would enhance our community.

### **Small Business**

Jeff King gave a brief synopsis indicating that the two most important issues right now are vetting the current list, and a guide to starting a small business in Forest Grove as the promo continues. The most important aspect currently is promoting new businesses and small businesses. There is a strong framework in place and the subcommittee is still making progress. Electronic copies have been made of a number of business articles in preparation of having a CD to distribute

### **Tourism**

Teri Koerner explained that the subcommittee will be meeting next week and the deadline for the WCVA guide is next Tuesday, August 17<sup>th</sup>. This is one of the major promotions for the Tourism Subcommittee and the stake holder membership is free, but the business owners simply have to fill out a form. There are at this time approximately 22 Forest Grove businesses that won't be included because they have not bothered to return the stake holder information form. 8 of the 22 are restaurants. The subcommittee has contacted the owners/managers of the various businesses in hopes that they will complete the form and not be omitted from the guide, but they cannot fill out the form for the businesses. Teri noted that Tourism will also be working with Pacific University to oversee the events before the football games this fall. Jeff King pointed out two more upcoming events which are The Americana Music Festival @ McMenamins on Sat. August 14<sup>th</sup>, and the Uncorked event downtown on Main Street on August 21<sup>st</sup> from 4 PM – 9 PM. The entrance fee to Uncorked is \$10.00 which includes a logo glass.

## **6. Council Communications**

Elena Uhing updated the Commission on the proposed Walker-Naylor Historic District. The request went in and there was a response from the Historic Landmarks Board that they will be on the docket October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010 to make their presentation. Anyone wishing to attend in support of the new historic district approval, please contact James Reitz in Community Development for information. If approved, this would be the third historic district in Forest Grove. There are several benefits in adding historic districts to the City such as: 1) Economic benefits such as tours. People come to the City just to see the historic districts. 2) Providing a sound

