

Morrow County Citizens Economic Development Task Force

Meeting Notes for October 4, 2016

Irrigon City Hall
Irrigon, Oregon

Attendees:

Kim Carter, Kim Cutsforth, Janette Eldrige, Scott Fairly, Sam Heath, Linda LaRue, Melissa Lindsay, Carla McLane, Skip Matthews, Judy Moore, Aaron Palmquist, Karen Pettigrew, Leann Rea, and Rod Taylor.

The meeting started at approximately 10:00 a.m. Meeting minutes for May 3; moved for approval by Linda and seconded by Aaron, approved.

Community Reports:

Janette: Discussed the reservoir lining project.

Aaron: Housing efforts continue; code update; abatement hearings in October for 26 properties; enhancement work progressing with about 6 properties receiving benefit; water rate study underway; new website coming; river water influence on city water wells.

Skip: Fire Hall is occupied; paving continues; TSP update underway; effluent needs to move out of creek – seeking assistance; hunting season is in full swing and business is hopping.

Karen: Hotel and apartment interest continues; chronic nuisance ordinance under consideration at tonight's council meeting; refinanced water and waste water bonds – lower rate and shorter length; LOC homelessness information was shared.

Judy: Executive Director hired – Susan Christensen; Judy indicated that innovation center work hindered, but moving forward; Rex continues work on loans; succession planning for businesses underway; website update forthcoming; NW Economics Institute was attended by Judy; Leann asked for an update on the Baker/Morrow partnership fund.

Leann: Morrow County Tobacco Free Policy didn't get approved; CDA is "negotiating" water rights with ACOE and NGB; North County Admin Building is being considered.

Linda: Emert I addresses converted to 3 digit city numbers; Emert II has impacted water pressure to Emert I and II; still considering sewer, but delayed – still wanting to view the Orenco System; ordinance and transportation plan updates underway; annexation pending.

Regional Priorities: Lower Umatilla Basin project advisory committee update regarding ground water nitrates - handout regarding letter from MiFF to inform the communities ie. cities about nitrate issues discussed; housing project meeting went well; looking for resources at state level for housing priorities for workforce; working in Gilliam and Wheeler counties as well; Grant County has identified a number of community projects that qualify for Oregon Solutions prioritized funding opportunities; a lot of things going on, but workforce needs are common across the state; interim will be working with students to tour facilities for job opportunity education.

Regional Solutions applied to the LUB GWMA: Economic collaborative at the Governor's Office – Scott provided a staffing update; setting priorities for the local region; helping state agencies align priorities to support local regions; LaGrande office covers seven counties; priorities set for this region include support for current and emerging businesses, natural resource utilization, water management development, workforce increase to meet regional needs (includes retaining current local workforce), workforce/affordable housing including upfront affordability for contractors, attractive amenities to attract workforce, infrastructure for marketable industrial lands; next step is working with state entities to help identify resources that can help advance the regional priorities.

Regional Travel Shed Planning Process: Email traffic between Carla and Matt Hughart of Kittelson & Associates indicated that Matt was not able to make the meeting in September, however reports that a meeting is still in the coordination phase with an anticipated date of October 24; mentioned that strategies from both coordinated “plans” would be a good launching point.

Housing as Economic Development: No specific objective for the discussion, but still interested in bringing in sufficient housing for workforce. Causing a hiring impact because incomers are not able to find housing to relocate. Discussion about funding subsidized housing vs. higher end housing and BCDA grant funding usage locally.

Business Initiative/Incentives: No update, this item was tabled.

2017 Meeting Dates: Approved for January 3, February 7, March 7, April 4, May 2, June 6, August 1, September 5, October 3, November 7, and December 5.

Items for the Good of the Order: No items.

Agenda Build: Housing, and waste water options.

Next Meeting: The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 1 at 9:00 a.m. in Lexington at the Lexington Town Hall.

Adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Future Meeting Agenda Build: Regional priorities, LUB GWMA, Travel Shed, 2017 meeting dates, business incentives/initiatives.

2016 remaining meeting dates: Nov 1 (Lexington) and Dec 6 (Boardman)