

Forest Grove Economic Development Commission
Thursday, October 6th, 2011

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: Kaely Summers, Jeff King, Brian Wilbur, Tom Belusko, Phil McVeen, Lisa Duncan, Danielle French, Don Jones, George Cress, Eduardo Corona, J.J. Johnston, Lois Hornberger, Anh Ho, Cindy Sturm, Jackie Sandquist.

City Staff: Michael Sykes

Other Attendees: Phil Reuter, Jessica Struyk, Amber Craviotto, Sterling Bax.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Brian Wilbur @ 12:15 p.m.

2. CITIZEN COMMUNITCATIONS

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 8TH, 2011

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

4. ADDITIONS / DELETIONS & STAFF SUMMARY

Jeff King reported that there are a couple of companies seriously looking to relocate in Forest Grove. One is a bakery that desires a west coast presence, and another is an organic beer company. Crane Point, which is a nail gun products company, recently relocated to the old Aura Cabinetry building.

5. BUSINESS

A. McMenamins Host Update

Clyde Fulkerson reported that McMenamin's is currently training new employees. He said that they had a busy summer, and that things are winding down a bit at this point now that school is back in session.

B. Board Member Recruitment Feedback

Jeff King and Brian Wilbur reported that Christian Viera from Hi-Tech Crating was concerned that the EDC may takes stances on certain issues that he may not personally agree with. He has asked for meeting minutes going back several months. Brian felt that at this time, he doesn't think that Christian will want to join the EDC. Bruce McVeen with New Seasons Foods has decided to join the EDC. Brian Wilbur and Jeff King will be sending a formal letter of invitation to Bruce very soon. At this time, there are no other vacancies to be filled.

C. Transportation Development Tax – Ordinance Proposal

Jeff King noted that the current recession combined with the increase of this fee, has had a significant impact on property owners and those looking to invest. Tom Belusko pointed out that since this fee is labeled a “tax” that those looking to invest have a very difficult time financing the fee. Banks typically do not finance any fee that is labeled as a tax. Jeff King noted that it would be a lot more attractive to investors to have this fee financed through the City. He made reference to other nearby Oregon cities and what they have in place currently. Jeff reported that the City’s finance director felt that residential development should not be included in this proposal since that particular industry is moving forward without the need for it. The finance director also is recommending keeping the financing at a fixed rate. J.J. Johnston moved that the EDC support this proposal including a fixed rate only, and excluding residential. Lois Hornberger seconded the motion. The proposal passes unanimously.

D. Fall SBA (Small Business Administration) Forum

Jeff King has been communicating with the SBA economic development director. It turns out she is an alumnus of Pacific University. They are looking at Beaverton’s template as a model, and considering a date in November of this year for Forest Grove’s forum to be held. Jeff asked the EDC if they thought it should be held in Forest Grove or Cornelius. Everyone agreed it should be in Forest Grove.

E. Subcommittee Reports & Feedback

Industrial / Infrastructure

Jeff King summarized the committee’s most recent meeting. He said they discussed the TDT, and that they are considering different ways to do more industrial marketing. They are considering putting together another broker letter which would highlight key industrial properties available in Forest Grove, and reiterating incentives, tying in the TDT. They also discussed having lunch with key brokers as a way to have one-on-one time, and in-depth discussions. Other communities have reported using this strategy, and have had positive feedback. The committee is also trying to set up a meeting with county commissioners Andy Duyck & Bob Terry. They are investigating more information on utilizing trade shows and economic development on-line tools to further promote Forest Grove.

Workforce Partnership

Jackie Sandquist reported that there actually is a fair amount of money provided by the Federal Government for on the job training. A business can hire a new employee, and then get reimbursed for that employee’s wages while that person is in training. There are also a lot of resources available for “green” companies, for hiring people who have been unemployed for longer than 6 months, and for dislocated workers and low income adults. She said a lot of the money coming out of the Federal Government right now is very specific as to how it is allocated.

Branding & Marketing

Don Jones said that they are still working on a Power Point presentation that will be available to local businesses. The hope is that each business will share it with their employees to educate them as to what amenities are available in and around Forest

Grove. They just about have the presentation complete. They hope to gather a little more information and a few more pictures as well. The committee is hoping to spend some of their budget money on items such as hats, T-shirts, mugs, etc. with the Forest Grove branding and tag line to advertise Forest Grove as well. Jeff King mentioned that the two kiosks that are currently in place seem to get a lot of attention, and that the brochures available at the kiosks are needing to be filled regularly.

Small Business

Jeff King conveyed that the committee has created a new booklet on starting a small business which is available in both English and Spanish. It is available on-line as well.

Tourism

Brian Wilbur stated that the Chamber of Commerce’s website is due to be unveiled on October 17th, 2011. Also the subcommittee has sent out for RFP’s on their new brochure.

6. COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

Tom Belusko welcomed George Cress as the new director of the Light & Power department. Also, he mentioned that next Monday night the City Council will get a report on rural and urban development. He noted that the City staff, and Council members are paying very close attention to the legal judgment that was awarded against the City last week in favor of the developers of The Parks subdivision. He said there will be more information to come on this subject.

7. STAFF & BOARD MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

None.

8. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

Brian Wilbur announced that the next EDC meeting will be on November 3rd, 2011 @ McMenamin’s Grand Lodge.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Brian Wilbur adjourned the meeting @ 1:36 p.m.

Approved by the Forest Grove Economic Development Commission:

Date: _____

Signed: _____