

January 14, 2010

To: LCOG Executive Committee

From: George Kloeppe

Subject: Agenda Item 3, Pursuit of Economic Development, Jobs Creation

Action: Provide Direction to Staff

At its December meeting, the Board of Directors considered the Executive Committee's recommendation that task teams be utilized to develop action steps for the agency to take in two areas that emerged from the Board's September Planning Session. Those areas were: "Communication & Governance" and "Human Services." The Discussion last month moved the focal point to a completely different spot. The Board requested that the emphasis be placed on a better coordinated regional approach to economic development and the creation or preservation of family-wage jobs.

As a reminder, I attach at the bottom of this memo the *rough draft* of the minutes from that portion of the Board's discussion in December. You will note that a number of suggestions were offered (not necessarily confirmed by formal Board action). For example, it was suggested that Eugene City Manager Jon Ruiz be asked to brief the LCOG Board on the results of the recent Economic Prosperity Summit. It was suggested that a representative of the Lane Metro Partnership be invited to attend one or more LCOG Board meetings to facilitate cooperation on economic development issues. It was suggested that the Executive Committee, plus Board volunteers, meet with "outside experts" to identify obstacles and incentives to development, and report back to the Board with specific proposals. And it was suggested that the Chair be authorized to establish a task team... Please take a look at this excerpt of the draft minutes, as it should inform the Committee's discussion under this agenda item.

The task at present is to determine *What do we do next?* The Committee may want to mix-and-match the comments and suggestions made by Board members to arrive at a reasonable strategy. Two concerns of mine would be that we must (1) avoid moving off in multiple directions and (2) avoid duplicating the efforts of others. We would be well advised to concentrate our efforts in those areas that,

frankly, LCOG does well. You may want to consider bringing in someone with appropriate professional credentials to talk with the Board in February. Alternatively, the Executive Committee or a subset may want to do some data collection and analysis (as a task team) before the February 25 meeting.

Under this item, the Committee is asked to provide direction to staff.

Excerpt from Draft (not approved) minutes of December 10 LCOG Board Discussion of Planning Session Priorities

BOARD OF DIRECTORS PLANNING

Mr. Kloeppe referred to agenda support material entitled “Follow-Up to Board Planning Session” and noted that the Executive Committee had reviewed the chart notes and high-priority outcomes that were produced at the Board’s September 24 Planning Session. The Executive Committee’s recommendation is that the Board focus on two policy areas – “Communication & Governance” and “Human Services”. It further recommends that the Board set up task teams, consisting of Board members, LCOG staff, and others with expertise in these policy areas, to meet separately from the Board and identify action steps LCOG could take, along with participating jurisdictions, to improve our region. As an example, Mr. Kloeppe suggested that a task team could devise a plan that would enable local communities and jurisdictions to communicate their needs and concerns in a cohesive manner to the Oregon Legislature. It could also help local jurisdictions address governance questions, such as the survival of small school districts, using special districts to deliver services, and whether to combine fire and ambulance services in the metro area. He asked Board members for their input.

Ms. Volta praised the sense of momentum created during the Board Planning Session and urged members to come up with a working plan to maintain that momentum. She said one key governance issue is to create a sense of seamlessness among jurisdictions, so citizens won’t become lost among government entities as they try to get their problems resolved.

Board Member Jim Torrey noted that it will take money to accomplish whatever goals the Board sets and said that money won’t be available until more jobs are created in this area and people are able to return to work. He praised the recent Economic Summit that Eugene City Manager Jon Ruiz spearheaded, suggested having Mr. Ruiz brief the Board

on the summit's results, and urged the Board to make "Economic Development" the policy area it concentrates on.

Mr. Brubaker supported this approach and said the Board's focus should be on "jobs, jobs, jobs". Mr. McCown agreed and suggested that LCOG could provide regional coordination for economic development. Board Member Al King suggested inviting someone from the Lane Metro Partnership to attend LCOG Board meetings to facilitate working with them on economic development issues. He also expressed support for helping coordinate a regional approach to the Oregon Legislature.

Mr. Pryor supported making economic development a Board priority, but said it will be difficult reaching agreement on specific steps, especially when there is a cost attached. He felt LCOG might be in a good position to play a coordinating role. Mr. Torrey noted that at the Economic Summit the group he took part in tried to identify barriers to economic development and how to overcome them. One example cited was finding a way to connect a jurisdiction with developable land, but limited planning resources, with a jurisdiction that could provide planning capacity.

Mr. Pishioneri said this sounded like the Team Springfield concept in his community. Each year, a variety of local agencies, such as Willamalane and the school district, get together with city representatives, develop a set of common goals, and then create a "punch list" of projects they're all willing to work on - and contribute to - for the coming year. He said LCOG would be a perfect forum for coordinating creation of a regional economic development "punch list" for 2010. Mr. King supported having LCOG look at such an approach.

Mr. McCown expressed reservations about jumping right into the creation of an economic development "punch list". He felt this could result in an uncoordinated, short-term approach. Instead, Mr. McCown urged the Board to focus first on helping communities and jurisdictions create a strategic economic development vision. We are good at recruiting businesses, he said, but we haven't always succeeded at supporting them after they're here or in growing existing, local businesses. Once we have a shared vision, Mr. McCown said, then we should develop the "punch list".

Mr. Pryor said there seems to be agreement on the importance of economic development, but he also expressed concern that the Board find a way to do something concrete in this area, not just discuss it every two months at meetings. He suggested having the Executive Committee, joined by several Board volunteers, meet with outside experts to identify obstacles and incentives to economic development that LCOG could have an impact on. Then the Executive Committee could bring a set of specific proposals back to the Board for discussion and adoption.

Ms. Metzger noted that one specific project in the human services area to consider is the effort United Way is making to establish a 211 information line. This would allow people to call and talk directly to a person about their issue or question and get a good referral to the proper agency or jurisdiction for addressing it.

Ms. Volta pointed out that each Board member's agency or jurisdiction has an obligation to examine whether its actions and regulations are helping or hurting business recruitment, economic development, and the creation of family wage jobs. She urged the naming of a task team tonight, so LCOG can continue moving forward in its planning. Chairperson James agreed on the need for a task team and action plan and recommended there be a mechanism, such as a listserv, for keeping those not on the task team informed of its activities.

Mr. Torrey suggested that Mr. Pryor, as the incoming Board Chair, be empowered to designate a task team from among the Executive Committee and any Board volunteers between now and the end of the year. Chairperson James asked if there was consensus to proceed in this manner. Board members unanimously consented to do so. Chairperson James said LCOG would keep Board members updated on the task team's activities.

Mr. Weathers asked that the task team be provided with the results of the Economic Summit. Mr. Kloepfel committed to furnishing Board members with a summary of the summit's findings.

Mr. Kloepfel noted there had been a significant shift during the discussion tonight from "Communication and Governance" and "Human Services" to "Economic Development" as the Board's primary focus for the coming year. He said LCOG staff is committed to assisting in this endeavor. He offered to work on making a connection for the Board with the Lane Metro Partnership. He also expressed support for LCOG's involvement in the 211 information line and for helping local jurisdictions coordinate their approach to the 2011 legislative session.