

MINUTES

Lane Economic Committee

Lane Council of Governments – 4th Floor Large Conference Room
99 E. Broadway, Suite 400 – Eugene

March 17, 2008 – 11:30 A.M.

PRESENT: Rob Scoggin, Chair; Tim Black, Mike Blommé, Mike Galvin, Phillip Hudspeth, Faye Stewart, John Sullivan, John Tamulonis, Ellen Teninty, Lynnette Wikstrom, *members*; Jay Bozievich, Deb Schmidt, *ex officio members*; Lawrence Brice, Robin Onaclea (for Chuck Forster), Howard Schesser, *alternate members*.

Steve Dignam, Milo Mecham (LCOG); Mike McKenzie-Bahr (Lane County); Bob Warren (Oregon Economic & Community Development Department).

ABSENT: Pat Albright, Denny Braud, DeAnn Cherbas, Chuck Forster, Ric Ingham, Glenda Poling, *members*, Kari Westland, *ex officio member*.

GUESTS: David Clyne, Hugh Prichard

Mr. Scoggin called the meeting of the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) Lane Economic Committee (LEC) to order at 11:30 a.m. He invited those who were present to introduce themselves.

1. Comments

Mr. Scoggin determined that there were no persons present wishing to make public comment and stated that he had not prepared comments.

Full of blarney, Mr. Dignam commented upon his Celtic heritage, and noted that Irish pubs could be a growth industry in Lane County because of the lack of competition.

Mr. Mecham reported that the City of Coburg had been awarded a \$1 million grant and a \$1 million loan from the Oregon Economic & Community Development Department to assist in its creation of a sewer collection and treatment system. He expressed appreciation to the LEC for its support by identifying it as the highest priority infrastructure project in the County.

Mr. Dignam reported that the Lane Board of County Commissioners had approved all of the membership recommendations made at the previous meeting. He distributed copies of a membership and contact list for all members.

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Bozievich requested that minutes of the February 25 meeting identify Mr. Sullivan, not he, as the maker of motions on page one. Mr. Scoggin determined there was no objection and the minutes were amended. He determined there was consensus to accept the minutes as amended.

3. Economic Development Toolbox

A. Rural Opportunities

David Clyne stated that he was the City Administrator of Junction City. He reviewed development progress since it had been announced that a new State Prison and State Mental Hospital were to be build on 260 acres south of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) of the City. He described the intensive planning activities underway. He said the Hospital would provide care for 360 patients and provide up to 500 jobs, and the Prison would house up to 1200 medium security and 600 minimum security inmates. He explained that ballot measures to be on a forthcoming ballot would decide between alternatives relative to their size and complexity. He said first round discussions of infrastructure development supported by the State were completed and processes for needed annexations underway. He said the Prison was scheduled to be opened in 2009 and the Hospital in 2011.

Mr. Clyne reported how development of the State facilities would open many opportunities for additional industrial development in the area. He described current negotiations with a food processing business that would locate there, saving over one hundred jobs from moving to Washington State.

Members discussed the development – that approximately 30 property owners were involved in the four mile corridor to be developed around Highway 99, the importance of visible public discussion including coordination with neighboring jurisdictions, that jobs created would initially be construction-related and later professional family wage positions, that training and education of workers would be essential, and the importance of the proximity of air, rail, and highway transportation.

B. Development Code Disincentives

Hugh Prichard stated that he was a developer of commercial property. He described his experience with what he described as the “broken” Development Code of the City of Eugene. He illustrated his concerns about its prohibitive nature and unenlightened limiting of flexible alternatives. He explained that a public hearing before the City Council was scheduled in April to consider what he considered its “worst features.”

Members discussed the presentation, appearing to support contentions that the Code unnecessarily limited private development opportunities.

C. Employer Workforce Training

Ms. Onaclea distributed copies of an information brochure describing the purpose and opportunities of federal Employer Workforce Training Funds made available through the State of Oregon. She explained that Lane County Workforce Partnership had distributed 22 awards totaling \$1.3 million benefiting 37 businesses since April 2004. She described eligibility and application processes.

D. Oregon Big Look Land Use Planning

Mr. Warren described his unsuccessful experience in identifying available large industrial development sites in Lane County. He said it was impossible for the area to compete for new employment with other sections of the country.

Members discussed their experience with difficulties of encouraging and enabling economic development. Mr. Tamulonis distributed copies of a chart entitled "State Policy: It's Complicated."

Mr. Scoggin announced that the next meeting of the LEC was scheduled for April 21. There appeared to be agreement that topics of discussion would include an update on the Eugene Research Park presented by a representative of the University of Oregon, and opportunities for "brown-field" development presented by a representative of a State agency.

The meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

(Recorded by Dan Lindstrom)

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