



CITY OF
West Linn

97068

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22500 Salamo Rd.
West Linn OR

WEST LINN

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

September 13, 2018
6:30 PM
Willamette Room, City Hall

Members Present:

Kazi Ahmed
Gail Holmes
Shannen Knight
Rachael Vidin

Members Absent:

Jennifer Harmon
Amanda Stein
Russel Williams

Staff Present:

Darren Wyss Staff Liaison
Richard Sakelik Council Liaison

Citizen Present:

Keisha Brewster

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 pm

Review of Agenda

The agenda was approved as written.

Approval of Minutes

Shannen Knight made a motion to approve the minutes of April 12, 2018 and July 12, 2018. Gail Holmes second. Motion approved as corrected of the spelling of Gail Holmes and Rachael Vidin 4-0.

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Old Business

Economic Development Committee ideas and strategy continued discussion:

Shannen Knight stated she thought in April the committee had the whole discussion of the new business license software and that it had launched and at the end of renewing a license there would final questions for data collection. She also stated it was now a lot easier to renew your license, very fast. Discussion by committee of when licenses are up for renewal next year the committee would need to have a plan together to have the final questions added. It was discussed to schedule It Director Shane Boyle to come to a meeting and ask him if there is information the committee could extract now. Associate Planner Darren Wyss will follow up on this task.

Rachael Vidin asked Councilor Richard Sakelik if he went on the tour of the Forest Grove Link and if a tour was possible for this committee. Councilor Richard Sakelik explained this is an inter-city free shuttle, a free service to citizens. He stated the council went on the tour of this ride connection system that was developed with involvement with Tri-Met to utilize the Tri-Met taxes being paid. After a presentation of Wilsonville's system SMART at the upcoming Council meeting he explained that the City is looking into developing a system in West Linn, this would be a benefit to the City including economically and for sustainability. He also stated this committee along with others committees and boards in the City are interested in a tour and it can be arranged. Kazi Ahmed asked Council Richard Sakelik what role the Councilor sees the Economic Development Committee playing in this? Councilor Sakelik stated that in Forest Grove they now have 60,000 riders; according to Forest Grove surveys 97% of the population are happy with the service and 33% shop in the city. He stated that if the City of West Linn had a service to get people up the hill, people without cars would have access to the shopping areas and as the City works towards the waterfront project a service would lessen the need for parking, and also for Willamette Falls Drive. He also stated there are no defined groups to work on this project now, theoretically if the EDC checks out the system and think it makes sense the Council would endorse. Discussion of committee that this would benefit riders that would also utilize the system to commute to work and also benefit students. Shannen Knight stated she attended the Oregon City annual main street vision planning and reported Oregon City is also toying with the same idea; could we partner with Oregon City. Richard Sakelik discussed how Forest Grove funds the system, different options available for funding a system like this and Council is exploring the options; it would need to be self-sustaining. Discussion around how collaborating with neighboring communities is good for all business and could increase ridership. Councilor Richard Sakelik thinks the sooner the better for a system and stated Forest Grove had the system implemented in one year and explained the cost to their city. Discussion how Tri-Met is involved the Ride Connection, and their need to apply for grants. Councilor Sakelik will keep the committee informed on a tour to Forest Grove.

Rachael Vidin went back to the retreat conclusion summary; it was noted by the committee the summary should have been printed and handed out. Rachael Vidin read aloud the items listed on the summary and she felt it would be a good idea to sit with each Council members and the Mayor, also NA presidents and glean their thoughts, hopes, and desires for the City and Economic Development Committee; creating transparency and trust. She stated she is hoping

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to have the majority of the meetings complete by the November meeting allowing the EDC can deliver to Council in January for the Council goal setting session can deliver a nice package. Councilor Sakelik suggested attending a Neighborhood Associations Presidents meeting. Gail Holmes explained when the NA Presidents meeting are usually scheduled, which neighborhoods are associated with economic development; Rachael Vidin wants each neighborhood association to decide for themselves if they are interested with meeting with Rachael Vidin and her philosophy behind this is, how can the EDC can serve the City better. Kazi Ahmed believe the list needs to be prioritized; agreed by committee. Rachael Vidin will also meet with the new Chamber president. High rent was a topic of discussion, how and why. Councilor Sakelik mentioned home occupation, it was also discussed how some home occupations are taking advantage of not paying taxes where an entire floor of a home is utilized with many employees and can't believe neighbors are not complaining. Planner Darren Wyss explained how home based businesses and how the City is very flexible, and also have rules and regulations. He explained the City is a complaint based enforcement, if there is not a complaint it will not be looked into. Shannen Knight believes the committee needs to look at zoning and connecting business districts. Rachael Vidin stated after her meetings she believes the group can come up with major pain points. Gail Holmes would like the list divided to short and long term and gauge timing for each items. Question, why does the Economic Development Committee exist; what is really, truly going to impact the City? Rachael Vidin believes this question could be answered after these meetings; what is our mission and core value. Gail Holmes explained how this committee judges grants for tourism dollars, just one of the parts of economic development and the original committee hope was to make the City aware how we create a strong business community. There is no true downtown, a broad area, how can we connect them.

There need to be a mission statement posted to the website and corrections to the membership listed, noted to be corrected.

Kazi Ahmed stated he thinks there should be an orientation; discussion how when you apply for the committee you should have an idea what the committee does. It was discussed that if citizens do not know what the committee does, there needs to be better communication. Councilor Sakelik stated the committee is here to compliment City Council goals. He stated one of the key goals of 2017 was reviewing city zoning to enhance economic development in the business districts, the committee did that and it is still ongoing. Discussion among committee members of who has the responsibility of implementing economic development for the City. Councilor Richard Sakelik discussed the opportunity of the committee to put together a plan for the old City Hall/Police building. This is a tangible idea as well as the shuttle project.

Rents being too high was a topic as well for the committee; could we have a consultant that works with business owners to negotiate rents within the city. Planner Darren Wyss stated that when Chris Kerr worked for the City regular meetings were held during the day to facilitate group meetings to give information such as this. He told the committee they could probably find this on the website. This is an anomaly community, let's be open and welcome without punishing owners of vacant spaces.

New Business

No new business.

Other items of interest EDC Members:

Shannen Knight stated that Willamette has a wine walk on Friday with 17 vineyards. She stated they are also working on a grant for weigh finding signage that might have economic development implications. Shannen Knight stated she had already talked to Parks and Recreation regarding a water ski team to have “home shows”, could be a tourism piece.

Gail Holmes discussed how the app of webpage 97068, part of an earlier tourism discussion makes sense to bring people to the city; the app would allow citizens and tourist to know of events like the water ski and home shows. She also stated the Post Office is losing their lease, makes you think if something like this happens there needs to be a better location, let's think about this. Councilor Richard Sakelik suggested the old Haggens/Albertsons store would make a great split of a post office and a store. Gail Holmes believes more post office boxes are needed and a bigger space would make that feasible. Rachael Vidin asked about security being an issue in a split environment, as a federal building. It was discussed how this could be secured. Gail Holmes also discussed communication and how does the City get information out to all the people; important with the bond money we will now be spending. Discussion around communicating through utility billing and there are too many mediums already; people are getting the information they do not want to attend until it is a major issue. Why is the City not using next door, our police department uses this medium. Kazi Ahmed again stated too many mediums, how do you raise citizen conscientious that they need to be aware; through different types of social media.

Other items of interest Staff/Council Liaison:

Councilor Richard Sakelik reminded the committee to attend next Monday's Council meeting to watch the presentation of Wilsonville SMART transportation.

Planner Darren Wyss stated the waterfront land use component on hold until PGE has finished their property evaluation. Regarding transportation the City has been working with ODOT on the reconfiguration of the intersection at the foot of the bridge, a lot of positive things happening. He stated the Mixed Use Task Force will meet next Wednesday to discuss potential rezoning along 8th Avenue, which will follow up with the Council to hopefully direct staff to work with another group to look at design and dimensional standards and look at the general commercial zone. The commercial zone now has 50% max coverage, this may need to be looked at; things this committee might think about for recommendation to Council in the future.

Kazi Ahmed asked about the Hwy 43 concept plan regarding the turnabouts for Hidden Springs. Darren Wyss stated Public Works Director Lance Calvert would be the person to ask and that he knows the City has gone out to bid for the final design of the northern section of Hwy 43. What is happening with the church property? Councilor Sakelik stated that the City is working with the church on tweaking the plan; hopefully the City will see the final plan soon.

Public comments on Economic Development matters not on the agenda

Keisha Brewster stated she has two points; about bring current economic development and stated the web site is not current and believes this a tangible item to be taken care of by Council. She also stated she came to a meeting a year ago and walked away with the question "what is the EDC doing"; here she is a year later and hearing the same question being asked. Why has this not been addressed, it is tangible. She stated if the website is not current, if that is not current, what are you? Let's get transparent of posting cancelled meeting agendas being posted. She also asked about Dutch Brothers and if there was a traffic analysis. There is no land use process required as they are taking over a building where a business can have a drive-thru. Discussion regarding go bonds and revamping Blankenship, 10th Street, and Salamo.

Additional discussion regarding the website with Councilor Richard Sakelik stating IT Director Shane Boyle is willing to listen to suggestions regarding the website. It was also discussed that Shane Boyle has nothing to do with the EDC website, the committee will work on getting the website updated. Rachael Vidin thanked Keisha Brewster for her comments.

Darren Wyss reminded the committee there is an economic opportunity analysis that was adopted by Council in 2016 that contains good information, such as retail demand and supply factors, there is potential, the City just has to figure out why that is.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.