

MINUTES
Veneta Economic Development Committee
Wednesday, October 21, 2015 – 2:00 p.m.
Veneta Administrative Center, 88184 8th Street, Veneta, Oregon

Present: Jason Alansky, Linda Boothe, Thomas Cotter, Dave D'Avanzo, Len Goodwin, Herb Vloedman

Absent: Gina Haley-Morrell, Charles Ruff

Others: Ric Ingham, Claudia Denton

1. Call to Order

- a. Chair Goodwin started the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

2. Public Comment

- a. No public comment, one community member in the audience.

3. Administrative

- a. Approval of Minutes:

Motion: Linda Boothe made a motion to approve the minutes from September 30th, 2015 as submitted. Thomas Cotter seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 6-0.

Note: Minutes were not approved until the Committee reached quorum, after binder materials were distributed.

- b. Binder Materials:

Claudia Denton passed out updated contact sheets and binder materials.

- c. Updated Bylaws:

Motion: Dave D'Avanzo motioned to defer updating the Bylaws until further discussion about committee purpose and function could be continued in the next agenda item. Herb Vloedman seconded the motion which passed 6-0.

- d. Discussion about Committee Purpose and Function:

After thorough discussion, members agreed to focus both on identifying and supporting the needs of existing businesses as well as attracting potential new businesses. As part of the upcoming Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program with Rural Development Initiatives, Inc. (RDI) there are planned business visitations to talk to business owners and gather information. There was general agreement that in order to obtain helpful information, outreach and adequate communications will be necessary.

Herb Vloedman said that businesses need to be comfortable being interviewed, and need to know the goals of the Committee, and the economic environment and goals of the City.

Len Goodwin said it is important for business owners to know that the Committee

members are community members looking to find what the needs of businesses are in order to advocate for those needs before the City Council and staff, and as citizens, asking “how can we help businesses succeed?”

There was consensus that potential outreach meetings and similar activities should be held in non-governmental locations, such as the Community Center or the Fern Ridge Library.

Len Goodwin suggested the Committee host a listening session for all members of the business community to discuss the overarching purpose of the Committee which he said was to help businesses thrive in Veneta. He said to ask them “how do we do that? What do you want us to do? How can we help”, perhaps before the BRE program is in place.

Dave D’Avanzo said the Committee needs to let businesses know that it exists, and communicate what the intention and goals are. The Lane Electric Cooperative had recently made a postcard and he suggested the Committee could do something similar.

In response to a question by Linda Boothe, Ingham said the BRE program with RDI and the Committee would start within weeks, and the business visitations would start approximately January 2016.

Len Goodwin said that a postcard suggestion by D’Avanzo would be a good idea in preparation for the BRE program and the business visitations.

In response to a question by Len Goodwin, Ingham said the City is able to support costs for administrative and printing needs, etc. associated with the Committee and the implementation of the BRE program and the Five Year Action Plan. He said the City Council is committed to supporting the Committee.

There was discussion about the timeline of the BRE program and the timing of the outreach and communications needing to occur.

Len Goodwin suggested hosting an outreach gathering for local business owners before the holiday season to communicate the BRE program and the related business visitations.

Tom Cotter said the Committee could host a series of open houses at a variety of times and weekdays, as well as in-person outreach at the upcoming Holiday Bazaar.

In response to a request by Len Goodwin, Dave D’Avanzo agreed to help produce a postcard or similar outreach item in collaboration with Ms. Denton to hand out at events. He agreed to have a draft by the next meeting. D’Avanzo also emphasized the importance of personal interaction with business owners, such as informal meetings over coffee.

Herb Vloedman commented on the need to have a crafted Committee purpose to communicate before creating outreach materials. He said that it may not be appropriate for the Bylaws Article II to contain the phrase “City of Veneta” as this

could be too constrained or unrepresentative.

There was discussion about what kind of businesses and industries the Committee is looking to support and recruit, to what location, and what kind of services those businesses may need.

Ingham discussed the City's goal of Veneta being perceived as a good place to do business and a place that can accommodate business.

Len Goodwin said a Committee purpose could be to create a vibrant economic marketplace in Veneta.

Herb Vloedman said the Bylaws should be approved with minor changes to be adopted by City Council as soon as possible, particularly due to the need to adopt the changes to the number of members and required quorum, although Article II of the Bylaws would likely need to be changed again soon after to reflect the discussions surrounding purpose and function.

Motion: **Herb Vloedman motioned to change the proposed Bylaws Article II: Purpose and Function up through point 1 to read as follows:**

“The purpose of the Veneta Economic Development Committee is to attract new businesses and support existing businesses. The mission is to pursue the economic interest of Veneta by constructing and implementing policy development and programs, including, but not limited to, the following functions:

1. Plan the responsible expansion and growth of business and industry in the Veneta area.”

with a notation to the City Council that the Bylaws, Article II will likely be changed again soon due to continuing discussion. Linda Boothe seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 6-0.

In response to a question by Len Goodwin, Ric Ingham said that the entire Article II should be reviewed for potential updates.

There was brief discussion about professional relationships and economic development contacts, and the need for staff and Committee members to be involved, particularly in regards to the Regional Accelerator & Innovation Network known as RAIN Eugene.

There was brief discussion about available property, the role of highway 126, Veneta's amenities, and the Northeast Employment Center. Ingham gave an update on the availability and marketing of properties in the Northeast Employment Center.

4. Implementation of Action Plan

a. Action Prioritization Results:

Exercise results were handed out to Committee members.

- b. Work Plan and Action Item Implementation Exercise: Top Three Actions:
Due to time constraints, the exercise was postponed until the next meeting.
- c. Information on Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) Program, Scope of Work
Denton briefly reviewed the draft Scope of Work for the BRE program with RDI. She said the work entails a task force, a visitation team, trainings, meetings, and an action plan, and briefly explained the timeline.

5. Program/Project Updates

- a. WealthWorks Webinar Series New Dates:
The WealthWorks Webinar series mentioned at the last meeting had set new dates. Denton handed out an informational sheet with the new dates and asked members to confirm if they would like to attend.

6. Other

- a. Volunteer forms:
Denton collected volunteer forms from Committee members.

7. Set Next Meeting

- a. The next meeting was set for Wednesday November 4th, 2015 at 2 p.m. There was an additional tentative meeting set for Wednesday November 18th, 2015 at 2 p.m. to be confirmed at the next meeting.

8. Adjourn

- a. Meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.