



**Banks Economic Development Commission
April 6, 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, Carolyn McCormick w/Washington County Visitors Association, Rich Weitzel, Planning Commissioner Rachel Nelson, Councilor Michael Nelson, Rodney Jacobs, Doug Hixson, Mayor Pete Edison.

Absent: Michael Samson, Councilor Mark Walsh, Mark Ward, Jeff Leo, and John Morgan.

Staff present: City Manager Jolynn Becker.

APPEARANCE OF INTERESTED CITIZENS – None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Marsha Kirk had a correction to the roll call. Rodney Jacobs was not present. Carolyn McCormick also had a correction. She asked if it should be noted that Corey Kearsley was present, and was an alternate for the Washington County Visitors Association. Carolyn also asked that it is clarified that grant funds are available from the Visitors Association, but that the City must apply. Rich Weitzel made a motion to approve the minutes with the corrections as discussed. Michael Nelson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

BUSINESS AGENDA

Doug Hixson had some questions after reading the initiative documents. He asked if Downtown was from the Fire Station north, and Main Street from Highway 6 to Banks Road. Jolynn stated that Downtown would be from the Business Center to Banks Road. There is some confusion on this, and Rachel stated that this could be worked out and clarified more as this project moves forward. Jolynn gave a little history on how Main Street was divided into three sections at the Main Street Workshop held a few years ago.

Economic Vision/Aspirations/Goals: Jolynn talked with John Morgan. He has been speaking with the Ford Family Foundation assisting with funding. Nancy Straw with Ford Family would like to attend an Economic Development Commission Meeting in the next several months. If that is not possible, Nancy would like to set up a meeting with a smaller group of members from the Economic Development Commission.

Banks Economic Development Commission Initial Strategy for Pursuing Economic Development: Rachel met with several members of the Commission. She will have the notes available for everyone at the next meeting. Rachel gave an overview of how she put the strategy together. The background information that will be in the consolidated plan will help the EDC create a Strategic Action Plan.

Rachel walked the group through Initiatives 1 & 2.

Initiative 1 – Main Street Revitalization – Rachel asked if anyone thought anything was missing, should be added, was incorrect, or should be removed. The group decided to review the initiative by section.

- Main Street Zoning including Design Guidelines: Rachel said the idea was keeping in theme with retaining a small town character. Rich said this sounds more like rules and regulations, and does the EDC have any authority. Pete stated that this group can suggest changes to zoning and design guidelines.
- Main Street Public Improvements: Streetscape Designs and Furnishings/Gateway Treatments/Signage/Town Square/Trailhead: Rachel said that this is actual investments made to improvements. Rich asked what the study area is as referred to in the 3rd paragraph. Rachel said this was in report #1 the 1999 plan. She will look in the report and either specify or delete that comment. Rachel mentioned there were two sections that refer to treatments at gateways. These treatments are used to demarcate the different areas of town. She will consolidate the gateway comments. Marsha pointed out that Sunset is referred to as “street”, but it is actually “avenue”. Rachel will make that correction to the

document. There was discussion on the different treatments, such as arches, cobblestone, and standalone signage. Rachel stated that signage should be established prior to taking on the parking issues. It also is a great place to start with marketing the branding for Banks. Carolyn asked where the town square would be located. Rachel stated it would be in the area of Cops Towing. There were several of the reports show conceptual plans of what that potential town square could look like. Marsha mentioned it would be nice to have a green space behind the town square, rather than a two story house, and that should be taken into account when developing the plan. There was discussion about potential public parking areas that were mentioned in several of the reports

- **Connectivity and Safety: Westside Circulator Road/Main Street Safety Improvements/Traffic Calming along Highway 47 & Main Street/Driveway Consolidation:** Rich asked if “An additional Main Street connection at Depot Road could provide better access to the north side of Banks.” refers to Commerce Street. Rachel will look a little further into that. Rachel stated that the Westside Circulator Road is not something that will be accomplished in the 1-3 year plan. The plan will be a living document as progress moves forward the plan will be continually updated. There was general discussion on the plan, and ideas of how to keep items at the forefront of everyone’s minds. Jolynn gave an update from the last meeting she attended regarding the Council Creek Trail. There was general discussion regarding the different trails that will be coming into Banks. Marsha said she looked at some of the concepts, and they are similar to what is currently in place. Regarding Driveway Consolidation, Rachel stated this also involves parking. Marsha said the parking lots except for Big Horn Logging, on the north end of town do not have a lot of driveways. There was discussion regarding shared parking lots, visitor friendliness. Rachel suggested that this section might be better suited to be addressed with the plan for parking.
- **Redevelopment: Infill Vacant Lots/Three Main Street Development Nodes/Market Feasibility Study/Storefront Upgrades/Façade Improvement Program:** There was a brief discussion on the nodes. Pete brought up that items such as Storefront Upgrades, has been a struggle. Rich told the group how Sisters ended up looking like it does. Black Butte Ranch did not want to put in a mall, so they offered businesses in Sisters a \$5,000.00 interest free loan each to convert to a western themed façade. Rich said Leavenworth was a similar situation. Pete asked everyone to think about if we want everything to look similar, or if the group would like to see variety. Rachel said that creating a brand vision statement will assist in that decision making, and that the citizenry should be involved in that decision making process.

Initiative 2 – Industry and Commerce Development:

- **Location:** Rachel stated our location impacts businesses decision to locate in Banks.
- **Transportation:** Banks has a unique position between the highways, which is also mentioned as an attribute. There was discussion regarding the railroad tracks. Rachel referred back to the visions section regarding having a train that would come in and out of town. She thinks it is a brilliant idea. People could ride a train to Timber, and get off and ride their bikes. Carolyn said she does not think it is feasible as there are so many parties involved, and some of the tracks are going to be decommissioned. She stated that there are many different players involved in the railroad tracks, and different owners of sections of the track. There was general conversation regarding dinner trains, and the trails.
- **Total Employment Growth Rate:** Rachel wanted to make note that these figures are from the 2005 report and need to be updated. Jolynn will look into this item.
- **Distribution of Total Employment;** Rachel wanted to make note that these figures are from the 2005 report and need to be updated. Jolynn will look into this item.
- **Types of Businesses:** This section has to do with types of businesses that would be attracted to Banks. Marsha asked where the businesses would go. Pete and Rich both stated it depends on the market. Jolynn said there is valuable property on the west side that is marked as industrial. Rachel said there is a group called Business Oregon that helps businesses find places to locate. There was general discussion regarding properties on Main Street that could possibly open up, as well as industrial areas. The commission needs to figure out how they want to market opportunities in Banks. Rich stated that Wilkesboro is not in the city limits. Jolynn stated that it is in the City’s Urban Growth Boundary. The City cannot just annex property. The property owners have to request to be annexed. There was discussion about industrial land inside the city limits, and the availability of the industrial land.
- **Other considerations:** This section addresses moving business such as automotive businesses off of Main Street, and opening up more retail space.
- **Existing Anchors:** Marsha had a question about “Strong Merchandising Elements”. She questioned why the commission would get involved in that. Rachel stated that this item is important to take a look at as the commission and City work with and counsel the businesses, and maybe the strategic report is not the place for this item. As a bedroom community, most people shop outside of the city, and are used to higher standards. Doug stated he thinks this is just a goal, the group can’t really tell businesses how to run their businesses. It was decided by the group that this section would be changed to “goals”.

- Visitor Development: Doug asked why the initiative states “At present there are only one or two businesses that may have visitor appeal”. There was discussion about what types of businesses visitors would come to Banks to shop at. Carolyn pointed out that you have to look at attractions that visitors would travel to Banks to see/do, not just businesses. She also mentioned that a group of travel writers are visiting Washington County, and that they are going to come to Banks for a bike ride, and hopefully they will do an article on Banks. Doug asked if this would be more of a Chamber of Commerce task. Rachel said that when the commission starts working on the strategy might be the best time to work with Business Oregon, and the Chamber of Commerce.
- Strategy: Prepare a Property Development Game Plan: No comments
- Strategy: Business Development: Rich feels this section is more of the EDC and not the Chamber of Commerce.
- Potential Economic Development
 - Business Assistance: No Comments
 - Recruitment and Marketing: No Comments
 - Development Districts (enterprise zones, renewal districts, etc.): Rachel referred to a presentation at the Joint City Council/Planning Commission meeting that addressed Urban Renewal.
 - Public/Private Partnerships: Rich asked where the public land that is mentioned is located. Pete stated that Greenville City Park, and Log Cabin Park are the only public land. Pete stated these partnerships can occur in the future, with the City purchasing property, and working with others to develop.
 - Financial Assistance: No Comments
 - Business Incubator: Rachel said there are some interesting things happening with business incubator/accelerators. She has reached out to a gentleman involved with this in Portland, and he is willing to come out and speak to the EDC about business incubators and business accelerators.
 - Mentoring and Advice: No Comments
 - Export Promotion: No Comments
 - Regional Collaboration: No Comments
 - Job Training: No Comments
 - Job Access: No Comments
- Quality of Life:: No Comments

Economic Development Strategic Plan for the City of Banks 2016: Rachel stated that there will be a few more initiatives to review. Also the commission will be moving on to thinking about strategy, and implementation. Pete asked if it was the intent to have John Morgan compose the strategy. Rachel said he will be developing a scope of work, which will include either writing, or guidance to the commission in writing the strategy. It will be clearer once the scope of work is presented. Jolynn said that John Morgan will be attending the May 2016 EDC Meeting. Doug asked how many grants the City is looking to get. Jolynn said that so far this year there have been about 10 grants applied for. He asked if it would be possible to hire a grant writer. Jolynn stated the city does use grant writers depending on the grant that is being applied for.

Round Table:

- Marsha Kirk: No Comments
- Carolyn McCormick: No Comments
- Rich Weitzel: No Comments
- Rachel Nelson: No Comments
- Michael Nelson: No Comments
- Rodney Jacobs: No Comments
- Doug Hixson: No Comments
- Pete Edison: No Comments
- Jolynn Becker: No Comments

ADJOURN The meeting adjourned at 9:03 PM. Next Regular Meeting will be held on May 4th, 2016 at 7:00 pm.

Submitted by:

Angie Lanter – City Recorder