

Union County Economic Development Corporation

P O Box 1208 102 Depot Street La Grande, OR 97850
Phone: 541-963-0926 Fax: 963-0689 e-mail: ucedc@eoni.com website: www.ucedc.org

Minutes December 10, 2009

Monthly Meeting: 6:00 p.m. at UCEDC Office, 102 Depot Street, La Grande Oregon
Meeting Facilitator: Howard Perry, President
Board Reporter: Janis Bozarth, Administrative Assistant
Executive Director: Mike Sanford
Members Present: Howard Perry, Mark Davidson, Bill Rosholt, Bill Whittemore,
Steve Anderson, Jeff Puckett, Mike Poe, Gary Lillard,
Robert Strope, Dale Case
Absentees: Tim Seydel, John Howard
Visitors:

Howard called for a motion to approve the November minutes. Robert moved that the November minutes be approved. Seconded by Mark Davidson. The motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Election of Officers – Howard Perry

Mike passed out the ballots for the election of officers. Howard asked for board members to mark their ballots, either for what was recommended by the Nominations Committee or to write in another name. He asked that the ballots be folded and turned into Janis. Ten ballots were received and no names were written in. The new officers for 2010 are:

President	John Howard
Vice President	Dale Case
Past President	Howard Perry
Treasurer	Mike Poe
Secretary	Jeff Puckett

It was also reported that Bill Whittemore was elected by the membership to fill the vacancy on the Board for a 4-year term.

Strategic Plan Overview – Mike Sanford

Mike passed out a Position Paper (attached to these minutes) on the Strategic Plan that he wrote at the E-Board's request summarizing UCEDC's role in the strategic plan process now that the plan has been completed. Three of the strategies - Business Cultivation, Attracting Government Jobs, and Business Recruitment all relate to bringing jobs into the area. He stressed that UCEDC currently is fulfilling part of their obligation for these strategies with their current activities. Mike recommends that UCEDC focus on these three strategies. The "Value Added Agriculture" will be a tough strategy to accomplish, and the "Environmental Restoration" is basically creating an inventory of what's available in the county and if there are mill sites that need cleaning up. That would probably involve contacting owners and seeing if UCEDC could help them get grant money to clean up their sites.

Howard recommended having an overview of the plan and then have a general discussion and consensus on UCEDC's role as it relates to facilitating implementation of the plan. He stressed the importance of having the partners understand UCEDC's role.

UCEDC would act as the facilitator, attending meetings of the various groups that are part of this plan, assisting where possible, and call meetings for the whole group to get together, to keep

communication going. Howard stressed that UCEDC doesn't really have the ability to see that the other groups do their part of the plan, but can offer support and help and arrange to coordinate the efforts.

Robert asked if UCEDC had any type of agreement from the other partners that they will, in fact, take the leadership role to complete their assigned strategies. Mike responded that he has discussed this with the majority of them and plans to follow up with a letter to all the partners. Mark said that the major role that hasn't been completed yet is the presentation of this plan to the partners. Discussion here followed on what type of presentation should be made. After discussion, the general consensus was that individual meetings should be held with the partners, and that members of the Steering Committee as a group would make the presentations. In these meetings, the partners would be requested to adopt the plan and recognize their role in following through on their assigned strategies. Robert said that another thing we need to ask of our partner agencies is what do they see as priorities and can they meet those priorities. Mark recommended that during the presentation to the County, Mike request funding at the same time, at least for a portion of out-of-pocket expenses in making these presentations. Organizations include, in addition to the County, NEOEDD, Chamber of Commerce, Union County Tourism, City of La Grande, Grande Ronde Hospital, and EOU. Discussion followed on the timeline for accomplishing the presentations. The general feeling was that these should be accomplished by mid to late January.

Strategic Plan Specific Focus – Mike Sanford

Howard recommended that UCEDC not take on too much, that they be specific about how to accomplish the tasks as outlined in the plan. At the last Board meeting, the discussion was to pick one task each meeting and study that task and take action. The E-Board suggested that the top three strategies were similar in nature and could be combined into one. These are: Business Cultivation, Attracting Government Jobs, and Business Recruitment.

Mike then gave an overview of the three strategies. During discussion of the Business Cultivation strategy, Robert asked about the Contact Committee and whether it was still meeting. Mike responded that the Contact Committee had not met in quite some time because there hadn't been a reason to meet. Discussion followed on the contact committee – whether it should be replaced. The general feeling is to keep the Contact Committee and possibly add a few people to the committee to have the financing area covered. The general feeling was that now would be a good time to get the Contact Committee together, now that meetings have been held with the businesses and there is this new economic development plan and explain to the Contact Committee that we would look to this committee as the group we would use to meet this strategy. Discussion followed on specific things that the Contact Committee could help with. Robert asked about the process of identifying who is going to be responsible for the various tasks and the deadlines for completing the tasks. The tasks need to be reviewed to identify whether it will be an Executive Director task or a committee task and then realistic target dates need to be set for completion. After discussion, the decision was made that the committee chairs would look through the tasks and identify which tasks they could accomplish.

Steve suggested looking at the committees to see if we need to restructure or add members, and that we not limit committee members to board members. The general feeling is that we have a pretty good model with our committees, and it would be a positive thing to involve more of the membership in committees. It was felt that committee members from the membership need to be recruited; people don't always volunteer but many are willing to serve if they are asked.

Much discussion followed on whether to bring the three strategies together as one committee or focus three different committees in each of the three areas. The difficult task is figuring out which segment of the strategies committees are responsible for. And some decisions will need to be made. Some of the tasks don't involve dollars, but some of the tasks will require spending some dollars. UCEDC will need to decide if they have the resources and energy to do some of these tasks.

Robert feels the tasks will fall into one of three groups: an existing committee, the Executive Director, or a new committee.

After discussion, the following decisions were made:

- 1) Committee chairs will review the tasks to see which ones they can do, and get their recommendations to Mike to present to the E-Board. Committee chairs can also make recommendations if their committee needs to be expanded.
- 2) The E-Board will then review the information received and make a tentative list of assignments.
- 3) The E-Board will present that information to the Board and then it will be assigned out to the various committees for implementation of those tasks.

After assignments are made, Mike can come back with a timeline – this is what we think we can do and list the resources that are required. The next E-Board meeting is January 8. The Committees were asked to meet between now and the E-Board meeting and have their information into Mike by that time.

REPORTS

Finance Committee – Mike Poe

Mike reported that all the PGG information should now be reported accurately in the financial statements. All the money that UCEDC had into the project has been reimbursed and moved back into the operating funds. The checking account for the PGG payments is now interest-bearing. The funds will remain in this account for approximately four months until the balance is built up and then it will be transitioned into a Money Market account that will pay a little higher interest. Three accounts on the balance sheet are related to PGG – the U.S. Bank checking account, a Notes Receivable, and a U.S. Bank Loan account. The checking account and the notes receivable (added together) will equal the liability. Each month a check will be written to put the amount received above the loan payment into Operations, plus the interest that is earned on that checking account each month will be put into the operations account. When enough cash has accumulated in the checking account that equals the loan balance, the loan will be paid off.

Discussion followed on the length of the loan and the money that is sitting in the money market account. Some of this had been in a CD Investment Account and was taken out at the start of the PGG project after the CD account was called by the bank. Mike Poe asked what should be done now with the money from the CD Investment Account.

After discussion, Robert moved that Mike be given approval to look for an account that would pay higher interest. Mark seconded. Motion passed.

Mark Davidson asked if UCEDC had received the City's portion of the sign constructed at the Business Park. Janis reported that the City had paid for this. Mark then questioned a couple of items on the Budget vs. Actual that looked on the financial statement to be over the budgeted amount. Mike explained that some payments, such as insurance, are paid on an annual basis, so each month on the budget the amounts will increase, and at the end of the year it will be in line with the budgeted amount.

Property Committee – Dale Case

Dale reported that the property team had not met. No report.

Communications/Marketing – Steve Anderson

Steve reported that one of the tasks the Marketing Committee had on their list was keeping track with

where UCEDC is at with the realtor representing UCEDC. The Marketing Committee recently met with him and he put together a list of commercial sales in the last year in this area. He discussed what he is currently doing. The marketing Committee feels he is doing all that he should be doing in this market at this time.

Steve also reported that the Marketing Committee has accomplished all their business and recruitment expansion meetings with the exception of one person who is no longer a member, and hopefully they can bring him back in. Steve reported on recent meetings they held with some businesses: Bronson Lumber, Oregon Trail Electric, W.C. Construction, Eagle Cap Steel & Supply. Steve said the meetings have been very successful and they learned a lot in these meetings.

Mike reported that OTEC had an interesting take on wind power. Steve suggested inviting the OTEC representative to a UCEDC meeting and have him present his intake on the future of power in Eastern Oregon.

Discussion followed from Steve and Mike on their interviews with the businesses this month. Steve reported that they are still trying to accomplish the task related to the NAICS codes. Mike reported that he and Robert would get together on this. Steve said he has a goal of getting rid of all the brochures as quickly as possible. And one of the goals was to send them out to potential new members (5 new each week), which is being done, and also sending them out to the businesses whose names we get from the NAICS codes. Another idea they discussed was to put a realtor box out at the Business Park and include a brochure, a flyer with a map of the Business Park, and a listing of the properties and their prices. They would include one at each entrance. John will get with Mike and put those together. Another idea they discussed was to get information at all the motels and talk with Don Waldrop about placing brochures in some of his businesses. Another idea they are going to look into is to put them into the information kiosks near Umatilla and Ontario. Bill Rosholt indicated that there is a cost to put information in these. Another idea was to contact Cycle Oregon and see what their schedule is for the next couple of years. If they are going to be in La Grande sometime in the next couple of years, they would print additional brochures and include them in the packets that the Cycle Oregon participants receive prior to the event. Discussion followed on making sure we have brochures in the City and County Planning Departments along with the Chamber and Tourism offices and getting information onto the internet.

There was discussion here on a request received from Horizon Wind for a letter of support in the newspaper with regard to their wind project.

After discussion, Bill Rosholt moved that at this time we not submit a letter to the newspaper for publication with regard to the Horizon Wind project. Bill Whittemore seconded. Motion carried.

EOU – Tim Seydel
No report.

Membership – Bill Rosholt

Bill reported that the committee hadn't met. He stated that after the first of the year, they will personally contact anyone that they haven't heard back from in response to letters being sent out. Steve suggested contacting the axle plant, Alco, sending them a letter or even making a personal visit to them.

Administrative Report – Janis Bozarth

Financial Reports through November 30 were prepared.
No renewing members for the month of November.
Invoices and letters for December membership renewals were sent out.
In the process of getting Christmas cards out to the membership.

Executive Report – Mike Sanford

Mike reported that most of the things he's been involved in this month have already been discussed earlier in the meeting. He's been involved in meetings with the Marketing Committee. He attended the monthly lunch with the group from the Steering Committee and will meet again in two weeks. He attended a Region 13 Work Source Board meeting. Received good information from that meeting. He has a meeting with the lady from the Water Testing Lab to look at the Business Park on Monday. He is working on distributing copies of the Strategic Plan to all the cities in the County. Next week he will be attending a workshop on wind energy in Portland.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No Executive Session.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Mark reported that part of the old sign out at the Business Park is flapping. Mike reported that he has the tools ready and is just waiting for the weather to warm up a little to go nail it down.

Mark reminded Board members that there is an opening on the Northeast Oregon Economic Development District. They meet four times a year.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Janis Bozarth, Administrative Assistant

Note:

Next Board Meeting: Thursday January 28, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.
UCEDC Office at 102 Depot St.

Executive Meeting: Tuesday, January 12, 2010 at 7:30 a.m.