

**COLLABORATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting Minutes – March 23, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.**  
**Ridge Conference Room**

**Committee Members:**

Bob Schaller (Chair)  
Daniel Mancuso (Vice Chair) - Teams  
Bradley Converse - Teams  
Cameron Camp  
Colene Martin  
Ethan Lane  
Gary Richardson  
Gene Merrill - Absent  
Josh Duval  
Josie Molloy  
Mark Woods  
Ron Gordon – Teams  
Ruth Swain  
Tori Middelstadt  
Tim Sweeney

**Government Liaisons:**

John West, County Commissioner - Absent  
Jean Ann Miles, City of Cave Junction - Absent  
Valerie Lovelace, City Council Liaison  
Marta Tarantsey, State Liaison, Business Oregon

**Staff Liaisons:**

Dana Pearce, Economic Development Manager

**Guests and Others:**

Lisa Parks, Rogue Community College Workforce  
Development Dean

- 1) **Roll Call:** Chair Schaller called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.
- 2) **Public Comment:** No Public Comment
- 3) **Approval of Minutes:**
  - a. Approval of minutes from February 23, 2023.

**Motion**

**Member Martin moved, and Member Camp seconded the motion to approve the minutes from the February 23, 2023, meeting. The vote resulted as follows: “AYES”: Chair Schaller, Members Mancuso, Converse, Martin, Lane, Richardson, Duval, Molloy, Woods, Gordon, Swain, Middelstadt, and Sweeney. “NAYS”: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Member Merrill.**

**The motion passed.**

- 4) **Work Session Items:**
  - a. **Economic Development Strategic Plan review**

**i. Presentation from Lisa Parks, Rogue Community College (RCC) Dean of Workforce Development.** Lisa shared her previous experience working at the college and Rogue Workforce Partnership. This position is a new role for the college, and it is providing some new direction. The focus now is aligning education with meaningful employment in our region. RCC is looking to help fill the need for employers, support livable wage jobs, and career and technical education for our region. Lisa asked the CEDC how RCC can collaborate in supporting workforce development and entrepreneurship, which led to open discussion.

**ii. Workforce Development and Entrepreneurship.** Conversation with Lisa of RCC continued and the following were among the topics discussed.

**1. RCC support for trades.** Welding program is at full capacity and starting new high school cohorts. RCC is looking to add non-credit, industry designed programs (e.g. plumbing and electrical).

**2. Soft skills.** Concerns expressed from membership about young people entering the workforce that do not understand the hiring process or lack soft skills. The question arose around who holds the responsibility for getting people ready to enter the workforce (education, parents, employers) and most felt it is a collaborative effort. Member Sweeney of District 7 Schools spoke to mandatory workforce readiness courses and mock interview event. To support career paths for kids, members felt communication, early career exploration, progressive plans, self-development, and on the job training would be beneficial. The Project Youth Plus program was cited as an example of a program that effectively supports workforce development for non-traditional high school students. Member Middelstadt felt current workforce has different needs so training employers on best practices could help the recruitment side. Overall, putting energy in K-12 age children is the best focus for future workforce development.

**3. Hemp Industry.** Member Mancuso asked about the possibility of RCC developing a horticulture program which could help with workforce development in hemp and wine industries. Member Gordon provided an article regarding hemp as a sustainable wood product. Other examples were given, and the OSU Global Center for Hemp in Klamath Falls was mentioned. Member Converse explained differences in the commercial opportunity between high CBD produced locally and that which is produced as a wood product. He also addressed the difference in processing material grown on federal public lands versus private, restricted areas. Exploring the hemp industry is addressed in the Economic Development Plan and there was support for more discussion on the topic.

**b. Subcommittee Reports.** Chair Schaller requested Chairs of Subcommittees identify their members, when they meet, and when we should expect information to be reported back.

**i. Airports.** Member Camp shared “a big win” for the Airports Subcommittee. They went before the Board of County Commissioners and expressed support for developing a strategic plan for the Airports that could be used as a pilot program to further develop a strategic plan for all County departments. Chair Schaller and Member Richardson also attended the meeting. The County Commissioners agreed to give the subcommittee 6 months for the pilot project. The Subcommittee will work with IV and GP Airport Advisory Boards, Airport Director, and the community to compile a working document to bring to the Commissioners. They will be required to incorporate the current masterplan from each airport. Several ideas for supporting the sustainability of the airports were discussed, including finding tenants and support airshow and events. The primary ask from the CEDC was to formally establish the members of the Airport Subcommittee that would commit to participating in the project. Chair Schaller, Members Camp, Richardson, Lane, Martin, Duval, Woods, and City Councilor Lovelace agreed to be members of the Airport Subcommittee. Member Camp also noted that the grants that were captured

and not lost by a lack of funding match were the fuel station, fire suppression and industrial air park grants.

**ii. Workforce Development: Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) project.** Member Gordon provided some resources and information on Adverse Childhood Experiences and seeing the skills and development to support the next generation falling on local government and community volunteers. The ACEs framework discussed at the previous meeting will be sent out to all members.

**iii. Industrial Lands.** Marta Tarantsey of Business Oregon shared they have announced an Industrial Site Readiness assistance grant range from \$25K-\$100K per eligible applicant, which can be economic development districts, cities, counties, or councils of government if there is property owner buy in. Funds could be used for feasibility studies, engineering, cost estimates, or shovel ready certification of a site. The Spalding industrial site is an example of a potentially eligible project and may be a good target for the Subcommittee. The Industrial Lands Subcommittee members are County Commissioner West, Members Martin and Molloy, Staff Liaison Pearce, City Development Director Brad Clark, County Real Property Manager Helene Lulich, SOREDI, and Cave Junction City Councilor Jean Ann Miles. The grant is open March through May.

**iv. E-Mobility: Electric Vehicles & Hydrogen.** Chair Schaller will begin the process of forming the E-Mobility Subcommittee. He would like to have our area poised to receive federal money that is available for infrastructure of electric highway, which includes Hydrogen.

## 5) Information Sharing:

### a. Committee Members

**i. Grants Pass and Josephine County Chamber of Commerce.** Member Molloy provided an update on the Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) results. The initial data is being compiled and will be presented at a breakfast in early May. Some overall findings were that businesses in Josephine County fared the pandemic better than expected. Areas for support included workforce and management needs, leadership training, and succession planning. Any “red flag” issues will be handled directly with businesses that have current pressing needs. All members of the CEDC will receive a copy of the final report. Also, the Chamber is bringing back Lemonade Day, getting younger kids into the workforce and being entrepreneurs. Registration opens May 1<sup>st</sup>. Last year, they worked with 200 kids, so would like to see that bump up to 300 this year. Contact Member Molloy if you’d like to be a sponsor.

**ii. Small Business Development Center (SBDC).** Member Swain share that the SBDC hired a Human Resources expert so they could provide training on Bureau of Labor and Industry (BOLI) laws and communication skills for employers. They will partner with the Chamber on these courses.

**iii. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).** Member Martin presented a project to promote ADUs as a partial solution for workforce housing. She shared Bend’s resources and website as an example. In the discussion, Grants Pass resources

were shared related to permitting and approved designs. Financing appeared to be an issue. There was also discussion around defining workforce housing compared to affordable and low-income housing. Other issues like housing being used for Airbnb arose. The Committee tabled the issue but would enter discussion later.

**b. Government Liaisons**

**i. City of Grants Pass.** Councilor Lovelace shared that she spoke with County Commissioner John West. He knows about this Committee, and he intends to begin attending. She is working to have better communication with the County Commissioners and building that relationship. They discussed the Fairgrounds and Flying Lark as an economic driver, and the Dimmick campus for workforce housing. Council Lovelace sees Spalding and the Airport as priority. She mentioned tiny homes are a priority and the Council has been working with the Home Builders Association regularly on the housing issue. Grants Pass City Council is focused on housing and creating a plan that will help our area to receive state funding and support.

**ii. Business Oregon.** Marta Tarantsey shared the Broadband Action Team, formed from the previous CEDC Broadband Subcommittee, is moving forward on further rural support for broadband. A Greater Applegate hired a broadband coordinator and on April 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> the Broadband Action Team will host Seth Thompson of Business Oregon for a listening session on behalf of the Oregon broadband office. Christina Berger will be making an invitation as Josephine County is the hosting stakeholder.

- 6) Items for Future Agenda Building for Next Meeting:** Airports and Industrial Lands;  
**Chair Schaller:** Presentation and discussion from City of Grants Pass Senior Planner, Mark Trinidad, on Climate-Friendly and Equitable Community (CFEC) rules  
**Member Mancuso:** Hotel for Cave Junction  
**Member Martin:** Invite County Planner  
**Liaison Tarantsey:** Invite Innovation Hub Planning Consultant

**7) Adjournment:**

- a. Meeting adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

**Next scheduled meeting: April 27, 2023**

*Minutes prepared by Dana Pearce, City Staff Liaison.*