

Forest Grove Economic Development Commission
Thursday, May 5, 2011

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: Steve Lach, J.J. Johnston, Don Jones, Jeff King, Guy Storms, Brian Wilbur, Teri Koerner, Anh Ho, Tom Belusko, Kati Mayfield, Rudy Marchesi, Lisa Duncan.

City Staff: Michael Sykes.

Also Attending: Pete Truax, Bret Rehrig, Larry Trujillo, Kimberly Viera.

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by EDC Chair Brian Wilbur @ 12:10 p.m. Brian asked if everyone would please introduce themselves.

2. Citizen Communications:

None.

3. Approval of the EDC Meeting Minutes from April 7th, 2011:

Teri Koerner moved to accept the meeting minutes as presented. Guy Storms seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously.

4. Additions / Deletions & Staff Summary:

Jeff King stated that the Wayfinder Signs are almost completely installed throughout the City. Teri Koerner mentioned that it would be important for Jeff to point out in his press release about the Wayfinder Signs, that they were funded by the Washington County Visitors Association (WCVA).

5. Business:

A. McMenamins Host Update

None.

B. Board Member Recruitment

Jeff King welcomed Bret Rehrig & Kimberly Viera to today's meeting and thanked them for attending for the second time. He stated that the EDC has asked them to consider becoming EDC members. He added that their business background and experience would be a valuable addition to the EDC. Tom Belusko introduced the new student advisor from Pacific University, Anh Ho. Tom asked Anh to give a little bit of background on herself. She stated that she is from Vietnam, and that she is currently majoring in economics and business. She said that she is very excited to be a part of the EDC and gain real world experience which she pointed out was already proving to be different from her text books.

C. Subcommittee Reports

Industrial / Infrastructure

J.J. Johnston & Jeff King reported that the broker letter is ready to go out, and that the subcommittee will next target the top 100 fastest growing businesses as listed in the Portland Business Journal for a second mailing. The letter will propose Forest Grove as a good option to consider if and when these businesses are ready to expand.

Workforce Partnership

Jeff King mentioned that there are two particular issues facing this subcommittee right now. One is that the likelihood of cuts being severe is very high now. Most likely the workforce center in Forest Grove will close, plus up to 40% cuts in other areas of the program. The second issue pointed out was that he feels the subcommittee has made strides in the language pertaining to Title 9.

Branding & Marketing

Brian Wilbur stated that the Wayfinding signs have been placed around town after much discussion as to the best place to put them. Also he mentioned that the committee is still working on putting together a collection of Forest Grove signature shots. He hoped those would be compiled by the end of the month. Don Jones added that it is very valuable to have a resource of signature shots at their disposal whenever they may be needed for things such as brochures or other public relations type media. Lastly, he noted that they have put the final touches on the Power Point presentation that will be used to educate the community.

Small Business

Kati Mayfield explained that the committee is still working on the Buy Local feasibility study / survey. It is available on-line, as well as in a hard copy version which can be obtained at City Hall, The Chamber of Commerce, Bank of the West, NewsTimes, Adelante Mujeres, and at the Farmer's Market. The survey has been printed with English on one side, and Spanish on the other. There is also one for business owners, and a separate one for consumers. Hopefully a lot of pertinent data will result from the responses. There have been announcements about the survey in the NewsTimes and also in the utility bills.

Tourism

Teri Koerner said that the committee is working out the possibility of working with Hagg Lake to implement a disc golf course in that area. She stated that they would not hear any news about whether or not the grant application that they submitted has been accepted until at least May 19th, 2011. The awards will be announced at the WCVA meeting. By the time the EDC meets in June, they will know whether or not they were awarded a grant, and if they will be able to go forward with the proposed brochures. Also, the new Chamber of Commerce website is being tested currently and hopefully will be finished soon.

D. U.S. Small Business Administration Presentation

Larry Trujillo from the Small Business Administration (SBA) gave a brief presentation of the types of programs, grants, services, etc. that the U.S. Government provides to small businesses. He said they mainly have three components which are: 1) Capital; 2) Contracting; 3) Consulting. He said that money from the government is delivered through lenders and/or banks, not from the SBA directly. He provided a lot of insight as to how the government works with small businesses. He also handed out information packets to the EDC members which contained a lot of valuable information about the SBA and how to contact them.

E. Sign Code Revision

Pete Truax stated that the City Council is working to revise the sign code and address some of the comments or complaints that have arisen since the code was first enforced.

6. Council Communications

Tom Belusko mentioned the open house on June 2nd, 2011 @ the Community Auditorium that is going to be held discussing the water rate hike. Also there is a budget meeting on May 18th, 2011. Michael Sykes stated that it seems like the economy is looking up and that there has been interest in vacant buildings, etc. within Forest Grove.

7. Announcement of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on June 2nd, 2011 @ 12:00 noon.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned @ 1:30 p.m. by Brian Wilbur.

Approved by the Forest Grove Economic Development Commission:

Date: _____