

## **Morrow County Citizens Economic Development Task Force**

Meeting Notes for February 2, 2016

Irrigon City Hall

Irrigon, Oregon

**Attendees:** Sheryll Bates, Tillman Carr, Kim Cutsforth, Scott Fairley, Skip Matthews, Carla McLane, Aaron Palmquist, Karen Pettigrew, Leann Rea and Don Russell.

The meeting started just after 10:00 a.m. Leann Rea moved approval of both the December 1, 2015, and January 5, 2016 meeting notes, seconded by Kim Cutsforth. Motion passed.

### **Community Reports:**

Leann shared that Rick Warden, Finance Director, has resigned, going to Community Counseling Solutions. Carty is now all PGE based on Abengoa default/bankruptcy; this will affect taxes and the in place SIP agreement. Tribal Enterprise Zone is not available for Umatilla Army Depot lands. The County will have the Bartholomew Building grand opening during the St. Patrick's Day events.

Aaron: Java Junkies is coming to Irrigon. Nuts and Bolts has been purchased by Hattenours; not sure of plans. ODOT is partnering with city to put sidewalks in ROW on south side of Highway 730.

Scott Fairley: Short session has started: workforce, education, sustainable economies, and government transparency. Discussion ensued about minimum wage and local impacts.

Sheryll: WCVEDG: Spending housing money. Chamber: Working on St. Patty's. Barek and Sorte reports are complete. Great discussion on housing needs.

Skip/Kim: Broke ground on the Fire Hall February 1!

Tillman: Three staff: Tillman, Judy and Stephanie. Looking to hire a loan officer and an underwriter.

Karen: Council retreat was last weekend. Water and sewer rates will be going up. Solid waste not going up. Council will redo SDC waivers tonight for this calendar year. Considering transportation SDCs. Carroll abatement continues... landowner will be talking with Council to reduce fee and allow them to make payments. Warm Springs tribe came to visit about the Marina Park earlier this month.

**Local Public Safety Committee:** Kim has been attending this local meeting for some time representing cities, mostly as a default acquired from Dave DeMayo when she was hired. At the last meeting there was discussion about the make-up of the Committee and Kim's role in representing all cities in the County. She's looking to make her participation formal, or have someone else attend on behalf of cities. Carla asked how this committee is similar to or different from the Local Emergency Planning Committee. After discussion it became clear there is a difference. One focuses on public safety and has involvement from the DA, Juvenile and the Sheriff's office; the other is focused more on emergency response issues like what might happen at an industrial plant. After discussion it was decided that Kim should continue. Carla offered that if issues need to be discussed in this forum, just let Carla know and she'll add it to the agenda.

**Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan – FEMA Review:** Carla shared that we cannot adopt based on the FEMA review. There are some identified concerns with the City Annexes, but Planning staff have not had an in depth conversation with OEM or FEMA staff. That should happen in the next couple of weeks. The FEMA review tool was shared with those in attendance.

**Projects with County Impacts:** Carla shared a bit of background on how we started around large projects with impact throughout the county. There are some things happening that will

have that kind of impact that folks might be interested in. The first being the change of the poplar tree farm back to row crops and the development of a large dairy south of Homestead Lane. The footprint of the dairy itself is about 500 acres; the balance of that operation is about 6,500 acres of farmland. The tree farm north of Homestead is being converted from trees to row crops, some quickly, others more slowly.

Another project is the Wheatridge wind farm along with the associated transmission. A portion of Wheatridge is in Umatilla County, with the lions share in Morrow County. The transmission line is proposed along Bombing Range Road with a terminus at the Port of Morrow.

Portland General Electric is looking to amend their Site Certificate for the Carty Generating site to include Carty II and a solar facility.

Mariah Wind, proposed in central county near the intersection of Highway 207 and Sand Hollow, has indicated they want to renew their local Conditional Use Permit with an increase from 20 MWs to upwards of 60 MWs. The Production Tax Credit (PTC) is back in force and they are wanting to take advantage.

As Scott Fairley needed to leave there was a quick conversation about Housing and agreement to continue the housing conversation then.

**Business Incubators:** Carla kicked off a discussion about how we each look at the term 'economic development' and who in our communities is tasked with the job. In a discussion last month Tillman and Jerry both talked about what makes a good community – good schools, healthcare, and communication services are vital. Discussion then focused on the need for businesses that provide communication support, internet connections and connectivity in general.

**Various Updates:** Special Transportation continues to meet and Planning is assisting with the update to the Coordinated Human Services Public Transportation Plan. Work continues. The Comprehensive Plan Economic Element has had its first public hearing in front of the Planning Commission with a second public hearing scheduled for later in February, then off to the County Court. There was a community meeting concerning the B2H Environmentally and Agency Preferred Routes and have submitted a joint comment letter with Umatilla County based on that meeting. Informal conversation indicates that BLM has taken our comment seriously. Bombing Range Road along the Bombing Range is clearly an energy or utility corridor and more is coming.

**PSU Population Research Center Population Forecast:** The March 1 meeting of this group has been cancelled as the regional meeting for the population forecast will be held the same day at 10:30 a.m. in Hermiston.

**Next Meeting:** The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 5 at 10:00 a.m. at the Boardman City Hall.

**Future Meeting Agenda Build:** Commercial Space Inventory; Commercial Recruitment Measures; Population Coordination; ACOE MOU; Willow Creek Dam Tour; Comprehensive Plan, Development Code and Transportation System Plan updates; Special Transportation Updates; and Joint Management Agreements.