

COLLABORATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes – September 28, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.
Ridge Conference Room

Committee Members:

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

Government Liaisons:

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

Staff Liaisons:

Dana Pearce, Economic Development Manager
JC Rowley, Finance Director

Guests and Others:

Colleen Padilla, SOREDI
Jaymes Tadlock, SOREDI
Lindsey Jones, IVCDO – Teams
Craig Dent, Housing Advisory Committee

- 1) **Roll Call:** Vice Chair Mancuso called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.
- 2) **Public Comment:** Colleen Padilla, Executive Director for SOREDI, shared news of two Josephine County companies that are expanding into Jackson County, Herb Pharm and Mycorrhizal Applications. It is good for the companies to be growing, expanding, adding new capital investment, and adding new jobs. Some of these projects can take years to negotiate and are treated confidentially. The Enterprise Zone benefit is often used for traded sector companies. There are four Enterprise Zones in our region: City of Grants Pass, Josephine County, City of Medford, and Jackson County. One point that was made is that we lack suitable industrial lands that have shovel ready infrastructure. This stimulated further conversation about convening the Industrial Lands Subcommittee and adding the topic to a future agenda.
- 3) **Approval of Minutes:**
 - a) Approval of minutes from August 24, 2023.

Motion

**Member Swain moved, and Member Duval seconded the motion to approve the minutes from the August 24, 2023, meeting. The vote resulted as follows: “AYES”: Vice Chair Mancuso, Members Converse, Camp, Lane, Richardson, Duval, Molloy, Woods, Swain, and Middelstadt. “NAYS”: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Chair Schaller, Members Martin, Gordon, and Sweeney.
The motion passed.**

- 4) **Work Session Items:**
 - a) **Cave Junction Hotel discussion follow up.** Member Mancuso met with the City of Cave Junction following September’s CEDC meeting to get more information on a Cave Junction Hotel site, and he shared that with Lindsey Jones of IVCDO. They are

collaborating to get a proposal together to present at the Hotel Convention in Ashland this coming weekend. Member Middelstadt has a staff member attending and can have the information available at the Travel Oregon table. In relation to the previous meeting, Councilor Miles shared a Mystic Corridor brochure that Sue Densmore had provided promoting the southwest Oregon and northwest California corridor from Crate Lake National Park to the Redwoods National Park. Additionally, she shared Cave Junction is targeting getting a Transient Lodging Tax on the ballot in November 2024.

- b) Alternative lodging – potential barriers, planning department advice, etc.** Member Middelstadt of Visit Grants Pass shared that, along with other community partners, they worked with Travel Oregon to hire Dean Runyan Associates to conduct an alternative lodging study to try and quantify the opportunities lost by not having more forms of lodging and what are the land use barriers that could be holding back alternative lodging options (e.g., yurts, tiny houses, farm stays, etc.). Currently, land use rules are a complaint driven system with no specific regulation. The risk to entrepreneurs looking to provide alternative lodging is to invest in development only to have a complaint affect their operation. The group is looking at how to get some advice on minor land use codes and systems that can help bring funds into the County. The study is also looking at four potential sites near Cave Junction.
- c) Permanent public safety funding discussion.** Councilor Lovelace provided a printout, City of Grants Pass Public Safety: Police & Fire Funding Summary Information. Currently, the City is \$8M short of public safety funding. To clarify, the County has put a sheriff's district on the November ballot, which does not include the City of Grants Pass. The Summary Information shows the expenses continue to exceed revenues and the gap in funding to meet current levels service is increasing. The City continues to seek levy funding though it isn't a permanent funding source. They are looking at ways to create a permanent funding mechanism that can fill the gap and maintain level of service. The City has explored raising the levy, creating service districts, and sales tax, all of which were shot down by voters. It is difficult to retain fire fighters and police without stable funding. Voters don't want to pay more for service, and it is costly to retrain firefighters and police with lack of job security. The City has continued to make cuts and has even adjusted their reserve to cover costs. The Council is looking at a utility fee or a food and beverage tax option.

Councilor Miles, regarding the County sheriff's district, shared there will be an information meeting at Wild River Pizza in Cave Junction on October 20th from 5:30-6:30. There will also be a session held at Fruitdale Grange in Grants Pass on October 12th from 6:00-7:00. The County is also experiencing the revolving door of officers. They go through training and after a couple years end up leaving to other agencies because they provide more stability.

The committee discussed the various options presented and their perspectives on equity. There are different ways to calculate a fee for the water bill and each of those options was discussed (e.g., water usage, water meter size, transportation model, etc.). Members considered flat user fees, service reduction, service district boundaries within the City, tiered fees, etc.

5) Information Sharing

a) Committee Members.

- b) **Government Liaisons.** Councilor Miles requested to move information sharing to the beginning because it often gets skipped because we run out of time.
- c) **Items from Staff.** The City Council of Grants Pass supported the request for the City and the Seed Collective to jointly submit for an EDA Recompete workforce grant. That application will be submitted next week.
- d) **Meeting recap and action items.** The committee would like to have a combined November and December meeting on December 7th to avoid conflicts with the holidays.

Motion

**Member Woods moved, and Member Swain seconded the motion to combine the November and December meetings into one meeting on December 7th. The vote resulted as follows: "AYES": Vice Chair Mancuso, Members Converse, Camp, Lane, Richardson, Duval, Molloy, Woods, Swain, and Middelstadt. "NAYS": None. Abstain: None. Absent: Chair Schaller, Members Martin, Gordon, and Sweeney.
The motion passed.**

6) Items for Future Agenda Building for Next Meeting:

- 10/26/23** – Community events, economic impact report, potential guests include a member of Active Club, Tamra Martin for the Fairgrounds, and Tori Middelstadt for Art Along the Rogue
- 12/7/23** – Strategic planning goals.

7) Adjournment:

- a. Meeting adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

Next scheduled meeting: October 26, 2023

Minutes prepared by Dana Pearce, City Staff Liaison.