



WEST LINN

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

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

Members Present:

Kazi Ahmed
Shannen Knight
Matt Lorenzen
Amanda Stein
Rachael Vidin
Russel Williams

Members Absent:

Jennifer Harmon

Staff Present:

John Morgan Staff Liaison
Richard Sakelik Council Liaison

Citizen and Guest Present:

Keisha Brewster
Samara Phelps – Clackamas County Tourism

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:38 pm

Approval of Minutes

Matt Lorenzen moved to approve the minutes as written, Amanda Stein second. Approved.

Agenda Approval

Rachel Vidin suggested moving public comment to the beginning of the agenda to accommodate guests. Approved.

Public Comments

Keisha Brewster of West Linn asked about draft minutes of subcommittees and maps with the GO bond, with the project update with the tourism, and the new project list.

Rachel Vidin commented on the November meeting and that members did not show or message that they will be not in attendance and the meeting had to be cancelled. They was a guest and also Shane Boyle IT Director in attendance as requested. She understands other commitments and asks for everyone to evaluate their purpose on the committee, if this is not a good fit for you at this time please resign and let other citizens who would like to be a participant have the opportunity. Discussion from members, and also liaisons regarding upcoming training for committees. Moving forward let's fulfill our commitments. Shane Boyle agreed to attend the January meeting.

Presentation

Clackamas County Water Based Tourism Study – presentation by Samara Phelps, Clackamas County Economic Development. This County department has recently moved into West Linn down on Blankenship. The presentation was not specific to West Linn but can be applied in many areas. Methodology, key findings, and opportunities presented. Discussion around how West Linn could improve to accommodate water sports, and add camping, and hotels. Discussion on how can we create a market for hotels; Clackamas County is short on hotels. John Morgan will reconnect with McMenamins regarding development. There is an interest for innovative space in Clackamas County Samara Phelps gave advice on how cities need to be active with developers. Councilor Sakelik brought up Jeff Parker's property and how this could become a perfect place for events.

Old Business

Economic Development Committee ideas and strategy continued discussion and development of an action plan: John Morgan opened the discussion with a draft -plan and strategy handout to consolidate what the committee wants to work on over the next year and forming the foundation of what direction the Council wants the committee to take.

First discussion regarding the Waterfront Project; there is no advisory committee as this is intended to be a bigger community outreach but it was suggested there need to be a civic group paying close attention, this is a logical committee to do so. This has been stagnant for the past 6 months. There is expectation for this to take off again in February or March; the committee needs to make a presence with a subcommittee or dedicated people of the committee members. Portland General Electric has taken off with project and will be proposing some alternatives and ideas and asking for response. Councilor Sakelik stated the Council just agreed to do a letter of intent with the Willamette Falls Heritage Coalition and there is \$400,000 reserved to become involved with the Coalition after their due diligence on how the Coalition can use the building.

Second discussion, Business retention and development; of the action items updating the business inventory monthly is not realistic, change to quarterly. Explanation of why this information is important and what is the intended outcome is to be able to survey businesses for feedback for the direction of the committee and to facilitate other goals. Why can't business survive in West Linn, what is important to help business, how can we support the owners. John Morgan threw out two suggested additional objectives, recommend policy and projects to

Council to encourage business retention and development, second, facilitate retention and development with the chamber and other groups. How can we attract better businesses to the City and what do we need to chase? We can be more proactive and sell the City to business particularly with the Waterfront Project coming up. Using the water accounts to find when a business is closing will allow us possible exit interviews, not always. Could the software send a questionnaire with auto renewals? If we do not have the resources or tools necessary to meet our objectives, the committee can recommend to council for help through staffing or budgeting. Can there be a random questionnaire to businesses, why did you come to West Linn and why are you leaving.

Third discussion, Improve the business climate; development code and city process, let's rekindle the red tape project especially for business as compared to developers. Who will reach out to developers, staff or members of the committee? We need to glean information from other cities on how they reach out to their businesses. This is all relationship building, do this with business groups and partner with other advisory groups to meet objectives. Meeting with Neighborhood Associations does not work as some have very few attendees and business owners do not attend. Discussed the Chamber is planning on working on this items as well in the next year; supplying 6 week sessions on topics like HR or Marketing, etc. to help business. Is it possible to collaborate quarterly? Proposal for a have a joint meeting with the Chamber and decide how can we collaborate; it would need to be a specific agenda. Let's add as an objective to connect with other business advisory groups and the Chamber, possibly the neighborhood associations as well. Discussion around having an open house with business owners. Decided to take the first action of meeting with developers off the spreadsheet and move working with the Chamber to the top and adding Willamette Main Street. Discussion and the pros and cons around creating a Facebook page for business owners only; maybe the Chamber could own this; would not be allowed through the City. John Morgan will adjust the spreadsheet to remove redundancies and merge similar objectives. We need to develop the City website to provide information to potential business, channel information from the State, and provide data to become a better resource. Discussed the action item of how to encourage economic growth, holding an open house should be the action item overlapping other objectives on the spreadsheet, and continue to work on zoning. We need to define action items, including roles, responsibilities, and expectations. Decided to discuss specific action items at the January 10, 2019 meeting. Take the broad spectrum actions items from the list to be more specific.

Encourage economic development through tourism; the presentation today was a head start and with the waterfront project this initiative will evolve throughout the year and after there is a draft to the waterfront. Camping need to look at; other cities have campsites, let's look at how they make this work with their tourism.

Increase EDC's impact; a quarterly update to with Council with a report. We could also invite Council members, the City Manager and department heads to attend the committee meetings. Council Sakelik stated he believes a joint meeting with the Council would be more productive.

New Business

Annual Report; the report is due to Council which is basically laid out; John Morgan will draft and send out for comment with no deliberation.

If members will not be in attendance for a meeting contact Rachael and John Morgan.

Other items of interest EDC Members:

Shannen Knight talked about a Planning Commission meeting and decision regarding the OBC zone. First floor/level is the actual front door and nothing below grade.

Rachael Vidin discussed the vacancies and applications for the committee. Be sure to reapply if you are interested in continuing on the committee.

Russel Williams stated for the Chamber that the Saturday shop local campaign was a big success and thanked the City for the support and help.

John Morgan stated to look for big news on the waterfront, hopefully by February.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 9:34 pm.

Next meeting January 10, 2019.