

MINUTES

Lane Economic Committee

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

April 21, 2003 – 11:30 A.M.

PRESENT: Alex Pawlowski, Chair; Tim Black (for Michael Redding), DeAnn Cherbas, Don Hampton, Scarlet Lee, Jim Ramseyer, Rob Scoggin, Valerie Standley (for Chuck Forster), Lynnette Wikstrom-Smith, members; Deb Schmidt, Dennis Shine, Kari Westlund, *ex officio* members; Bob Doppelt, Mike Galvin, Howard Schesser, alternate members.

Steve Dignam (LCOG); Peter Thurston (Lane County); Bob Warren (Oregon Economic & Community Development Department).

ABSENT: Anna Morrison, Glenda Poling, Hal Reed, Charles Spencer, Mike Sullivan, John Tamulonis, members.

GUESTS: Wendy Farley, George Hall, Cynthia Norman, Brett White, Shawn Winkler-Rios.

Mr. Pawlowski called the meeting of the Lane Economic Committee (LEC) to order at 11:35 a.m. He invited those who were present to introduce themselves.

1. Public Comment

None.

2. Comments from the Chair

Mr. Pawlowski said he agreed with an opinion expressed by Jack Roberts on the editorial page of a recent issue of *The Register-Guard* regarding the positive and lasting value of the short duration of manufacturing operations by Sony Corporation in Springfield.

3. Staff Comments

Mr. Dignam excogitated on renaming the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department.

4. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Schesser requested that the minutes of the March 17 meeting be changed to reflect that he was not present and that Mr. Ramseyer was present.

Mr. Black requested that the spelling of the name of the Lane County Board of Realtors' Political Analyst on page 3 of the minutes be corrected to "Welsh."

Mr. Pawlowski determined there was no objection to the requests of Mr. Schesser and Mr. Black and the minutes were amended.

Mr. Hampton moved, seconded by Mr. Ramseyer to accept the minutes of the March 17, 2003, meeting, as amended. The motion was adopted unanimously, 9:0.

5. Bylaw Subcommittee Report

Mr. Dignam said the Bylaws Subcommittee had made no recommendations for changes to the current Bylaws regarding membership and that it had raised the possibility of expanding the LEC's role of making recommendations to the Land Council of Governments (LCOG) Board of Directors about economic development issues.

Mr. Scoggin, Chairperson of the Bylaws Subcommittee, referred to a document entitled "Bylaws Subcommittee Report – March 4, 2003" distributed with the agenda of the meeting. He described the Subcommittee's review of membership issues and explained why no recommendations for change had been made. He said members had agreed that a Nominations Subcommittee should be established with the responsibility of recommending the best candidates for membership available from important Lane County constituencies currently under represented.

Mr. Pawlowski explained that persons designated as Alternate or Ex Officio LEC Members participated in all discussions at LEC meetings. He said they could seek to influence committee decisions, but were not able to vote when decisions were made.

Mr. Scoggin reviewed comments of the Subcommittee regarding LEC advocacy included in a document entitled "Bylaws Subcommittee Report – Advocacy – March 25, 2003" distributed with the agenda of the meeting. He noted that the LEC was given the task of advising the LCOG Board of Directors on economic development issues. He said the Subcommittee had concluded that consideration should be given to forming an Advocacy Subcommittee and requesting permission to refer recommendations on advocacy issues to other groups.

Mr. Dignam pointed out that the LEC Bylaws restriction on committee advocacy did not prohibit members from taking individual positions on economic development issues before any body.

Mr. Galvin pointed out that the recommendation of the Bylaws Subcommittee that voting on advocacy issues require support of two-thirds of the members present gave disproportionate weight to those opposed to a position. Mr. Scoggins replied that the proposal was intended to ensure that advocacy decisions were supported by a majority of all members.

Mr. Dignam noted that the Subcommittee had recommended that the two-thirds vote proposal be established by LEC policy, not incorporated into its Bylaws. He said doing so would allow more flexibility in setting and following the practice. He asked if members supported increasing the advocacy role of the LEC.

Mr. Shine said he believed it would be a positive step for LEC to increase its advocacy role on economic concerns of the local area.

Mr. Galvin said he did not believe the question was whether the LEC should increase its advocacy role, but whether it was prepared to deal with advocacy issues with an established process.

Ms. Norman said it was her experience that regional economic development advocacy groups filled an important role throughout the country and that it had been difficult for her to identify such a group when arriving in Lane County. She said changing economic situations increased the value of developing of support for common interests.

In response to a question from Ms. Schmidt, Mr. Pawlowski suggested that advocacy to the LCOG Board regarding economic development was encouraged in Section II.a of LEC Bylaws.

Ms. Schmidt suggested there could be advantages in having an Advocacy Subcommittee with a flexible membership, since it would allow participation of those most appropriate and interested in a specific issue. Mr. Pawlowski replied that without an established membership an Advocacy Subcommittee could be limited in its ability to react to concerns of immediate concern. Mr. Scoggin suggested that permanent convener/officers of a Subcommittee could be established, with an adjustable membership pool identified.

Ms. Lee said she believed allowing LEC to take a more independent advocacy role would increase its influence on economic development concerns.

Mr. Hampton pointed out that the current LEC membership included three persons who also served on the LCOG Board of Directors. He said he did not believe the Board would support giving the LEC a “*carte blanche*” in taking advocacy positions.

Mr. Ramseyer moved, seconded by Mr. Scoggins, (1) to accept the report of the Bylaws Subcommittee; (2) to form an Advocacy Committee according provisions of Bylaws Article VII; and (3) to request LEC members serving on the LCOG Board of Directors to discuss at its next meeting the possibility of expanding LEC’s advocacy role. The motion was adopted unanimously, 9:0.

Mr. Pawlowski determined there was consensus to direct that advocacy positions considered at the March 17 meeting be used as examples of issues that could be considered in the new role.

6. City of Lowell Economic Development Update

Cynthia Norman stated that she was hired as City Administrator for the City of Lowell in January. She described her experience in rural economic development and reported on economic development concerns in her community. She identified needs and issues as Pioneer Street improvements, fiber optic capability for the City’s industrial park, development of an industrial incubator, expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary, downtown development, and fire equipment.

7. City of Oakridge Economic Development Update

Brett White stated that many economic development concerns in Oakridge related to Highway 58. He said construction of road improvements was being postponed until the City completed its Refinement Plan. He described development of a Community Center using a federal grant and

resources available through the Community Development Block Grant program and the beginning of work on an Oakridge Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. White reviewed economic development projects – housing improvement, Greater Oakridge Area Medical Association (GOAMA), work force development, broadband access, and Oakridge Industrial Park (OIP).

8. Next Meeting

Mr. Dignam reported that the May 19 LEC meeting would be held at Lane Community College.

Mr. Doppelt suggested that consideration be given to strategies for using existing economic development capacity at a future LEC meeting.

Mr. Warren distributed copies of a memorandum regarding the Oregon State Budget. He said there was concern that proposed reductions could eliminate all regional investment programs.

The meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

(Recorded by Dan Lindstrom)