

MINUTES
VENETA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, June 10, 2020 – 2:00 P.M.
Veneta Administrative Center, 88184 8th Street, Veneta, Oregon

Committee Members Present:

Herb Vloedman (Chair, Fern Ridge Self-Storage), Len Goodwin (Vice Chair), Thomas Cotter (Council Appointee, Council President), Jason Alansky (Veneta – Fern Ridge Chamber President), Dalen Corbett (KEZI), Gina Haley-Morrell (Veneta – Fern Ridge Chamber), John Tribolet (Grateful Graffix), Tulsi Elizabeth Strickland (In Your Heart Song Coaching & Training) via telephone

Matt Michel, City Administrator and non-voting member

Absent: Ryan Frome (Veneta Vet. Hosp.)

Staff: None

Visitors: Jenna Cusimano (Lane County Economic & Community Development Management Analyst)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Herb Vloedman called the June 10th Economic Development Committee (EDC) meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE

a. Approval of March 11, 2020 Minutes.

- Gina Haley-Morrell made a motion to accept the minutes; seconded by John Tribolet; passed unanimously.

b. 5-Year Strategic Plan Action Priorities Update

- Matt Michel explained that the green colored tasks are either active or ongoing. Changes since the last EDC meeting are noted by “6-10 Update:”

IV. RDI / EWING MARION KAUFFMAN RURAL OPPORTUNITY INITIATIVE GRANT

a. Update and Grantor Expectations

- Michel presented the 3-page memo to RDI proposing a revision to the original grant-funded actions.

b. VenetaWorks

i. Oregon RAIN – Mentor Meet-ups online

- Michel reported that attendance at Mentor meetings has been consistent, even when the Meet-ups moved online starting in March.

ii. Online Marketplace with Oregon RAIN & Foundry Collective

- Michel presented a proposal to create an online MainStreet marketplace for local entrepreneurs and businesses. Foundry Collective will create and maintain the site, and handle vendor logistics for 6 months under the grant. The site will

operate similar to Foundry Collective's other effort at sparkmercantile.com for a Harney County artisan collective. Discussion occurred. Funding will be through the RDI grant for 6-months.

- Questions raised included: Will payments to vendors be timely? Shopify is the platform and Foundry Collective will be responsible. Will there be additional costs for search engine optimization and online ads? Shopify does some of this. There is money in the advertising budget for local advertising and online promotion. Branding the website for Veneta will need to be done.
- The cost to vendors for participating in the Online MainStreet marketplace is to be determined. Guidance included: Offering tiered subscription on a 90-day basis. Cost could be based on the number of products listed or volume of sales. Offer a month-to-month participation with a discount for longer term 3- or 6-month participation.
- Consensus that there would be interest by vendors not wanting to deal with the logistics and website management side of the business. Michel thanked the EDC for their input on details to be worked out with Foundry Collective and the participating vendors.
- KEZI has a local business web platform that generates traffic and is available for free.
- Michel shared a summary sheet of Oregon RAIN's Summer RAINmaker Accelerator program. This will include follow-up one-on-one meetings with Veneta's Oregon RAIN Venture Catalyst, Raj Vable. Local entrepreneurs participating in the event will be made aware of the online MainStreet marketplace and the Retail Pop-Up events as business development opportunities.

iii. Summer Retail Pop-Up planning

- Michel proposed hosting a Retail Pop-Up event in late July or early August using the Veneta Downtown Farmers Market as an example of COVID-19 appropriate measures. Discussion occurred on type of structures for the vendors including last year's PODS or small sheds/barns for this year. Price will largely dictate availability, and either leasing or buying smaller sheds. Question of storage will need answered if purchased.

V. PROGRAM UPDATES

a. Fermentation Incentive Package Response

- Michel discussed the Fermentation Incentive Package Tiered process. The current Brewpub Team has met Tier 1 & 2 goals and are refining their business plan. The next and last deadline is June 17th for Tier 3 submission. Discussion occurred. The City must prudently manage the land and building on W. Broadway where the Brewpub Team wants to be while appropriately incentivizing the Team to help Veneta achieve its economic development goal of revitalizing downtown.

b. Middle Mile Fiber

- Michel discussed the latest activity in negotiations with Zayo for the fiber route. Zayo asked to negotiate Veneta's route as part of a larger negotiation with LCOG with no cost to Veneta. Waiting to hear from LCOG if Zayo deal is done. A 1¾ mile of ROW is still needed to complete the route. Hunter Communications has that contract. Remaining issue will be how to light the fiber to achieve a Fiber-to-the-Premise (FTTP) goal. Discussion occurred on options with ISPs or City-Owned utility.

VI. R.A.R.E. PARTICIPANT PROJECT REVIEW

- a. Discuss tentative workplan for September 2020 through June 2021
 - Michel presented the 2-page proposed workplan with 5 tasks, 3 of which are economic development related. Discussion occurred on the scope of VHAB and FTTP projects. The VHAB project would focus on sustaining the effort beyond the current individuals. The FTTP project will require learning the technical jargon and focus on gathering marketing data that ISPs and others will need to pencil out the business case for deployment.

VII. EDC NEWSLETTER

- a. Topics
 - i. Letter from Chair
 - ii. Spotlight – New management Analyst
 - iii. VenetaWorks activities
 - iv. COVID-19 Business Assistance Programs
- Should be upbeat in tone. Additional topics that were suggested: Fermentation update, OR 126 Study reminder, VenetaWorks activities, Small Business Emergency loan availability. Include statistics as a regular feature: building activity, housing activity, etc.
- Jenna Cusimano shared new information about State matching grant money and the prospect for additional funds. The application process will use the State's forms that are discouraging. Discussion occurred. Applying for the initial round of emergency business support was very frustrating.

VIII. OTHER

- a. New Management Analyst – Jana Weaver (Start June 18th)
 - Michel gave Weaver's background and shared how the role will include greater economic development focus, including supervising the RARE Participant
- b. Options for Strategic Planning Process
 - Michel presented examples of past Veneta economic development planning consultants and asked for guidance. The University of Oregon's Community Planning Workshop (CPW) effort on the prior 5-year plan was very good. Contact CPW to see what they offer.

IX. NEXT MEETING

- a. August 12, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. and the Second Wednesday of Every Other Month
- b. Topics:
 - i. Online Marketplace operation
 - ii. Pop-Up Retail operation

X. ADJOURN

Chair Vloedman adjourned the meeting at 3:42 p.m.