

Meeting Minutes

ATTENDEES: Tim Budelman, Hope Kramer, Kelly Marks, Justin Norman, John Hayes, James Draznin, Howard Sullivan, Guy Storms, Don Jones, George Cress

CITY STAFF: Jeffrey King, Cassi Bergstrom

ALSO ATTENDING: Dick Stenson, Peter Truax-Mayor, Jon Michael Kowertz, SBDC

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 12:24 p.m. by EDC Chair Tim Budelman.

2. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION:

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MAY 7, 2015 SUMMARY MINUTES:

Justin Norman moved to accept the meeting minutes as presented. Howard Sullivan seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously.

4. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS & STAFF SUMMARY:

Jeff gave the following update on Staff Summary:

We are starting to see some new business activity in downtown Forest Grove. A potential of 3 restaurants are coming in. Two locations being on Main Street and one on 21st.

A small grocery store selling local products such as meats, wine, cheese, eggs, produce has bought property to renovate and is something to look forward to.

They are continuing talks with a food processor looking at a 60,000 square foot industrial site located on Elm Street. Potentially could be 12 acres because they will want to double their growth.

Washington County's Industrial site assessment project is looking at 15 sites for review, 5 being within the City of Forest Grove. The economic opportunities and infrastructure cost is being looked at. All 15 sites are found to be significantly under water. To make them development ready would take assistance from grants, state programs, infrastructure programs, etc. Final report will be eye opening, and will go into depth in July. Mr. Michael asked the question as to why the cost is so high. Mr. King explained that the highest cost was the transportation access costs. Mr. Draznin asked how we

can catch up these Tier 2 and 3 lots to a Tier 1 lot. Mr. King stated it would take a higher level discussion regionally/statewide to negotiate the cost. An ongoing grant from Metro is looking at these sites to get these to the next stage. Mr. Dranznin asked what the average salary of a food processor employee. Mr. King stated that he would have to look at the data. It is not minimum wage, but lower than a manufacturing salary.

5. BUSINESS:

A. McMENAMIN'S -HOST UPDATE:

None.

B. FOREST GROVE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATE:

Howard Sullivan updated the board on the following:

A new Visitor's Guide was handed out to everyone on the EDC board. Everyone is very happy with what it is. Forest Grove was the only community in Washington County without a Visitor's Guide. There are things in Forest Grove that no other community has, and the Visitor's Guide provides the public with that information. Only 6 weeks was spent on the creating the guide, and next year they would like to start earlier. Businesses are commenting that they would like to be in the guide next year.

Friday, June 5th at 5pm will be the ribbon cutting for Bull Run Cider. The mayor will be present.

Wednesday market went really well.

C. EDC STRATEGIC PLAN & SUBCOMMITTEES UPDATE FINALIZATION:

Mr. King wanted to finalize the four pieces:

1. Mission Plan;
2. Strategic Plan;
3. Work Plan-Appendices; and
4. Subcommittees, specifically the Ambassadors Committee.

Ms. Kelly read the email regarding the language around Ambassadors. Mr. King made the Ambassadors its own unique subcommittee since it will be for all the EDC members. Ms. Kramer gave opinion that the plan looks really good, very succinct and organized. Mr. Michael asked if Jeff will need support at the City Council meeting when he presents this. Mr. King appreciates the gesture and would like 3 EDC members to be present. Ms. Marks made comment that just a few formatting things to adjust on the document.

Ms. Kramer moved the motion to approve the Strategic Plan, Subcommittee and Appendices as presented and discussed. Ms. Marks seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

D. 2015-16 CITY PROPOSED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BUDGET:

Mr. King gave the update on the proposed budget:

It is essentially the same budget as the previous year, with the main pieces being public information (marketing). This includes food processing, Team Oregon shows, broker promotions, tourism with Travel Oregon, and professional services working with small businesses. There is a hope to see economic growth through an economic gardening program. The program has access to powerful data and research engines so it can pinpoint the opportunities within the particular market. Ms. Kramer asked if we get services in specific cases or if we are a member. Mr. King explained that the gardening programs work with specific businesses to do their market research. Mr. Stenson asked the question if the entire budget will be spent this year, and if there are projects that additional money was needed for. Mr. King answered that the entire budget will be utilized, and projects regarding commercial opportunities would be nice to have additional budget money for. At this point, it is too late to add to the ED budget. A suggestion was made by Ms. Kramer that specific projects need to be thought of for next year's budget. The sooner the better.

Mr. Stenson asked if there is more that can be done via urban renewal to prepare and finance the vacant properties. Mayor Truax answered that the urban renewal is a different operation, and the district needs built up and the limited funding won't go very far. When the new city manager comes in, it will take a bit to figure out your job, my job and then will begin to progress. Mr. King explained it will be a broad discussion across different agencies to get industrial sites up to par.

Mr. King then gave an update regarding the Business Incentive Program. The council report will be on June 8 and have found that the actual cost to the city is very little. Most of the businesses utilizing the program have been very small businesses that need it the most. It has made great strides in filling up industrial space as well. Mr. Hayes stated that this program should remain in place until every store front is filled. Ms. Kramer suggested making this a 2 year program instead of going to council every year. Mayor Truax stated that there is no reason to send it back for council approval on an annual basis. It gives the council a sense of direction and should be approved until 2020. **Mr. Hayes moves the motion to present the Business Incentive Program to the council as a 5 year plan with annual reports. Mr. Draznin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.** Mr. Michael stated presenting this as a 5 year program shows commitment to the small businesses in Forest Grove.

E. TOURISM:

Ms. Kramer gave the update on Tourism, stating that a CEP grant application was put in for a tourism promotion piece that would be a two sided map tear off sheet, similar to what Washington County has. This will mostly be geared towards wine/cider/craft foods and other major attractions. The application is to get the funds

for designing and developing the map, printing, and distributing. It will be presented June 11 to the committee. Mr. King explained the front has the visual; the back has the contact information. Ms. Kramer went on to say that the hope is to keep adding to the information they have, and all of this will one day become an app on a smart phone. Ms. Kramer made the suggestion that the EDC has a goal to write a grant per year, and starts earlier in the year to process. Mayor Truax explained that it was later this year because processes needed to be changed. Ms. Marks suggested we have an annual calendar created to line up the meeting schedule and not forget about these deadlines.

Ms. Kramer reminded the board about having a training regarding the links on the website and where to find information. It also presents an opportunity to train the ambassadors of the board on where potential businesses can access the information.

6. COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS:

Ms. Uhing was not present so Mayor Truax gave the following update:

The budget committee is in final talks regarding the 2015-16 budget. A budget of \$95 million was adopted. Property tax rate went to 3.9554 per thousand for a permanent rate, and \$1.60 per thousand for the local option levy that has two more years to run. An action and public hearing will take place on June 22.

Jesse Vanderzanden will be our new city manager, pending his background check. He comes from Fairbanks, Alaska where he was a manager of an airport, but is an Oregon native graduating from Glencoe High School and Oregon State.

Senator Merkley sent an email update indicating that as part of the Energy and Water Appropriations update, there is funding for capacity and infrastructure updated for Scoggins dam to make it bigger and earthquake proof as much as they possibly can. This is new territory, and just a start. If the federal government doesn't pay 85-90% of the project then Forest Grove's share of the project becomes unattainable.

Transportation issues have been addressed to the Oregon Legislature to please do something about transportation issue. There is a move to surrender streets from the state to the city or county. Forest Grove has the Highway 47 issue, and would like something to be done in the corridor of Pacific to B Street. Nationally we are always in contact with the Department of Transportation. There are 5311 funds that we are trying to access to guarantee a longer future for GroveLink. GroveLink has surpassed its two year projection only 3 months in. Figures continue to go up every month. Long term funding seems feasible.

County wide discussions will be held to help pay for transportation through a bond. This is for the four areas of huge growth coming in to Washington County north Bennet and Bethany, south Hillsboro, South Cooper Mountain, and River Terrace. Eighteen thousand homes will be coming in to the next 20 years in these areas. One third of cost will come through the city SDCs, and two thirds will come through county bonds. More discussion is needed.

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Wilsonville opted out of the Joint Water Commission. This is creating issues amongst the JWC. This may push projects on the board out, and will keep the EDC updated on the results of future discussion.

Times Litho is moving forward. Tokolo Properties is in talks still. The Post Office is up for auction as well which may be of interest.

7. STAFF & BOARD MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS:

Ms. Kramer reminded the board about having a training regarding the links on the website and where to find information. It also presents an opportunity to train the ambassadors of the board on where potential businesses can access the information. It would be nice to have Cobb from H&H Outfitters to come back and give his opinion on the ease of access through the EDC website.

Ms. Marks passed out information regarding the A Taste of Washington County event taking place Thursday, June 18 from 5:30-9:00pm.

8. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING:

Jeff King announced that the next meeting of the EDC will be on Thursday, July 9 at 12:00 noon in the Alice Inkley Room at McMenemy's Grand Lodge.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Mark Nakajima, James Draznin seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Approved by the Forest Grove Economic Development Commission:

Date: _____,

Signed: _____
EDC Chair