

MINUTES  
**Veneta Economic Development Committee**  
**Wednesday, September 14, 2016 – 2:00 p.m.**  
Veneta Administrative Center, 88184 8th Street, Veneta, Oregon

Present: Jason Alansky, Linda Boothe, Thomas Cotter, Len Goodwin (Chair)

Absent: Dave D'Avanzo, Gina Haley-Morrell, Herb Vloedman (Vice Chair), Charles Ruff

Others: Ric Ingham, City Administrator; Claudia Denton, Economic Development Specialist; Stephen Dobrinich, Program Specialist; Marina Brassfield, Economic Development Specialist; Ron Osibov

---

**1. Call to Order**

- a. Chair Len Goodwin called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

**2. Administrative**

- a. Approval of Minutes:  
**Not at quorum. Motion to approve minutes from August 10, 2016 at next meeting.**
- b. Introduction of New RARE Participant: Marina Brassfield

**3. Public Comment**

- a. Ron Osibov, director of West Lane Tech since March 2016, would like to join the Workforce Development Subcommittee.

**4. Implementation of Action Plan**

- a. Review & Revise Work Plan (pgs. 7-8)  
Ric Ingham reviewed the work plan approved by the Committee in 2015 to see if there was any desire to reprioritize actions.
- After the last meeting with LS Networks, there is more interest in broadband development. Expansion and installation of fiber optics remains a top priority. Ingham will meet with LS Networks to move forward with the discussion.
  - Lane Metro Partnership, an agency the Committee has worked with frequently to recruit industry, transitioned into Greater Eugene, Inc. The Executive Director will begin in October and the Committee hopes to engage more in Action 2 around the same time.
  - Improvements to Highway 126 is still a priority, and the EDC will continue to advocate ODOT for funding.
  - Toolkits and incentives have been developed to help fund potential projects. The resources target businesses that come to the City asking for

help. There may be another step in having an even more targeted focus for these programs, such as fiber optics.

- Veneta Business Connect was a huge success and will hopefully continue into a second and third year.
- Collaboration with Lane Workforce Partnership will hopefully be a project for the Workforce Development Subcommittee.
- Work with ODOT on wayfinding and signage will begin this year as part of Brassfield's work plan.
- Upgrades to downtown infrastructure are in progress. St. Vincent de Paul will hear within the next month whether they will receive a full allocation of New Market Tax Credits to build a retail facility and two stories of veteran housing on the empty lot between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets. The proposed project will include many infrastructure upgrades.
- Work is underway with Travel Lane County to support any local business that wants to have a presence in the visitor's guide. The City has agreed to pay for 50 percent of the cost from its Rural Tourism Marketing funds to support advertisements. Community Development Director Kay Bork is working on a bike studio project to promote bike tourism in the area. The City will apply for funds to build a disc golf course at Perkins Peninsula Park.
- A list of "shovel ready" properties is on hold because most commercial/industrial property owned north of Highway 126 is owned by one LLC. Ownership is being transferred, and the new owner is hesitant to market the property until that happens. Once it does, the Committee will be in a better position to move forward.
- Beautification efforts on the northwest corner of Territorial and Highway 126 are complete. There were high hopes for a Grocery Outlet and other retail outlets to replace the old pawn shop by BiMart but those plans have fallen through. The City will work with property owners to improve this corner. Tracy Robertson has acquired the Red Barn property and is submitting plans for the southeast corner.
- The Urban Renewal Agency would like to complete sidewalk connectivity through downtown area. Sidewalks on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets are being built.

Goodwin closed the discussion by noting that the Committee may need to focus

its priorities on a smaller subset for more immediate action. A discussion is needed regarding what the Committee has implemented and what it is near implementing, and what the next steps should be. Cotter said it may be useful to develop criteria to how EDC prioritize actions.

Ingham said the City Council recently updated the work plan for City staff, and that staff can weave some Committee priorities into the plan. Ingham will speak with City staff about key opportunities that currently exist and bring back a revised priority sheet for the Committee.

b. High Speed Internet Community Survey (pgs. 9-10)

Dobrinich provided the Committee with a “Community High Speed Internet Demand Survey” developed by Wasco County. Dobrinich connected with Carrie Pipinich, a project manager at MCEDD in the Dalles. Pipinich administered the survey to residents in South Wasco County to evaluate satisfaction with their current internet provider and to find opportunities to bring high speed internet service to the community. Dobrinich said that Questions 7, 8, and 9 are the core of the survey. He reported that the survey was administered online and in print.

A quick two-page survey could be adapted for Veneta and sent to residents in the monthly water bill. Ingham said a separate survey for Veneta and the Fern Ridge area may be necessary. He explained that there is infrastructure in place within city limits for a company like LS Networks to use, but it may be a different model to deliver services to Elmira, Noti, and other outside areas. Goodwin mentioned there is a significant community outside of Veneta city limits, and that this population could increase the market size substantially if LS can reach the greater Fern Ridge area.

Ingham said the City can create one free internet-based survey with Lane Council of Governments. Ingham said people should be encouraged people to do it online, but a hard copy is needed as well. Jason Alansky asked if the City would survey only high density areas outside of city limits. Goodwin explained that while density is important, different models can allow for Wi-Fi in non-core areas. The Committee agreed that it would be smart to ask LS for feedback on survey content and service areas before sending a survey. Goodwin asked if LCOG could retrieve outside addresses for the Committee. It was explained that LCOG has ability to retrieve addresses of property owners but not names of tenants. Ingham explained a scenario in nearby rural areas where Emerald Fiber was able to connect residents to Wi-Fi. This scenario could work for people living outside Veneta city limits. If LS extends fiber to certain point, another entity could develop Wi-Fi from that infrastructure. Emerald Fiber is a potential provider for the City and plans are to have them present their broadband model to the EDC.

Dobrinich will develop a survey to send to residents. Ingham will work with LCOG to utilize their survey instrument and work with LS to get feedback on their likely capabilities. Cotter suggested providing a service area map with the survey.

Goodwin noted Veneta satellite providers include Dish, Exceed, and HughesNet which will be important for creating the survey. Ingham suggested Dobrinich defining what survey means by “internet service.”

The City is currently on a year-to-year lease with Charter Communications until December 31, 2017. The facility Charter utilizes includes a microwave as well as a fiber optic transmitter. Ingham said fiber optics would provide reliable broadband service and likely a bundle for residents with cable, telephone, and internet.

c. Highway 126: Joint Legislative Committee Follow-up

Ingham reported that many Veneta and Fern Ridge area citizens provided testimony and caught the attention of legislators at the Joint Legislative Committee on Transportation Preservation and Modernization. Staff of Oregon Department of Transportation for Region 2 included a NEPA and preliminary design for the Highway 126 buildout in project mock ups for the area. The NEPA is a necessary first step, is a multimillion dollar project, and has a shelf-life of five years. City staff and the Committee want to remain a “squeaky wheel” to ensure the NEPA is funded as part of the 2017 legislative package. The Committee will decide upon next steps to continue to advocate to ODOT. Ingham said that the NEPA has a possibility of being funded at the \$300 million funding package level. If the funding package drops below \$300 million, the Highway 126 package would likely not receive funding. Goodwin said that if the City receives the funding for NEPA, the City will be in a position to apply for federal money to continue construction. If the NEPA were funded, Veneta would be able to use as a tool to continue attracting businesses.

Goodwin noted that the stories of individuals who have been affected by the accidents on Highway 126 made a strong impression on legislators. ODOT maintains a database of accidents, but does not capture the last 24 months. He suggested the City and committee members keep track of when events occur on Highway 126 and that the Committee build its own, less formal, and more “human sensitive” documentation so the Committee is prepared to share a story that addresses the impact the road has on the community and farther west toward the coast. He said picture boards might be effective.

d. EDC Newsletter Proposed Articles & Timeline

Denton reported that the last newsletter was published in April 2016 and that Marina Brassfield will create the November newsletter. Brassfield will have a draft

complete by the October meeting. There will be two articles, a message from the Chair, and a feature on two EDC members. Ingham said it is important to bring up the Veneta Business Connect findings again. Ingham said the testimony on the Joint Legislative Committee may be an option and that an article was already written for the City newsletter. Goodwin suggested a listing of new businesses or new construction. He noted that the Veterinary Clinic is doing well. Ingham noted the Frost Queen as a new home-based bakery that has been doing well at the Farmer's Market, and FCR is in need of space for training purposes. Ingham said FCR has taken on unique customers, they are now one of main suppliers for Google Plus.

## **5. Subcommittee Updates**

### **a. Recruitment Efforts to Date**

Dobrinich has been recruiting members for the three subcommittees of the Committee.

Workforce Development Subcommittee: Dobrinich has reached out to Sweet Creek and Ray's Food Place. He tried calling FCR but has had trouble touching base with the on site manager. He is waiting on FCR's response to pick a date for the meeting, but has received other members' availability. The first meeting will narrow down the draft work plan and members will decide what they want to focus on.

Business Tools, Resources, and Relationship Building Subcommittee: Ingham, Brassfield, and Dobrinich went to the Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce board meeting and discussed overlap between the BTRRB Subcommittee and the Chamber. Ingham suggested labeling this as a Chamber of Commerce Subcommittee, because it already entails activities the Chamber has been doing and follows their mission. The subcommittee will meet on September 27<sup>th</sup>. During this meeting, members will decide where to focus their energies and the work plan will be flushed out into two to four immediate actions, and one to two larger, long term projects. A major issue is that the Chamber has tried for years to connect businesses to each other, and no one showed up to events and meetings. The Subcommittee will need to define what exactly businesses want when they say "connections with other businesses."

Business Infrastructure Subcommittee: The subcommittee will be mostly City staff led, and much of its focus will overlap with the downtown market analysis and the work the Urban Renewal Agency has been doing.

## **6. Other**

- a. Three Committee membership terms are ending as of September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Jason Alansky, Charles Ruff and Dave D'Avanzo will need to reapply if they wish to continue service. An advertisement will be published calling for applicants to submit application by September 30<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Sandra Larson will review the applications and appoint members for a three-year term at the City Council Meeting on October 10<sup>th</sup>.

**7. Next Meeting**

- a. The next meeting was confirmed for Wednesday October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 2 p.m. with a regular meeting schedule of the second Wednesday of the month.

**8. Adjourn**

- a. Chair Len Goodwin adjourned the meeting at 3:08 p.m.