



Economic Development Committee Meeting Minutes

Scappoose City Hall, 33568 E Columbia Ave., Scappoose, OR 97056

February 24, 2022 12:00 Noon – 1:30 pm

Attendees: Brian Rosenthal, EDC Member; Len Waggoner, EDC Member; Michael Leipzig, EDC Member; Christine Turner, EDC Chair; Robby Backus, EDC Member; Brenda Michael, EDC Member; Casey Garrett, Columbia County Liaison; Jeff Weiss, Library Liaison; Heidi Ralls, CRPUD Liaison; Paul Vogel, CET Liaison; Nancy Ward, Port of Columbia County Liaison; Amanda Haner, PCC Liaison; Huell Whitehaus, Assistant to Public Works Director; Sherrie Ryan, Citizen

Absent: Jeannet Santiago, EDC Vice Chair; George Hafeman, EDC Member; Tina Amela, EDC Member; Mike Sykes, CRPUD Liaison; Josh Koch, OMIC R&D Liaison; Scott Burge, Mayor; Josh Poling, City Council; Alexandra Rains, City Manager; Laurie Oliver Joseph, City Planner; Isaac Butman, Assistant to the City Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 PM by Chair Christine Turner.

1.1 Meeting Agenda

Brian made a motion to approve the Feb. 24, 2022 meeting Agenda. Len seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

1.2 Meeting Minutes

Brian made a motion to approve the Jan. 20, 2022 meeting minutes. Len seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Citizen Communication

Sherri Ryan stated that she wanted to call in and listen to the meeting for the first time and wanted to see what's going on.

Brian asked to add an extra item to the agenda. The Chair added a new item as 3.1 under new business.

2. Updates

2.1 City – Huell gave an update. Planning is working on the Annual Town Meeting being held on April 30, 2022. Planning is also working on the vision portion of the 50-Year Plan, and the first stakeholder meeting will be held March 15, 2022. The Dealers Market review will go before Planning Commission March 10, 2022. Staff is reviewing a second submittal for a 12,00 sqft warehouse in the NE portion of the City for Oxbo. Staff is still waiting for more submittals from the food cart pod. Public Works is making progress on the sidewalk infill along Old Portland Road.

Jeff asked if there was an update on the Buxton development. Huell stated that there is no more information at this time; more will come available when they submit information to the Planning Department.



2.2 CET – Paul gave an update. There were 10 small business grants made to entities in the City of Scappoose totaling \$71,000, and for nonprofits received \$19,000. The Business Oregon grant program for Guides and Outfitters is open and has funding of \$10,000,000. The Site Selector Magazine advertisement for Scappoose is live. ColPAC economic development strategy kicked off, and the County wide Housing Needs Analysis also has started. Rail Corridor Report Session 2 has occurred. Session 3 is in a month. Senator Wyden had a townhall meeting in Columbia County, CET advocated for initiatives across the County. One of Bonamici's staffers is leaving, and CET will be involved bringing the new staffer up to speed. NEXT Renewable associated permits are now available for public comment.

2.3 County – Casey stated that the new public health center at the Courthouse in St. Helens is about to break ground. County will soon issue an RFP for a hospital feasibility study. Commissioner Magruder looking for folks to join her on a water forum looking at water supply and quality. There was a presentation yesterday about elevated E. Coli near Fischer Park – something to keep in mind for folks recreating in the watershed. NEXT Renewables is in the tentative approval phase. The County is getting into their budget process and will be busy with that.

Len asked if there were any idea as to the pollution causing the E Coli? Casey replied that they are not precisely sure at this point, the testing – while thorough – has not identified the source(s). County just met yesterday about posting signs cautioning recreators.

Christine asked about the hospital study – how long has it been since the last study? Casey stated that when the hospital district was dissolved it was determined that there wasn't sufficient need. Len mentioned the need for a sponsor in order to justify the need for a hospital. Casey stated that they have not identified a precise amount for the study but have tentatively planned for \$100,000 from ARPA funds for it.

Len asked if Columbia City qualifies for Farm-Home? Casey stated that he is not familiar with the program. Len stated that it's a process similar to FHA/HUD/USDA loan programs for rural communities. Casey stated that Columbia City might be more advantageous for a hospital siting, given its status as a smaller rural community.

2.4 CRPUD – Heidi gave an update as to what is going on in Scappoose. PUD has moved all of the poles for the OPR sidewalk project. The streetlight replacement project is halfway over. They are going to board soon for the authorization to purchase EV chargers for Scappoose.

2.5 Library Jeff gave an update. Earth Day is on April 23 at Heritage. Two service projects – (1) cleaning up Chapman Landing; (2) SBWC – clearing invasive species. All of the improvements bought with ARPA money have arrived – hopefully they'll be installed by the time of the event. The Library is planning to do movies in the Park again in August.

2.6 PCC – Amanda stated that PCC is getting ready for ribbon cutting ceremony. Most of the local high schools are signed up for visits to the facility. They are working on making it something special for students – the event will be both in-person and online. The ceremony/visits will be happening in March and April, 2022. They will be taking 30 students at a time.



2.7 Port – Nancy stated that the Port had the Director of Operations from the Railroad at the public meeting pertaining to rail traffic. He's been invited to a future meeting regarding the rail traffic – Nancy will let the committee know when this occurs. Nancy mentioned the benefit of having a more dialed in timetable for rail trips, and more information about what is allowed in terms of timing rail trips.

Chris of Next Renewables was at the Port meeting last night and was able to answer many of the questions asked. Some of the contingency plans that Next has were not known, but now the Port knows about them, which is good. Next is not looking to use rail primarily for their business, they sited on the river in order to be able to use the river. Rail trips are more of a contingency rather than the rule for Next.

3. New Business

3.1 Brian's Agenda Item: For years there has been talk about attracting a hotel to the community and the City incentivizing one. Many companies may not locate in a community if a hotel/motel is not available. Brian raised the idea to make a recommendation to City Council to incentivize a hotel/motel as long as it did not dip into City coffers. This could be a 75% transportation SDC reduction and a 50% reduction on the hotel/motel's taxes for 5 years. In the long term, this would bring more tax revenue to the City. Brian state he did not look at Water or Wastewater SDCs. The minimum requirement would be that they serve breakfast and carry at least 2 stars (the basic corporate requirements). Brian stated he is not seeking a vote at this moment, but that we add this item to the next agenda.

Len stated that as far as amenities, that's really up to the determination of the hotel developer and mentioned that developers like to be near highways/and major activity areas. Brian stated that Hotel-Motels have one of the highest lender default rates – which according to Brian is why no developer has secured loans to build one in Scappoose. If we don't have a hotel/motel, it'll be difficult to attract companies to locate here.

Christine stated that she will reach out to Best Western in St. Helens to see what their occupancy is like. Brian stated that there might not be enough in Scappoose to attract a hotel/motel, but some sort of incentive could possibly bridge the gap. Christine asked if the Committee should form a subcommittee? Brian stated that the chair can do whatever they want, but that he thinks the committee should come back and formulate a recommendation at the next EDC meeting. The idea here is not to take money from the City, but rather increase its tax revenue over time. Jeff stated that he would like to propose that a hotel/motel should be a part of a franchise because they would have to maintain certain standards.

Casey stated that St. Helens really is interested in a Hotel by the water front, and wondered if that would impact the feasibility of a hotel in Scappoose. Len stated that there would probably be space in the market for one in Scappoose, even if there was one in St. Helens.

Brian stated that the type he was thinking about is more angled towards where to put corporate travelers that is comfortable but affordable. Brian asked what the Transient



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lodging tax rate for the City is? Casey stated that it's 10% and only entity paying it is the County for the RV park.

Christine asked Bryan if what he was proposing was to make a recommendation to Council that Council offers an incentive to future hotel developers [unintelligible; mics cut out]. Bryan stated that included in the recommendation should include a limit for the program, perhaps a one-time only incentive. Len asked Paul if grants are made for things like this? Paul stated that not in his experience, and that proving the profitability of a hotel is extremely complicated, and this is a very data driven industry, especially before a build is started.

Brian stated that this could be a first step.

Robby stated that two weekends ago a High School Teacher put on a large competitive basketball championship that drew from as far away as Arizona, and attracted some former NBA players, where all of the visitors had to stay in Portland because there were no hotel/motels here in Scappoose. The Committee came up with other activities that could indicate the usefulness of having a hotel in Scappoose.

Huell reminded the Committee to please replace their masks if they were not eating.

Jeff asked if there were any updates on Council Goal Setting. Huell stated he would look into it, and get back to the Committee, and stated the next work session on ARPA would be on March 22, 2022.

Robby asked if the Committee would be interested in making an ARPA ask to Council about the Hotel and stated that SPRC is doing just that for their initiatives, and asked if maybe there is some sort of project that EDC could propose – such as relating to the hotel/motel discussion.

Casey stated that there might be challenges with the hotel/motel discussion and how it relates to ARPA, as it could be hard to link a new hotel to the ARPA requirements. Huell stated that that indeed has been a challenge to determine what is or is not allowable to be funded under ARPA; that determination is something the City Attorney needs to weigh in on during Council Meetings, and stated that there is around \$700,000 left, and Council is in the process of evaluating proposals.

Brian stated he understands that there are limited purposes ARPA money can be used for and asked about water/sewer infrastructure improvements. Huell replied that yes, those are broad eligibility categories under the ARPA requirements.

4. Announcements and Next Meetings

- March 17, 2022
- April 21, 2022
- May 19, 2022



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5. Meeting Adjourned at 1:06 pm.

For questions about these minutes, contact Isaac Butman, 503.543.7184, ibutman@cityofscappoose.org
The EDC conducts its meetings in an ADA accessible room. If special accommodations are needed,
please contact City Recorder Susan Reeves at 503.543.7146, ext. 224 TTY 503.378.5938