



**Banks Economic Development Commission
March 2, 2016
MEETING MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER Economic Development Commission Chair Rachel Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present were: Marsha Kirk, Rich Weitzel, Planning Commissioner Rachel Nelson, Councilor Michael Nelson, Councilor Mark Walsh, Doug Hixson, Mayor Pete Edison, Corey Kearsley (alternate for Washington County Visitors Association).

Absent: Michael Samson, Carolyn McCormick, Mark Ward, Jeff Leo, Rodney Jacobs, and John Morgan.

Staff present: City Manager Jolynn Becker.

APPEARANCE OF INTERESTED CITIZENS – None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Michael Nelson had a correction to the next regularly scheduled meeting date. It should be March 2nd, not April 6th. Marsha Kirk made a motion to approve the minutes with the corrections. Michael Nelson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

BUSINESS AGENDA

City Committee Assignments: Jolynn Becker gave a description of two Economic Development Commission related meetings (Northwest Area Commission on Transportation – NWACT, and Columbia Pacific Economic Development Directors – COL-PAC EED), that a member of City Council currently attends. Jolynn asked the Economic Development Commission if there was a member that would be interested in attending. The meetings are held every 2 months, on the 2nd Thursday of the month. The meetings rotate, they are normally held in Scappoose, Tillamook, and Astoria. Pete Edison used to attend these meetings, and he gave a brief talk on how these groups help businesses. Rachel Nelson asked if anyone would be interested in attending these meetings. Marsha Kirk said that she would be willing to attend depending on the date and location of the meetings. Councilor Branstitre has been attending these meetings. Jolynn stated that she could be the back-up for attending these meetings.

Branding: Jolynn Becker handed out information on “What is a Brand”. Pete Edison gave an overview of the meeting that he and Jolynn had with Washington County Commissioner Bob Terry. Commissioner Terry is very involved in the trail activity that is happening in and around Banks. He would like to see Banks come up with a “brand” to help get us on the map. Washington County Visitors Association has funds to help with these types of projects, and Carolyn McCormick has offered her help and support to Banks application process. Commissioner Terry made a suggestion of “Trailhead City”. Pete visited the Planning Commission Meeting in February, and asked their opinions on branding. Planning Commission suggested a more universal brand, instead of tying the city just to the trails. Rachel Nelson asked if anyone had any thoughts or questions they would like to bring up. Michael Nelson asked what the risks would be if the City did not seek to re-brand Banks. Pete brought up that “A Darn Good Little Town” used to be the “brand”, in regards of positioning Banks as being one of the trail centers of the county, we may lose out on money and opportunity if we don’t act soon. Mark Walsh asked about asking the community what they would like to see. Pete stated that he has been through many town halls here in Banks, and there are fewer than 30 people that attend. Doug Hixson asked about using the City newsletter to get this information out to the citizens. Doug said that he is all for branding Banks. The trails are heavily used, and if we get our name out there, and promote the city and the trails, the people, and the businesses will come. Michael Nelson asked why Commissioner Terry feels that this is an urgent matter. Pete said that Commissioner Terry is on the board of the Salmonberry Trail Committee, and when the City brought to Commissioner Terry’s attention that the Salmonberry Trailhead was slated to be in Manning it caught his attention. Pete has the same thoughts as Doug Hixson. This will bring people, jobs, money, to our community. Marsha Kirk said yes, we need to get on the bandwagon, but she does not think we need to change our brand to accomplish that. At this point, Pete is just

looking for a nay or yay, as to if the EDC feels this should be pursued. Rachel Nelson pointed out that even though this is just being brought up as a topic, it has long been addressed in the many different plans by the many different consultants over the years.

Economic Vision/Aspirations/Goals: Rachel Nelson asked Jolynn to please walk the commission through the Banks Economic Development Commission Initial Strategy for Pursuing Economic Development document that John Morgan created based on discussion at the previous EDC meeting. Jolynn reviewed each item, and asked for comments and questions from the commission that she and Rachel can take back and discuss with John Morgan. Rachel gave her views on the document, and the direction she feels that John was taking, but would like to talk to John further. The commission had discussion on open lots/areas in Banks. Pete asked about the note at the bottom of the document discussing the funding process. Jolynn stated that the City will be pursuing funding to assist with the projects. Jolynn will be meeting with John Morgan when he returns from his business trip. Doug Hixson asked how the City's name would get in the "hat" with these organizations. Jolynn explained the application process.

Rachel Nelson discussed the Economic Development Strategic Plan for the City of Banks 2016 document that she created. She took all of the different plans and reports that have been completed, and combined them into one document of action items. She welcomed comments, suggestions, and changes as she reviewed the document. Jolynn gave some background on the project prior to Rachel reviewing her document. Pete added that the City has been working to combine these plans for quite some time. Ultimately, this will develop at Capital Improvement Plan. There was discussion on where the Planning Commission and the Economic Development Commission begin, end and overlap on their efforts.

Values: There were no changes, additions or comments to this section.

Banks Cooperative Advantages:

- Rural, small-town quality of life:
Jolynn asked about adding a comment about the City being a crossroads. This was brought up at the Planning Commission meeting. Rachel will incorporate that into the next draft.
- Trail Hub:
Marsha Kirk stated that the proper name of the trail is the Banks-Vernonia State Trail. Rachel will make that correction to the document.
- Geographic Location:
This will be a new section added to the next draft.

Pete mentioned that diverse agriculture and wine country were talked about at the Planning Commission.

Mission: There were no other changes, additions, or comments to this section.

Vision:

- Sense of Place:
Rich Weitzel felt the sentence "City growth plans will strive to protect hillside vistas, natural areas, prime farmland and working landscapes of agriculture" is too restrictive. He wondered if this sentence is even necessary. Doug Hixson asked if there was a way to reword the sentence. There was discussion amongst the commission regarding the area in the City's UGB. It was agreed that the sentence "City growth plans will strive to protect hillside vistas, natural areas, prime farmland, and working landscapes of agriculture" will be removed. Doug Hixson felt that "A great place to visit, and a great place to live" would be a great tag line. There were no other changes, additions or comments to this section.
- Neighborhoods: Rich asked why retirement community and assisted living facility were included. Rachel said that they were stated in one of the reports. Rich is ok with it being in this section, he just doesn't see if happening.
- Main Street: Jolynn asked if this section could be called Downtown District or Business District. The commission agreed to make the change to Downtown District. Pete would like to see it stay as Main Street. Downtown will be more of a City plan, and Main Street would be more of an EDC plan. Rachel would like to see consistency in the terminology. Doug Hixson agreed it would lessen the possible confusion. Corey Kearsley said when he thinks of "Main Street" he thinks of small, quaint country town, and "Downtown" makes him think of Portland, L.A. and Chicago. Public perception should be taken in to consideration. There was discussion amongst the commission on "Main Street" vs. "Downtown District". Rich Weitzel

disapproved of the sentence "We will keep the traditional Main Street downtown by limiting commercial development elsewhere and encouraging industrial uses currently in downtown Banks to relocate to areas designated for industrial development". He does not like the fact that it basically says we want to limit commercial businesses, and move industrial business out of town. There was discussion regarding this sentence, and commercial/industrial businesses on Main Street.

- Economic Diversity: No changes, additions or comments to this section.
- Marketing & Communication: Rachel would like to see more digital or print communications. Marsha said there is a new brochure that North Plains and Banks Chambers are working on together. Marsha also mentioned that there is a local resident that creates apps. This might be something to look into in the future. Rachel was thinking more along the lines of an online "newspaper" where local news, and advertising could be viewed. There were no other changes, additions or comments to this section.
- Tourism: There were no other changes, additions or comments to this section.
- Transportation: There were no other changes, additions or comments to this section.
- Public Services: Pete feels this is more of a City function, and could see this coming off of the list. Everyone was in agreement that this item should come off of the list.

Rachel handed out a revised copy of the Economic Development Strategic Plan for the City of Banks 2016 which incorporates 3 more reports (Banks Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan – 2015, Parking Management Report – 2015, and the Oregon Downtown Development Association Report – 2002). She asked commission members to please review the document, and bring their comments and questions back to the next EDC Meeting. Michael Nelson asked if Jolynn could have staff email this document out to the members that were absent.

Round Table:

Marsha Kirk: None

Rich Weitzel: None

Rachel Nelson: None

Michael Nelson: None

Mark Walsh: None

Jolynn Becker: The March Planning Commission meeting will be a joint meeting with the City Council and she would like to invite the EDC to attend, as the topic is Urban Renewal. The meeting will be on March 29th at 6:00 pm.

Pete Edison: The 2014 Main Street Revitalization Plan – Pete likes the section on 3 distinct zones. He inquired as to where that was included in Rachel's document. He would like Rachel to take a look at that section, and add more to the document.

Doug Hixson: None

Corey Kearsley: None

ADJOURN The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM. Next Regular Meeting will be held on April 6th, 2016 at 7:00 pm.

Submitted by:

Angie Lanter – City Recorder