

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Jeff King, Guy Storms, Tom Belusko, J.J. Johnston, Bruce McVean, Tim Budelman, Lisa Duncan, Mike Mallery, Don Jones.

City Staff: Rob Foster, Michael Sykes.

Also Attending: Jennifer McGuirk (Jeff King's intern), John-Michael Kowertz, Erik Horeis, Mayor Pete Truax.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order @ 12:13 p.m. by Vice-Chair Don Jones.

2. Citizen Communication

None.

3. Approval of EDC Meeting Minutes from September 13th, 2012

J.J. Johnston moved to accept the meeting minutes as presented. Tim Budelman seconded the motion. The meeting minutes passed unanimously.

4. Additions / Deletions & Staff Summary

Jeff King reported that the construction of the new Prime Time Restaurant is underway. Excavation is currently taking place, and they are due to receive their building permit very soon. Jeff also mentioned that Old Trapper's expansion is moving along, and that once completed, they will add up to seven new jobs. Pascor is also on track to add eight to ten new jobs. Jeff noted that the bean paste company that has been looking at Forest Grove as a potential new site is currently growing beans in eastern Oregon to see how well a crop will grow in that region. If all goes well, it might mean that they will choose Forest Grove for their newest facility.

5. Business

A. McMenamin's Host Update

Clyde Fulkerson stopped by briefly to say hello and to mention a few of the upcoming events that the Grand Lodge will be hosting. Don Jones thanked him for allowing the EDC to meet each month in the Alice Inkley Room, and for providing lunch for each meeting as well. Clyde reported that

McMenamin's had had a very busy and productive summer and that this weekend McMenamin's will be celebrating the grand opening of the improved Fernhill Wetlands area. Picnic tables and restrooms have recently been added to the site, and McMenamin's has produced a special beer in honor of this expansion called Fernhill Pale Ale. The celebration will be this Saturday October 6th from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and is entitled "Birds & Beer".

B. EDC Board Openings Update

Don Jones reported that the owners of Ace Hardware, Mark & Lisa Nakajima, are very interested in becoming EDC Board Members, with Mark as the primary member, and Lisa as the alternate. Both Mark and Lisa are very involved in Forest Grove. Mark has served on the Budget Committee for the Forest Grove School District, and on the Forestry Commission as well. Don Jones made a motion to approve Mark as a new board member. Lisa Duncan moved to accept Mark & Lisa as members. Guy Storms seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. At this point the EDC will recommend the Nakajima's as new board members to the City Council, and await their approval or denial of these new candidates.

C. Transportation Issue Update

Rob Foster, the director of the Public Works Department for the City of Forest Grove, gave a presentation on the issue of the timeliness and safety of emergency vehicles responding to calls in the northern areas of Forest Grove, including rural areas to the north of the City. In 2007, College Way was a two-way street, and Council Street was a one-way street which headed north. Pacific University approached the City asking for College Way to become a one-way street heading south, and for Council Street to remain a one-way street, but to change the direction to south as well. The City asked the University to conduct an engineering study to determine if the change would have a negative impact on traffic flow. The study showed that it would not, and so at that time the change was made to make College Way one-way south, and to change Council Street's direction to one-way south as well as not to impede south bound traffic in that area. This change also created more parking for the University along College Way. Since the change has been made, the Forest Grove Police Department, Fire Department, The Safety Board and Public Safety Advisory have been concerned with the response

time to emergencies on the north side of the City. Rob contracted an engineering firm to conduct another study to determine if reversing the changes to College Way and Council Street would make an improved response time to areas in the north. The result determined by the study is that since emergency vehicles are now forced to use Main Street if they go west of College Way, or Cedar Street if they go east, the resulting difference in time is an additional 10 seconds to use Main Street, and an additional 24 seconds to use Cedar Street. One other concern about one of the alternate routes is that Main Street is closed various times throughout the year for community events such as The Farmer's Market, Uncorked, and Main Course, which in turn makes Cedar Street one of the only, and perhaps the quickest option to head north. Mike Mallery from Pacific University pointed out that even if the direction of the two streets was reversed back to their original state, that the amount of pedestrian and bicycle traffic on College Way is quite high, and the safety to students on their way to and from campus would be called in to question. Also, the Pacific University Health Center is currently being moved from Cedar Street, to College Way, which would add even more traffic to College Way. Since emergency vehicles would be forced to slow down due to the large amount of pedestrian traffic, there is a question as to how much time would actually be saved if College Way was returned to its original two-way traffic pattern. After much discussion, the consensus of the EDC was that the ratio of time saved to the potential risk to pedestrians and/or students on College Way, didn't seem worthwhile. The cost of rerouting the two streets again, the disruption to traffic, and the risk to individuals accessing Pacific University via College Way, appears to be greater than the advantages of changing things back to the way that they were originally.

D. Update from Congresswoman Bonamici's Office – Erik Horeis

Erik Horeis is a District Representative for with Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici's Office who works with Yamhill and rural Washington County. His territory covers Banks, Gaston, North Plains, and Forest Grove. He also handles rural economic development, tribal outreach, and military and veterans outreach. Erik reported that approximately a month ago he and the Congresswoman toured the facility at Sake One here in Forest Grove. He said they enjoyed the tour very much and were interested to learn about the Sake One operation and the number of people they employ. Next month they are going to try to attend the next Forest Grove Chamber of Commerce meeting as well. Erik said that the USDA is putting a temporary hold on their

rural designation status change which is based on the new census. This is very important to smaller communities like Forest Grove since it allows our citizens to still take advantage of 0% down, guaranteed home loans from the USDA. When congress is back in session after the election, this issue will be addressed and hopefully can be extended since it is a valuable asset that can help stabilize and secure the housing market in our area. The Congresswoman has also been very involved with small business in the greater Portland area, and is also urging the International Trade Commission to look in to the Chinese saturation of the sale of solar panels in the United States. This will effect greatly local companies like Solar World in Hillsboro, who have employees that live in Forest Grove. Erik thanked the EDC for inviting him to this meeting. He handed out his business card so that people could easily contact him for any issues or concerns they may be experiencing.

E. Greater Portland Inc.

Jeff King spoke about Greater Portland Inc. which is a regional economic development entity. It is a private, non-profit, volunteer organization. Their annual work plan focuses on three areas: Business Development, Marketing & Branding, and Regional Strategy & Coordination. The group meets monthly. They are currently working on an export initiative which is a very important aspect of the Portland Metro economy, and they are hoping to foster it and bring it to smaller businesses as well. The monthly meetings introduce members to services such as site selectors, best practices and trends surrounding workforce training, and marketing techniques. Belonging to this group helps Forest Grove to remain apprised of what resources are available in the greater Portland area that will help with our economic development.

F. Committee Updates
Workforce

Jeff King gave a brief report for Kelly Marks who was unable to attend today's meeting. She sent information via e-mail which stated that enrollment is flattening at the community colleges which means that people are finding work. The demolition and construction has begun at the PCC Rock Creek Campus, seasonal jobs look promising this year, and there has been an upswing in I.T. and engineering jobs.

Small Business

Don Jones shared that before Ali Brown from Adelante Mujeres left to accept a new job in Portland, she came up with the idea of putting together a round table for small businesses. This would help small businesses in sharing ideas and resources, and enable the ability for them to collaborate to build stronger ties and a base within the community.

Tourism

Jeff King stated that the Tourism Committee and the Marketing & Branding Committee will both meet later this month in an effort to come up with a strategic plan to implement going forward into the new year.

Industrial / Infrastructure

J.J. Johnston reported that the Broker Tour that is scheduled for October 18th is coming together. He stressed that the success or failure of this event depends on the number of brokers who attend. The Broker Tour will include a guided bus tour of available sites in Forest Grove, a box lunch, a "Thank You" gift bag, and the chance to win an iPad 3. J.J. also mentioned that the latest broker e-mail went out last week, and the flier for the Broker Tour will be mailed out next week. Lastly, J.J. said that the industrial video is being edited now and that there is so much good information that it is hard to decide what to cut in order to get the video to the preferred running time. It looks at this point that the video will end up being an excellent product for promoting Forest Grove.

6. Council Communications

Tom Belusko stated that the plan for an Urban Renewal District has gotten kicked back to City staff due to the concern that since the levy just passed, some citizens may view this program as another budget item, and may not accept it very well.

7. Staff & Board Member Communications

Jeff King announced that economic development has signed an agreement with Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB) to run a 10 second spot for 13-weeks before and after the Nightly Business Report once a week to spotlight Forest Grove. Oregon City had a similar spot run and had a lot of success with it.

Mayor Truax announced that tomorrow afternoon will be the 15th Anniversary celebration of Maggie's Buns @ 4:30 in the afternoon @ her location on 21st Avenue. Please stop by and wish her well if you get a chance.

8. Announcement of the Next EDC Meeting

The next meeting of the EDC will be held on November 1st, 2012 @ 12:00 noon in the Alice Inkley Room @ McMenamin's Grand Lodge.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Don Jones @ 1:44 p.m.

Approved by the Forest Grove Economic Commission:

Date: _____

Signed: _____
EDC Chair