

# MINUTES

**Lane Economic Committee**  
Lane Council of Governments  
859 Willamette Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Eugene, Oregon

April 18, 2011 – 11:30 A.M.

**PRESENT:** Rob Scoggin, Chair; Pat Albright, Mike Galvin, Don Hampton, Faye Stewart, John Sullivan, Sean VanGordon, members; Barry Miller, Jack Roberts, Robin Scott, Howard Schesser, John Tamulonis, alternate members; Kari Westlund, *ex-officio* member.

Steve Dignam (LCOG); Bob Warren (Oregon Economic & Community Development Department).

**ABSENT:** Jacque Betz, Lawrence Brice, DeAnn Cherbas, Chuck Forster, Greg Rikhoff, Ben Sappington, Mike Sullivan, Ellen Teninty, Shawn Winkler-Rios, members; Deb Schmidt, *ex officio* member.

**GUESTS:** Bill George, Wes Johnson, Mark Shrives

Chairperson Rob Scoggin called the meeting of the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) Lane Economic Committee (LEC) to order at 11:32 a.m. He invited those who were present to introduce themselves.

## **Public Comment**

**Pat Albright** – Mr. Albright stated that the City of Eugene, Eugene School District 4J, and Bethel School District are proposing an income tax measure. He stated that ballot measure 5 has not met its expectations and is in support of the current income tax proposal as a stop-gap emergency measure. Mr. Albright asked LEC members to help pass on support of the measure.

*John Tamulonis moved, seconded by Robin Scott, to accept the minutes of the March 7, 2011, meeting. The motion was adopted unanimously, 9:0.*

## **1. Update from Lane Metro Partnership**

Jack Roberts provided an overview of the latest opportunities for Lane Metro Partnership, specifically in working with traded sector companies. He explained that this sector makes up one-third of the economy and provides the foundation for all economic sectors. Jack provided a local overview of the changes that have taken place in this sector, from timber and manufacturing to technology. He stressed the importance of creating a diverse economy that is able to re-tool its industry to accommodate changes.

Jack presented two main challenges for this area: the lack of vacant land, and the lack of empty buildings. He explained that on a positive note, everybody loves this area and it shows well. He listed the

advantages and challenges of the main areas within Lane County: West Eugene, Cottage Grove, Junction City, Coburg, Veneta, and Florence.

Members discussed the data and information needed to shed light on the area's deficiencies and strengths.

## **2. Economic Development Project in the City of Creswell**

Creswell City Manager Mark Shrives delivered a PowerPoint presentation entitled "City of Creswell – Community and Economic Development Efforts". Mark introduced Wes Johnson with the Resource Assistant for Rural Environments (RARE) program through the University of Oregon. Mark and Wes highlighted the following points from the presentation:

- Promotional videos: Provides opportunities for small cities to tell the story of their community, discuss school events and business opportunities.
- Human Services Initiative
- Cobalt Building Redevelopment Project
- Comprehensive Plan Update
- Special events: 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration, Tree lighting Ceremony, and Earth Day Celebration
- Business Development: Enterprise Zone, Outreach and Support for small business
- Infrastructure: Hobby Field; wastewater upgrades; City hall expansion; water system upgrades; Interchange Area Management Plan; Broadband Initiative; Stormwater Master Plan

Members discussed the presentation.

## **3. Enterprise Zones**

Bob Warren provided an overview of Property Tax Abatements (PTA). Bob reviewed the criteria set to qualify for a PTA, as well as the benefits and penalties.

He stated that Lane County currently has six enterprise zones, which are monitored by Lane County Tax Assessor's office. Bob suggested that when members are asked why the County appears to be "giving money away," that an appropriate response can explain that abating potential property tax in order to attract new investment reaps a payoff with larger investments such as Hynix and Monaco.

## **4. Role of Rural Communities in the Regional Economy**

Steve Dignam asked the LEC members if they wished to pursue this topic as it seems to be an issue on which there is some level of disagreement in Lane County. There was consensus with putting this topic on a future agenda. Other topics included: Commercial Banking; ERT being replaced by Regional Community Solutions; Tourism Review by Kari Westlund; Difficulties with Refinancing for Small Businesses; and an Economics Discussion led by someone from the University of Oregon or LCC.

Mr. Scoggin announced that the next meeting of the LEC was scheduled for May 23.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

*(Recorded by Ann Mortenson)*