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22500 Salamo Rd.
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WEST LINN

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

October 11, 2018
6:30 PM
Willamette Room, City Hall

Members Present:

Kazi Ahmed
Jennifer Harmon
Shannen Knight
Matt Lorenzen
Amanda Stein
Rachael Vidin

Members Absent:

Russel Williams

Staff Present:

John Morgan Staff Liaison
Richard Sakelik Council Liaison

Citizen Present:

Noelle Brooks
Keisha Brewster
Andrew Mallory

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm

Approval of Minutes

Shannen Knight made a motion to approve the minutes of September 13, 2018. Kazi Ahmed second. Motion approved as corrected of the spelling Rachael and good. Approved 6-0.

Rachael Vidin announced that Gail Holmes submitted her resignation, she was valuable member and will be missed. Welcome to new member Matt Lorenzen, he gave a brief history of his history in West Linn, he moved to the Sunset Neighborhood 5 years ago and volunteered for Historic Willamette for a couple years. He stated he is the Economic Development Manager for the City of Estacada. He is here to listen and learn and offer insight when the timing is right. Kazi Ahmed requested information on how Matt Lorenzo is helping the City of Estacada. Matt Lorenzen gave a brief overview of his position and explained economic development looks different in Estacada where the focus is industrial improvement, business retention and expansion.

Old Business

Economic Development Committee ideas and strategy continued discussion and development of an action plan:

Rachael Vidin summarized last month's discussion and thanked John Morgan for bringing the retreat conclusion handout. She thinks the committee could narrow down the list that they can't tackle or are too general or too broad, she opened, is this tangible. Rachael stated she had put out an email to the Council asking met for the question "what can the EDC do to better serve the City". She met with Councilors Teri Cumming and Richard Sakelik, kind of pseudo the Mayor by attending his Happy Hour. An email also went out to the Neighborhood Association Presidents and heard back from no one. Rachael want to pick three or items that the Committee can tackle and get back with the Council. Guest Andrew Mallory apologized for the Willamette NA for not responding and he stated the EDC is hugely important. Kazi Ahmed stated that the committee does not know what their role is, his perspective is that the role is provide advice and guidance from the committee experiences and to form policies and procedures for the Council to adopt and believes the list does not provide answers on how to come up with policies and procedures. John Morgan stated the list of issues the EDC identified two years ago and was approved by Council. John suggested reviewing the list and revise to what is relevant and needs attention; what are you trying to achieve, the committee need to have a report to Council by the end of the year. Amanda Stein suggested doing a survey of business owners to collect data to support the committee's objectives. She also suggested putting together the committee's top three objectives and supporting them with data for presentation. Discussion around the survey done a year ago and how the data was not hashed out between brick and motor vs. home based business, making it irrelevant as answers were mixed together. Amanda Stein volunteered to contact businesses to put together a story on what is important to business owners. Decided to revisit the survey, need to ask with strategic questions and directives.

Kazi Ahmed asked Councilor Sakelik what is the Council looking for, he believes that the committees job is to come up with polices for adoption across the board. Councilor Sakelik stated the committees job is to convey to Council what the committee feels is important to move the City forward in economic development. He stated the goals for 2018 integrated the committee's ideas on zoning and mixed use. Process was discussed, recommendations vs. policy and how some items were worked on some not as circumstances have changed and the City cannot or have not been able to move forward. Councilor Sakelik stated the goal of the EDC is to compliment City Council Goals; mixed use was one goal, old City Hall could be another, and there are probably a few other items on the list or new items that could be added to accomplish this. He stated the Council does not want to direct the committee, the committee is to direct

Council on ideas. Kazi Ahmed wants the committee to identify what are the priorities on the list, agreement by the committee. Discussion around local transportation as a priority that could benefit everyone. Yes it is one of Council goals this committee and this could help drive Council to move forward with this item. Discussion around the roles of staff and liaisons, Shannen Knight suggested a subcommittee that creates questions for the survey that could go to staff for distribution. Additional questions on roles; Councilor Sakelik defined the roles and reminded the committee they are the ones to facilitate meetings and create ideas. John Morgan stated this committee has not had a lot of direction for itself, making it difficult to know where he can productively serve time for the committee; getting the list nailed down will help. Rachael Vidin stated that she will contact the new Councilors after the election and hopefully the neighborhood association will be listening to this meeting and reach out as well, or Rachael will connect with them.

Shannen Knight asked if IT Director Shane Boyle will be coming back to speak with the committee regarding business license surveys; he will be coming back. John Morgan will follow up with Shane.

Kazi Ahmed suggested picking a long and short term project on the priority list; we can harvest low hanging fruit, doing projects that are short term that leads to long term, all the better. Shannen Knight stated number one is done, number two is software that can be discussed when Shane Boyle attends the meeting. Developing relationships with commercial brokers died out, the committee cannot influence rent prices; it is obsolete. Kazi Ahmed stated he believes Council could influence brokers with policies on empty facilities not being empty for a long period of time. The administrative overhead to police this would not be worth it. Discussion around incentive, what can we do to encourage business. Richard Sakelik suggested looking at the City of Canby on a public/private partnership they have established, urban renewal. Let's look again at zoning, to make recommendations to Council. John Morgan discussed the Water Front plan will be coming down the road and this committee should be deeply involved. He also stated urban renewal, we need to establish a district and this group could guide that.

Shannen Knight brought up red tape. John Morgan stated, regulatory reform has been high on the list, process in West Linn is extensive delays and uncertainty; some citizens like it this way to stop development. The cost of SDC's in West Linn is very high, the highest in the Metro area. It is worthy to take a look in this area, stay progressive and current.

Tourism another item on the list could be a priority, and it ties to transportation. Water tours could be a major part of this, and could be competitive for grants. John Morgan would like water based tourism on the next agenda and would like the committee to hear the study on this. Water based tourism besides boat ramps encompasses the infrastructure, such as hotel rooms and brew pubs, etc., that support a tourism economy that could be a lot larger.

The committee chose three items to focus on. One would be including zoning and coding review, a good short term focus. Discussion regarding water front zoning, waiting to hear from PGE what their intent is. Zoning in the whole area need to be a focus, and the infrastructure of that narrow area; let's look at target properties, what are the barriers, how does the City address. Councilor Richard Sakelik suggested the EDC come forward with some recommendation for the GO bond money for something that will work in that area. John Morgan will bring a map to the next meeting. Needs a subcommittee.

Transportation, combining water tourism and shuttle bus would be another priority. Needs a subcommittee.

Urban renewal discussed again, need assessment which would require hiring a consultant. This will cost a lot of money to do a study and plan. There needs to boundaries defined for the district. What can the EDC do to help get this off the ground? Shannen Knight moved to ask Council to look at the formation of an Urban Renewal District. Jennifer Harmon seconded, passed unanimously. There are special Districts that need to be a part of this.

Matt Lorenzen asked John Morgan about how the committee can move forward on the SDC and fee structure. John replied to present it to Council as a goal. Discussion around 1 year vacant properties and what are new business subject too; they are subject to new transportation analysis and be responsible for transportation impact fees.

John Morgan stated he will come up with a new and updated project list which he will bring to the next meeting for final review and formal action. This list can be edited as need be and prioritized.

New Business

No new business, back to early discussion with Amanda Stein suggesting every month look at the local economy, let's use the business license data to get information, this could change our priorities. A majority of West Linn business is home based that does not provide goods and services, different from brick and mortar. A brochure for starting a home based business would be beneficial.

Other items of interest EDC Members:

Jennifer Harmon asked about the Albertson property, where the lease is up and is available. Nothing is happening.

Shannen Knight discussed the grant for water transportation, the Willamette areas plan for Halloween for children and an added adult event of a Pub crawl on the Friday night before Halloween. Main Street open house on the 11th and 25th of November.

Rachael Vidin announced the Advisory Appreciation night is October 26th, 5:30 to 8:30.

Other items of interest Staff/Council Liaison:

Councilor Richard Sakelik reminded the committee year end reports are likely due in December. Four open seats on the committee for next year.

John Morgan stated West Linn Paper Company is actively for sale, the owners are working in close concert with PGE and have hired the same consultant to do an inventory of interest. The old Blue Heron Mill Pond owned by WES, would sell it if someone comes in with something viable for the community. Clackamas County has budgeted several million dollars for a level one remediation. A developer would need to pay to get to level three remediation to make it usable for a building. May come to the table sooner than later, and expected to be a big controversial issue for community.

Public comments on Economic Development matters not on the agenda

Noelle Brooks asked for a reallocation of funds for the grant awarded to the Chamber through Clackamas County. The grant is November 1st through the 24th, she is requesting a shift of time frame to coincide with the Holiday season of November 24th to December 24th. Noelle wanted to nix money allocated for t-shirts supporting shop local, by getting free merchandise from the national shop local campaign and using the funds for advertising which is very expensive. Discussion around what meets the requirements. This grant was done through the Budget Committee so the EDC cannot reply to this.

Noelle Brooks is also asking for the EDC's help in promoting the Chamber and moving the organization forward. Noelle would like to attend the EDC meetings, contribute where she can, share assets, and add value to members and this committee. Stated board seats are opening up, as Noelle is not a resident of West Linn she is welcome to attend any meeting. Thank you to Noelle from board members.

Andrew Mallory stated the City is about to change radically and this group is important in what it can do to bring the community together and support initiatives. Andrew questioned the goals the purpose and mission of the EDC. Rachael responded, the committee is here to serve the City, Council, and the community and are in the process of honing in on what is important and developing goals. Andrew still has concerns and will submit questions to the committee in writing for discussion at possibly the next meeting.

Next meeting November 6, 2018 at 6:30pm.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm.