

LANE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

November 13, 2023

(LEC meetings are held on the **2nd Monday** of each month)

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81381054676?pwd=1tS6o9HYJoocVfbkdoziFOUSj4Kq5U.1>

+1 253 215 8782 US

Meeting ID: 813 8105 4676 Passcode: 062723

Denise Walters

dwalters@lcog.org

541-682-4341

Paula Taylor

ptaylor@lcog.org

541-682-4468

Sandra Easdale

seasdale@lcog.org

541-682-3359

All individuals are expected to observe respectful behavior and decorum during this public meeting. Please be courteous and respectful.

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Welcome / Introductions / Changes to the Agenda Presenter:
Greg Ervin | 11:30 |
| 2. Public Comment
Presenter: Greg Ervin | 11:35 |
| 3. Comments from Members, Chair, and Staff
Presenter: Greg Ervin | 11:40 |
| 4. Review Minutes from October 9, 2023
Presenter: Greg Ervin
Action item: Approve minutes. | 11:50 |
| 5. Reminder - 2024 Government Member Appointments
Presenter: Denise Walters | 11:55 |
| 6. Economic Drivers & The Cost of Homelessness in Lane County
Presenter(s): Madeline Baron, John Tapogna – EConorthwest
CEDS Priorities: 4 – Workforce Support | 12:00 |

Next Meeting Dates:

- December 11, 2023
- January 8, 2024
- February 12, 2024

October 9, 2023
Lane Economic Committee (LEC)
Agenda Item Summaries

ITEM 6: Economic Drivers & The Cost of Homelessness in Lane
County Presenter(s): Madeline Baron, John Tapogna – EConorthwest
CEDS Priorities: 4 – Workforce Support

For many years EConorthwest has conducted numerous analyses of Oregon housing policy at local, regional, and state levels. Madeline Baron and John Tapogna will present their findings regarding economic drivers and costs of homelessness in Lane County.

MINUTES

Lane Economic Committee (LEC)
Lane Council of Governments (LCOG), Fifth Floor Conference Room
859 Willamette Street -- Eugene (Hybrid meeting via Zoom)

October 9, 2023
11:30 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Greg Ervin; Chair (City of Cottage Grove / Government), Anne Fifield; Vice Chair (City of Eugene), Justin Peterson; (Oregon Cascades West), Matt Michel; (City of Veneta / Government), Allie Camp; (City of Springfield / Government), Jake Clifton; (Business), Sandra Easdale; (LCOG Staff), Mike Eyster; (LCC), Paul Berger; (Business); Jacob Thode (City of Veneta), Larissa Ennis; (University of Oregon).

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeremy Caudle; (City of Lowell / Government); Jude Anderson (Lane County / Government), Chantelle Meyer; (Economic Development), Cindy Perry; (Business / Labor), Faye Stewart; (City of Cottage Grove / Government), Kari Westlund; (Travel Lane County), Nicole Desch; (Onward Eugene), Mark Bodie; (Business/Finance), Anne Whittington; (Oregon Cascades West), Jude Anderson; (Lane County / Government).

STAFF: Paula Taylor; Denise Walters, Diana Pamir Tisdale.

GUESTS: Stephen Hoshaw; (Travel Lane County), Andy Vobora; (Travel Lane County), Karen Hyatt; (University of Oregon).

1. Welcome/Introductions / Changes to the Agenda

Chair Ervin called the LEC meeting to order at 11:30 AM. Introductions were made, and a quorum was established. There were no changes made to the agenda.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Comments from the Members, Chair, & Staff

Mr. Michels said The City of Veneta received a 75-thousand-dollar grant. The money would be put toward the construction of four pickle ball courts. The courts would be co-located with the city's skate park.

Ms. Easdale said the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) Board approved LEC recommendations for the Loan Administration Committee. New committee members included the following:

- Jude Anderson – Representing Lane County
- Troy Reichenberger – Representing Banking
- Kevin Riley – Representing Banking
- Steve Recca – Representing Elected Official

4. Review Minutes from September 11, 2023

MOTION: Ms. Berger moved, seconded by Mr. Michel to approve the September 11, 2023, LEC meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

5. LEC Officer Nominating Committee

Presenter: Denise Walters, LCOG Staff

Ms. Walters welcomed volunteers for the 2024 LEC Chair and Vice Chair positions.

Mr. Michel and Mr. Berger volunteered.

6. Travel Lane County

Mr. Vobora described Travel Lane County to be a 501c6 membership and partnership-based economic development agency focused on the tourism industry. They became incorporated in 1979 and had a 30-member board of directors (BOD). A new membership model was recently introduced, with the intent of growing their partnerships. They had 550 partners at the time of this meeting. Travel Lane County's intention was to increase overnight visitors for a year-round, county-wide vibrant economy. Their target market included leisure travelers, sports planners, and convention and meeting planners. The Travel Lane County budget included the following:

- Transient Lodging Taxes – 92 Percent of Revenue
- Partnership Dues – Four Percent of Revenue
- Sponsorship Programs – Two Percent of Revenue
- Interest – Two Percent of Revenue

Budgeted expenses included the following:

- Tourism Marketing – 28 Percent
- Sports Marketing – 16 Percent
- Conventions Marketing – 15 Percent
- Integrated Marketing – 15 Percent
- Stakeholder Relations – 13 Percent
- Administration – Seven Percent
- Visitor Services – Six Percent

Though the COVID pandemic negatively impacted travel spending in Lane County, the industry bounced back and reached a record-high 1.4 billion dollars in 2022. This was in large part due to the World Athletic Championships. Mr. Vobora noted that the collection of travel lodging taxes (TLT) for Lane County shifted from the City of Eugene to the Oregon Department of Revenue, who collected taxes on a quarterly basis. Fortunately, Travel Lane County had reserve funding, which allowed operations to continue despite the new delayed tax schedule. TLT's in Lane County drop significantly during the winter months. Therefore, increasing winter visitors was a high priority for Travel Lane County. The construction of additional convention space or an indoor sports facility could help stabilize TLT's throughout the year. Mr. Vobora noted that the recent fire at the Valley River Inn prompted a complete remodeling of their hotel and conference spaces. The remodel was scheduled to be complete in 2024. However, during construction, 257 of their rooms would be temporarily out of commission. Overall, Lane County had lost numerous hotel rooms for a variety of reasons, having 529 hotel rooms that were permanently closed. The construction of Town Place Suites in Eugene would create 100 new hotel rooms.

Travel Lane County data sources included the following:

- Weekly State and Region Reports
- Monthly State and Region Reports
- Resident and Visitor Sentiment Surveys
- Lane County Welcome Center Visitor Dashboard
- Oregon Travel Barometer
- Oregon Travel Impacts
- Visitor Profile Research
- Culinary and Agritourism Research
- Outdoor Recreation Research
- Oregon Wildfire Research

Mr. Vobora left the meeting at 12:00 PM.

Mr. Hoshaw said Travel Lane County had been working with a company called Zartico for the past few years. Makers of the first Destination Operating System, Zartico harnessed and streamlined data to provide data science, benchmarking, and analytical services for use in marketing, community development, and sustainability efforts. The three main types of data analyzed by Zartico included geolocation, spend data, and event data. In working with Travel Lane County, they would also incorporate the data sources listed above to name a few, and public data, which included information on jobs, the weather, and exchange rates, into their analysis. Their research concluded that in 2022, 33 percent of money spent in Lane County came from visitors. The categories of spend included the following:

- Accommodations – 87 Percent
- Sporting Goods – 50 Percent
- Attractions – 54 Percent
- Bars – 36 Percent
- Sit Down Restaurants – 32 Percent
- Department Stores – 25 Percent
- Gas Stations – 27 Percent

Zartico's services allowed Travel Lane County to decipher visitor to resident ratios of spending in numerous categories. For example, It was determined that Oregon football events attracted more visitors than residents. Zartico's technology could also decipher visitor spending from designated market areas, i.e., Portland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, etc., which helped Travel Lane County efficiently utilize marketing dollars on the best target markets. Travel Lane County would use this information to build a smarter destination, using data-driven strategies to create a better visitor experience and resident quality of life.

Travel Lane County created a yearly marketing plan that encouraged visitors to come to the region, enjoy their experience, and share their experience with others. Marketing efforts were also focused on encouraging Oregon residents to explore and spend time in different parts of Lane County.

Ms. Fifield asked how the system deciphered University of Oregon (UO) students from visitors.

Mr. Hoshaw said specific definitions were built into the Zartico platform to distinguish residents from visitors.

Ms. Westlund said the Zartico platform analyzed the length of time a person was in the market, while taking the possibility of UO students into consideration.

Mr. Berger asked if the qualitative reasons why people were coming to the region were being taken into consideration.

Mr. Hoshaw said the reasons why people may visit the area were being integrated into campaign creatives and content marketing. Zartico provided people's spending details, but much of the qualitative data came from Travel Lane County's other data sources listed above, specifically resident and visitor surveys. A lot of testing had to be done to determine the best way to reach specific target markets.

Ms. Westlund said a lot of learning still needed to happen, but efforts were underway to understand the possible affinities that could be integrated into marketing campaigns and correlations between different parts of the county and points of interest. The goal was to attract visitors who could relate to the things that residents of Lane County cared about and help them have a meaningful experience while they were here. Zartico would help Travel Lane County learn how to reach those people.

Mr. Eyster said he spent a number of years on the Travel Lane County BOD. Back in those days, the intent was to get anyone and everyone to come to Lane County. He acknowledged the sophistication of the current data analysis methods and said it was so different than what he recalled during his time as a board member. He asked about job possibilities within the hospitality industry, what the salaries may be, and what skillsets were required for potential positions.

Ms. Westlund said job growth was predicted to expand in the hospitality industry through 2030 and noted that wages had grown significantly since the COVID pandemic. Despite that, the hospitality sector continued to suffer due to a lack of pride in the work. The hospitality industry had a history of a lack of competitive wages and a stigma that hospitality work was belittling. Efforts were underway to resolve such workforce issues. The people in the hospitality industry could often make or break a visitor's experience and people should be mindful of how important their work was. Ms. Westlund noted that a recent national survey stated that 52 percent of jobs in the hospitality sector were at middle class wages or higher.

Chair Ervin commended Travel Lane County for their presentation and the work that they were doing. Regarding ideas that could increase overnight stays, i.e., an indoor sports arena, he mentioned concerts, and comedy shows. He asked if there was a pool of capital funds to utilize for the creation of such ideas and what Travel Lane County's influence would be to make those ideas a reality.

Ms. Westlund said Lane County was an interesting destination. It was a large county with many different communities. Travel Lane County was leaning in on the potential for sporting-based tourism, i.e., rowing at Dexter Lake, different disk golf parks from Oakridge to the coast, or mountain biking, to name a few. Big arenas could not be built everywhere. Utilizing the unique attributes of each community was the best way to boost small town economies in rural Lane County and allow those communities to keep their unique charm. Regarding large arenas, the Matthew Knight Arena could accommodate large concerts and attract overnight stays. The Hult Center for the Performing Arts could also draw overnight stays. Travel Lane County was putting their efforts toward boosting winter tourism, and winter facility investments were critical. Travel Lane County was also focused on utilizing performing arts events in the fall, winter, and spring months to boost tourism. Ms. Westlund acknowledged the work that was being done in Cottage Grove to set up a district that could fund investments of different facilities and said Travel Lane County was excited to see that play out.

Mr. Berger said there was not anything that could be done about the smoke from forest fires and how it negatively impacted outdoor sports-related tourism.

Ms. Westlund said while there was not much that could be done about the smoke problem, proactive communication methods were in place for the visitors engaged in outdoor recreation. Travel Lane County did not take people's health lightly. If there were dangerous amounts of smoke in the air, communication would happen to keep people from being sent into harms way. Contingency plans were in place for large events if situations allowed for them.

Ms. Walters said with fires becoming more frequent each summer, more data was coming in regarding the smoke situation. She asked if that data was being used to help facilitate the need for an indoor sports arena.

Ms. Westlund said the smoke situation may help provide more funding opportunities for an indoor arena, but she noted that building that type of facility in this region was ridiculously expensive.

Chair Ervin asked what made the costs of building here so high.

Ms. Westlund said it was based on unionized wage pressures and seismic standards.

Chair Ervin asked if any out of the box thinking had been done regarding partnerships with regional tribal nations.

Ms. Westlund said tribal partnerships were an interesting idea.

7. Adjournment

Chair Ervin said the next LEC meeting would take place on November 13, 2023. He adjourned the meeting at 1:00 PM.

(Minutes recorded by Diana Pamir Tisdale)

LANE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE - 2023

MEMBER	Phone	Email	EMPLOYER	REPRESENTING	Term Began	Term Ends	Alternate	Phone	Email
TBD				Business	2019	N/A	Jake Clifton	541 912-6371	jake.clifton@gmail.com
TBD				Government	2020	12/23			
TBD				Government	7/1	12/23			
Allie Camp*	541-726-3700	acamp@springfield-or.gov	City of Springfield Economic Development	Government	3/23	12/24	Nancy Newton		
Anne Field*	541-682-5451	anne.e.fifield@ci.eugene.or.us	City of Eugene	Government	12/21	12/24	TBD		
Chantelle Meyer	541-590-4019	chantelle.meyer@ci.florence.or-us	City of Florence Economic Development	Government	2/23	12/23			
Cindy Perry	541 255-8116	cindy@laneworkforce.org	Lane Workforce Partnership	Business / Labor	2018	12/23	Ashley Espinoza	541-913-2284	ashley@laneworkforce.org
Faye Stewart	541-942-3340	pwdirector@cottagegrove.org	City of Cottage Grove Public Works/ED Director	Economic Development / Government	2020	12/23	Robert Scoggin	541-942-8711	scogginrob@msn.com
Greg Ervin**	541-556-8953	greg@ervinitconsulting.com councilorervin@cottagegrove.org	City of Cottage Grove Councilor	Government	12/21	12/24	Len Blackstone	541-501-53967	len@blackstoneinc.net
Jeremy Caudle	541-937-2157	jcaudle@ci.lowell.or.us	City of Lowell City Administer	Government	7/12	12/23	Mike Galvin	541-937-2393	mgalvin@pacbell.net
Jude Anderson*	541-682-3741	jude.anderson@lanecountyor.gov	Lane County Economic Development	Government	12/21	12/24	Jenna Cusimano		jenna.cusimano@lanecountyor.gov
Kari Westlund	541-743-8750	kari@travellanecounty.org	Travel Lane County	Ex-Officio	2017	N/A	Andy Vobora	541-743-8770	andy@travellanecounty.org
Mark Bodie	541-913-5564	mark.bodie1@usbank.com	U.S. Bank	Business / Finance	2020	12/23	Gary Collins	541-334-4121	gary.collins@fib.com
Matt Michel	541-935-2191	mmichel@ci.veneta.or.us	City of Veneta City Administer	Government	2020	12/23	Jacob Thode	541-935-2191	jthode@ci.veneta.or.us
Mike Eyster	541-954-6451	salsamike@comcast.net	Lane Community College Board Member	Education	12/21	12/24			
Paul Berger	541-357-8236	paulberger@saavsus.com	Saavsus	Business	12/21	12/24	Larry Brice	541-954-2619	ldbrice@comcast.net
Vanessa Ringgold	541-346-8912	vrr@uoregon.edu	Economic Development	Education	12/21	12/24	Karen Hyatt	541-346-5351	khvatt@uoregon.edu

* These positions are appointed by their respective elected bodies.

** This position is appointed by the LCOG Board.

Changes are indicated in **Bold**

Last updated: 09/12/2023