



SCAPPOOSE *Oregon*

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2025

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING AT 12:00 PM

33568 E COLUMBIA AVE; SCAPPOOSE, OR 97056 & MICROSOFT TEAMS (HYBRID)

Disclaimer: These minutes are intended to summarize the conversations that took place in this meeting rather than provide a full transcript. Anyone wishing to view the full conversation can find a recording of this meeting on YouTube at: <https://youtu.be/eQ2BpQ1MJlU>

Attendees: Chair Christine Collins, Vice Chair Karl Fenstermaker, Committee Member Brian Rosenthal, Committee Member George Hafeman, Committee Member Paul Fidrych, Committee Member David Sideras, Committee Member Judy Isaman, City Councilor Jeannet Santiago, Columbia Economic Team Executive Director Paul Vogel, Port of Columbia County Commissioner Nancy Ward, Columbia River PUD Administration/Public Relations Manager Gina Sisco, Scappoose Public Library Director Jeff Weiss, Community Development Director Laurie Oliver Joseph, Public Works Contract Administrator Charlotte Baker, Small Business Resource Center Director Jason Moon, Len Waggoner

Committee Members Absent: Sean Findon

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 12:11 pm by Chair Christine Collins.

1.1 Meeting Agenda

Vice Chair Karl Fenstermaker made a motion to approve the September 18, 2025 agenda. George seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

1.2 Meeting Minutes

Brian made a motion to approve the June 26, 2025 minutes. Judy seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

1.3 Public comment

No public comment.

2. **NEW BUSINESS**

2.1 Updates

- Columbia Economic Team - Paul
 - Looking employers who are willing to participate in a small study on all things employment.
 - Business Oregon is developing the state's first economic strategy in more than a decade. They're looking into updating how their incentive packages are designed.
 - Applying for a grant to complete a second round of the BRE project.



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- County hired a consultant to facilitate the energy transmission and load planning work group.
 - PGE is looking for three sites in unincorporated Columbia County for utility scale solar farms.
 - PCC OMIC just completed their microcredential program, which included many students from Columbia County and had a 100% graduation rate and an 80% employment rate. OMIC R&D completed its intern program where 8 of the 19 interns were from Columbia County.
 - Project Spice chose not to come to North America and are instead building their new site at home in France.
- Scappoose City Council - Jeannet
 - Youth Advisory Councilor Tyler Ferreira just joined our group.
 - Councilor Marisa Jacobs stepped down and we have appointed Marty Marquis and John Riutta.
 - Columbia River PUD provided Council a presentation on the current energy situation in the county.
- Columbia County
 - *No update provided.*
- OMIC R&D
 - *No update provided.*
- PCC OMIC
 - *No update provided.*
- Port of Columbia County - Nancy
 - Meeting next Wednesday about the Scappoose Bay Marina and its current challenges and opportunities. We'd love to have you there.
 - New owner of Next Adventure is taking over by the end of the month.
 - American Jet Center leased an additional building at the Port.
- Columbia River PUD - Gina
 - Approved an overall rate increase of 7.6% at their board meeting.
 - PUD supports attracting small and medium sized manufacturing enterprises that we do have the capacity to support their energy needs.
 - Tuesday, October 7th at 5:00 pm is our free customer appreciation spaghetti dinner.
- Scappoose Public Library - Jeff
 - Finished summer reading program and more kids completed it than ever.
 - Movies in the Park had about 200 people every week.
 - We have our two Willy Vlautin events this Friday and Saturday.
 - Kids marketplace event will be at the Senior Center on November 8th.
- City of Scappoose - Laurie
 - I should hear back from ODOT on the grant request for a downtown strategic plan and transportation system plan update this week.



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- Upcoming work session with City Council, Planning Commission, and 50-Year Plan Stakeholder Advisory Committee on the 50-Year Plan.
- City of St. Helens was awarded a grant to design a trail between Scappoose and St. Helens. The project is kicking off soon and the City is on the project team.
- Ofstad Self Storage was approved by City Council in August.
- Scappoose Hospitality Group has entered into a purchase and sales agreement with the Port for Lot 3 of the partition off Wagner Court.

2.2 State of Business in Columbia County

Jason provided a presentation that can be viewed from [34:00-1:20:00 of the YouTube video](#).

Chair Christine Collins: What challenges are businesses facing when doing business in Scappoose?

Jason: The biggest are access to capital, access to land/space, and navigating regulations.

Chair Christine Collins: Is there anything EDC can do to make doing business easier?

Jason: Let people know about the SBRC and what we have to offer. We're always happy to help new and emerging businesses no matter where you're starting from.

Vice Chair Karl Fenstermaker: I've heard about the work groups that are responding to some of the biggest hurdles identified in the BRE project. Do you have any updates on those?

Jason: There are taskforce teams assigned to each of the biggest challenges, including a regulations team.

Laurie: Sierra Trass is working on a grant to hire a consultant that would interview all the regulatory agencies in the county and assist them in improving their processes as well as creating resources for business owners to navigate the regulatory process.

Chair Christine Collins: Do you think that the overall attitude is that it's easy to start a business here?

Jason: If I'm being honest, that is not the case. That isn't to say that Scappoose is doing anything wrong but there are differences between Scappoose and other jurisdictions in the county. Other jurisdictions may be more lenient on certain things for industries they want in their town for example.

Jeannet: The City has an app and I've spoken to the City Manager about adding features to it that allow you to apply for a business license or other simple tasks on the app.

Vice Chair Karl Fenstermaker: I would interview folks who didn't start a business because it was too difficult in addition to people who were able to jump through all the hoops.



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Chair Christine Collins: Do we have enough space to support business growth?

Jason: Unfortunately, we've had clients that started looking here, couldn't find the space that worked for them, and found it elsewhere.

Paul F: It's a big red flag to me that people are struggling to start businesses here. I really think we need to work towards reversing that reputation.

David: A lot of businesses don't pencil because they have to do half-street improvements with their project.

Brian: Are transportation SDCs a barrier to businesses?

Jason: Yeah, it can be a big cost and so it certainly is a barrier.

Judy: I think a lot of these issues come down to knowledge. How many people trying to start a business know about the SBRC or how to navigate the rules of permitting? I think we can invest more in education so that people know what to expect.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEXT MEETINGS

- Next meetings
 - October 30, 2025 at 12:00 pm
 - November 20, 2025 at 12:00 pm
 - December 18, 2025 at 12:00 pm

4. Meeting adjourned at 1:36 pm.