

Forest Grove Economic Development Commission
Thursday, March 5th, 2009

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Lois Hornberger, Don Jones, Jackie Sandquist, Pete van Dyke, John Johnston, Jack Musser, Guy Storm, Cindy Sturm, Lisa Duncan, Ali Brown.

City Staff: Jeff King, Michael Sykes, City Manager,

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called at 12:16 pm by EDC Chair- Don Jones

2. Citizens Communications

There were none.

3. Approval of EDC summary minutes.

Lois Hornberger moved to accept minutes as amended. Mike Sykes seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Additions/Deletions

EDC staff, Jeff King had a handout of a draft of a revised sign code to distribute at the end of the meeting. JJ Johnston asked about stimulus money for Forest Grove. Don Jones placed it under staff comments.

5. Business

A. Mcmenamins- Host Update

Don Jones thanked Mcmenamins for use of the meeting space and lunch.

B. Board Member Communications

Jack Musser said that the Oregon House passed a revision of the 07-09 state budget and the Oregon Senate was expected to pass shortly. A combination of cuts and federal stimulus funds means that the Forest Grove School District will have a full school year with no days cut.

C. Board Positions

Don Jones read an email to the board stating that Randy Roedl from Woodfold-Marco resigned from the EDC Board due to increased work commitments. Don asked for the Board to think about suggestions for a replacement in the value-added wood products industry. He also sought suggestions for alternates for Steve Boone covering agricultural/winery industry. Lois Hornberger asked if Dewy Weddington, a senior employee at Sake One would be a good candidate. Mike Sykes suggested Scott Behren from the Wine Behren. Don Jones asked the Board to give it some thought and either e-mail or come to the next meeting with possibilities.

D. Strategic Plan Update

Don Jones explained the importance of completing a sheet for each action item bullet. He explained the elements of the Action Plan Form. He said that one method of having each sub-committee complete this task is by dividing the bullets among each member to complete separately. The Sub-committee then would re-convene to edit and sharpen each action plan. Don added that the next would be to have the sub-committees prioritize the top 10 action items. It should only take 1 or 2 more sub-committee meetings to complete the strategic plan.

Jeff King mentioned that several of these goals overlap. For example there are business retention, and training action items in several of the subcommittees such as commercial/retail, industrial and small business. The same for marketing. But are they really different strategies for each sector. In other words should the final strategic plan be presented around issues or by subcommittee where it shows up each time. Cindy Sturm asked if the Chamber event was segmented or was it for all businesses. Don said the chamber event worked well for all types of business. He added that the top 10 should be around issues not subcommittee titles. We want to be efficient. Ali Brown said that's what the Chamber event did. It was basic assistance for all businesses. Teri Koerner said one of the goals of the Chamber event was to bring business together. Cindy Sturm stated that individual subcommittees need to prioritize. Jack Musser that there is quite a bit of overlap and the goals and action plans need to be consolidated around issues.

Lois Hornberger asked if all of the goals and action plan bullets have now been completed by each subcommittee, Staffer Jeff King said that they were. Don Jones that the Action Plan forms really need to be completed for each action bullet before prioritization. He is concerned that if the prioritization gets done first then the action plan forms will never get done. JJ Johnston said that there is some duplication but each sub-committee has some of each issue. For example, industrial has some elements of marketing and retention and that should get spun off to marketing group so we can focus on hard data. He added that every time we take something to committee it takes time and we all have limited time. Do Jones agreed saying that future organizational groups will be around actions. So we might put sub-committees on hold and reorganize. Cindy Sturm said that some redistribution or reorganization will be necessary. JJ Johnson said that the action items should be sifted to a vital few. Staff Jeff King will send out the original goals and actions and a second that has been consolidated and reorganized around issues and email out to board members before the April meeting.

D. Branding Representation

Lois Hornberger gave a power point on the branding project for Forest Grove tourism. The power point was a version of what was presented to City Council a week earlier by the consultant Bill Baker. Lois said that branding is much more than just a logo and tagline. However a good logo and tagline will draw attention

to Forest Grove. Lois discussed the three related projects/studies that contributed to this branding. She also talked about the extensive outreach including direct interviews, focus groups, surveys and meeting with people from outside the City. Lois said the goal of branding is something that sets Forest Grove apart. What makes us different? The competition is global and it is intense. So you either differentiate or fade into the background. Some goals for Forest Grove are fun, charm, relaxation, innovation, getaways. She showed the Destination Promise –it is a promise or your reputation to deliver on. Some of the leading attributes are: wineries, outdoor recreation, a small historic college town and community events. Other strengths that feed into this are Pacific University, History and Heritage and Mcmenamins Grand Lodge. The target audiences include Wine Enthusiasts, Getaways-day trips and short stays, Outdoor Recreation Enthusiasts, Sporting Event Organizers, Families, Students and Alumni of Pacific University, Meeting Planners, Relocation-Residents. The tagline is: 'Forest Grove –Where Oregon Pinot was Born'. The logo has a green circle with a white pinot leaf within it and a bunch of purple wine grapes. Lois said that the logo and tagline is just a mechanism to leverage other things.

Jack Musser asked if it could be a representation of our brand. Lois said yes – including innovation, wine, history, innovation and agriculture yet modern and sophisticated. Don Jones said it is the mindset we are trying to get. Lois asked for any additional feedback. Cindy asked about next steps. Lois said that it will be presented to the Chamber board, City Club and Rotary Club for further feedback and the final report and materials should be completed by April. Jack thought it was very good. He said that we are trying to develop cultural competence and be more bilingual. How does this relate to competence? He was concerned that it was too 'white middle class'. Cindy asked Jack if his concern was that we are not bringing the Hispanic community into our efforts. Ali Brown said we need to integrate with Latinos such as the Farmers Market. Staff Jeff King replied that part of the branding is a section about promoting fresh, local produce. Mike Sykes stated that this is more about tourism for everyone not just particular cultures. We are looking to create jobs for backgrounds. Jack said that we should make sure not to forget that.

JJ Johnston thought the logo looked elegant yet simple and can be used for many things. The key is what you use it for. Lois Hornberger said to look at the positives and that this is the tip of the iceberg. There is still a lot to do in order to begin implementation.

F. Small Business Initiative/Retention

Staffer Jeff King talked about the overall coordinated effort to assist and retain small business. The Chamber small business event discussed earlier was one example. King said the small business roundtable/brainstorming meeting will consist of a good cross section of small business service providers will be held later this month. The goal is to address current challenges and new approaches and ideas to help local business.

6. Council Communications

There was none

7. Staff Communications

Jeff King said that some progress is being made in restoring the Forest Grove Workforce and Training Access Center. Jackie Sandquist said that there are some monies that WSI is providing for upgraded computers and software. In addition federal stimulus money will be available for a year or so. Staffing has not been figured out yet but will involve several agencies in partnership. Mike Sykes said that there will be another meeting shortly to develop next steps. Mike added that these service are important to the area, especially with the downtown office in Hillsboro also closing he said that Forest Grove and western Washington County and that we getting a lot less workforce resources in this region compared to other comparable areas such as in Columbia and Tillamook counties.

Jeff King also distributed a draft of revisions to the sign code produced by the Community Development Dept and that members should review this closely.

Mike Sykes said that the City is aggressively pursuing stimulus funds. We have produced a priority list and the #1 project – a \$1.6 million sidewalk and streetscape improvements in the downtown funded allows the original project to be extended. Jack Musser asked how many businesses have closed. Jeff King replied that Times Litho and the Cedar Canyon have ceased to operate with the latter being purchased by Oregon H2O. JJ said most companies are experiencing some layoffs. Lois Hornberger said that the new freshman class is expected to be steady.

8. Announcement of Next Meeting

EDC Board members agreed that the next meeting will be April 2nd, 2009

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:38 PM

Approved by the Forest Grove Economic Development Commission:

Date: _____ 4/2/09 _____

Signed:  _____