



THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2026
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING AT 12:00 PM
33568 E COLUMBIA AVE; SCAPPOOSE, OR 97056 & MICROSOFT TEAMS (HYBRID)

Please submit public comment to N.J. Johnson at njohnson@scappoose.gov or in writing to Scappoose City Hall (33568 E Columbia Ave; Scappoose, OR 97056) by February 18, 2026 at 5:00 pm. Public comment can also be made verbally at the beginning of scheduled meetings.

This meeting will be conducted in an accessible room. If special accommodations are needed, please contact City Recorder Susan M. Reeves at (503) 543-7146, ext. 224 in advance.

TTY 1-503-378-5938

Topic

1.	Call to order	12:00 pm
1.1.	Approval of Agenda: February 19, 2026	
1.2.	Approval of Minutes: November 20, 2025	
1.3.	Public Comment	
2.	New Business	12:05 pm
2.1.	Updates Community Partners	
	• Scappoose City Council	
	• Columbia County	
	• OMIC R&D	
	• PCC OMIC	
	• Port of Columbia County	
	• Columbia River PUD	
	• Scappoose Public Library	
	• City of Scappoose	
2.2.	Vote Urban Renewal Grant Awarding	
	Assistant to City Manager/City Planner N.J. Johnson	
2.3.	Discussion Columbia Economic Team Dissolution and Next Steps	
	City Manager Benjamin Burgener	
2.4.	Presentation Service Recognition to EDC Member Sean Findon	
	Chair Christine Collins	



3.	Announcements	1:25 pm
3.1.	Annual Town Meeting	
	• Saturday March 7, 2026 at 9:00 am at Scappoose High School	
3.2.	Next meetings	
	• March 19, 2026 at 12:00 pm	
	• April 16, 2026 at 12:00 pm	
	• May 21, 2026 at 12:00 pm	
4.	Adjourn	1:30 pm



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 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/n8-savh4uzw>

Attendees: Chair Christine Collins, Committee Member Brian Rosenthal, Committee Member George Hafeman, Committee Member Paul Fidrych, Committee Member Sean Findon, Committee Member David Sideras, Port of Columbia County Commissioner Nancy Ward, Scappoose Public Library Director Jeff Weiss, Community Development Director Laurie Oliver Joseph, City Manager Ben Burgener, Assistant to City Manager/City Planner N.J. Johnson, Mayor Joe Backus, Winston Sandino, Ralph Culpepper

Committee Members Absent: Vice Chair Karl Fenstermaker, Judy Isaman

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

1.1 Meeting Agenda

Brian made a motion to approve the November 20, 2025 agenda. Sean seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

1.2 Meeting Minutes

Brian made a motion to approve the October 30, 2025 minutes. George seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

1.3 Public comment

No public comment.

2. NEW BUSINESS

2.1 A+W Enterprises LLC Urban Renewal Grant Application Presentation

Winston provided a presentation that can be viewed from [2:00-12:44 of the recording](#).

Chair Christine Collins: The parking lot behind your building is pretty rough.

Winston: I own the parking spaces right behind my building but the area behind other buildings and across the alleyway are owned by other parties. I recently paved my area.

Brian: You can coat the inside of your windows with vinyl and it will help a lot as a sound barrier by the highway.

NJ: You had a quote from A&S Construction in the slides of \$70,700. In the quote exhibit though, you had \$80,300. How did you reduce it this much?



Winston: I have a new quote now that doesn't include the sign.

Chair Christine Collins: Did you get any local bids?

Winston: Unfortunately, no. The contractors that submitted bids did say that they'd be willing to source material locally where possible.

Paul: I think this all looks great. I think it could look better if the building colors were more coordinated. Looks circus-y now. I think you could use black and white as trim colors to let the branding of the businesses pop but also create some unity.

Winston: Are the other buildings going to be required to fit into your design scheme?

Chair Christine Collins: I think it starts with you.

David: Are you going to replace windows?

Winston: Yes and they will be doubled paned.

Jeff: Are you going to do any upgrades inside the building?

Winston: We just remodeled the bedrooms and hallways.

Chair Christine Collins: NJ, do we have an updated total we could award him?

NJ: His new A&S quote brings the total to \$35,350 but there's \$33,136.50 so that's what we could give him. I will remind everyone though that we're not recommending today; we're just hearing Winston out and asking questions.

2.2 Service Recognition to EDC Member Paul Fidrych

Chair Christine Collins: Paul Fidrych has been on our committee for 3 years and has been such a joy to work with and always brings great ideas to the table. Thank you so much for your service to this committee and the City.

Paul received a round of applause.

Paul: I appreciate being able to serve on this group and have learned a lot from everyone.

Joe: I want to thank you as well, Paul. I've learned a lot from you in my time here and I appreciate all you've done for the City.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEXT MEETINGS

- Next meetings
 - December 18, 2025 at 12:00 pm
 - January 15, 2026 at 12:00 pm
 - February 19, 2026 at 12:00 pm

4. Meeting adjourned at 12:41 pm.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 5, 2026

Columbia Economic Team Successfully Transitions \$500,000 in Community Programs to Local Partners

Organization Preserves Economic Development Initiatives Through Strategic Partnerships as Closure Process Continues

COLUMBIA COUNTY, OR – The Columbia Economic Team (CET) today announced the successful transfer of approximately \$500,000 in economic development programs and funding to community partners, ensuring that vital initiatives will continue to serve Columbia County residents and businesses following the organization's dissolution.

Following a unanimous Board decision to dissolve CET, the organization has worked diligently over the past two months to preserve its legacy by redirecting key programs to capable local partners. The successful transitions include the GRO Greater entrepreneurial ecosystem initiative, the Northwest Innovation Hub, and the Rural Opportunity Initiative (ROI) grant program, along with Keep it Local and Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) programs.

"This outcome represents the very best of what public-private partnerships can achieve," said Tony Hyde, CET Board Chair. "Our funders demonstrated exceptional commitment to Columbia County by working collaboratively with us to ensure these programs could continue under new leadership. Their flexibility and shared vision for our community's economic future made all the difference. We are deeply grateful for the strong relationships built over the years that enabled this successful redirection of resources."

Major Program Transitions

GRO Greater: The "Growing Rural Oregon" initiative, funded by the Ford Family Foundation, has been transferred to the City of St. Helens with nearly \$100,000 in program funding. The initiative, which CET expanded from a city-focused program to a countywide benefit, will continue with two additional years of Ford Family Foundation support. An additional \$15,000 from Oregon Community Foundation awarded in December is being held by OCF for possible redeployment once GRO is settled at the city.

Northwest Innovation Hub: The regional program awarded by Business Oregon will be managed by Oregon Entrepreneurs Network (OEN), with more than \$270,000 available for launch and operations.

"CET has been an outstanding partner in advancing entrepreneurship and innovation in Columbia County and throughout the region," said Cara Turano, President & Executive Director, OEN. "Their initiative in bringing the Northwest Innovation Hub to this region, combined with their collaborative approach and unwavering support, has laid a strong foundation for regional economic growth. We're honored to have collaborated with CET and Business Oregon to create a hybrid organization to build upon their work and continue serving innovative entrepreneurs across Columbia County and beyond."

Rural Opportunity Initiative: The City of Scappoose will house the Business Retention & Expansion and Keep it Local programs, along with Small Business Resource Center tools and databases.

-- more --

Columbia Economic Team

PO Box 1653 St. Helens, OR 97051 | (503) 410-1061 | columbiaeconomicteam.com

The \$100,000+ grant ensures continued business support services with multiple funding rounds available.

"We're extremely grateful for the strong partnership and successful programs CET delivered to Columbia County and its businesses." said Ben Burgener, Scappoose City Manager. "Their extraordinary dedication and effort to preserve the ROI grant and transfer critical business support resources serves as a testament to their legacy, leadership, and commitment to successful economic growth in our communities. We are determined to build upon the strong foundation they've created and work with our county partners to continue strengthening our local businesses for years to come."

It's important to recognize," Hyde added, "that none of these transfer decisions was up to CET, they were all at the discretion of the funders with whom CET has exceptional relationships – and key stakeholders who stepped up to embrace the challenge and give these vital programs new homes. On behalf of the community, and especially the small business community, we thank the cities, Business Oregon, Ford Family Foundation, and OEN for their initiative and creative partnership."

Closure Timeline

CET is targeting March 31, 2026, for completion of all administrative closure activities. The organization terminated employment on December 31, 2025, and has contracted with former Executive Director Paul Vogel to manage operational wind-down and program transitions. The organization continues to work on economic development projects in progress, including Enterprise Zone management transfer and coordination of the Business Oregon-funded Energy Load & Transmission Task Force.

About Columbia Economic Team

Columbia Economic Team has served as Columbia County's economic development organization, working to support local businesses, attract investment, and foster entrepreneurship throughout the region. Through partnerships with public agencies, private funders, and community stakeholders, CET has implemented numerous programs focused on business retention and expansion, entrepreneurial ecosystem development, and tourism promotion.

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