



**Banks Economic Development Commission  
April 7, 2021  
MEETING MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER** Economic Development Commission Chair Will Moore called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

**ROLL CALL**

Present were: Marsha Kirk, Rich Weitzel, Peter Edison, Clint Jackson, Will Moore, Doug Ableman and Trevor Beard.

Absent: Kim Post and Margaret Holland

Staff present: City Manager Jolynn Becker.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**1. Approval of March 3, 2021 minutes**

Trevor Beard made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 3, 2021 meeting as presented. Clint Jackson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

- 2. Matt Craigie, Washington County Economic Development Manager** introduced himself to the Commission, described his role and responsibilities, shared his experience and career history. He answered questions from Commissioners about the other communities he had worked for in the past, his department's budget, the County's economic development plan, his department's coordination with County Staff on transportation projects, and communication between Banks and his department. He also shared information about federal COVID-19 funding. Commissioners and Staff shared information with Mr. Craigie about Banks' economic programs and initiatives.

**BUSINESS AGENDA:**

- a. **Review Economic Roadmap** Jolynn Becker provided Commissioners with an update on the progress of the projects listed in the Roadmap, which was included in the agenda packet. She noted that projects still needed to be identified for the Local Jobs, Vibrant Main Street, and Thriving Tourism categories. She listed the projects recently approved by the City Council and answered questions from Commissioners about how those projects would be implemented. She also provided information on and answered questions about upcoming trail extensions and improvements.

Ms. Becker described a project recommended by Margaret Holland to develop an attractive public/private parking area that could be used for event parking with signage that could guide people from the trailhead to Commerce Street. Upcoming Code amendments would make this project possible and once those amendments are adopted, the City could start discussing the details of the public/private partnership. However, she would follow up with the City Attorney to see if a public/private agreement could be made prior to adoption of the Code amendments so that the parking project could be implemented sooner. Commissioners agreed that additional parking was needed and Staff suggested areas of town that could accommodate more parking. Rich Weitzel offered to make his business's parking lot available to the public after 5:00 pm on weekdays and all day on weekends, as long as the City paid for the insurance.

- b. **Goal 2: Local Jobs** Marsha Kirk and Ms. Becker provided an update on her work on the goal to enhance workforce needs for local industry, as indicated in the Roadmap document. The Commission

briefly discussed the possibility of providing grants to businesses installing Starlink satellite internet service. Ms. Becker offered to invite Jeremy Pollard to give the EDC an overview of his plan to install fiber at the Fire Department. She could also invite local internet service providers to give a presentation on how they could enhance their services in the city. Mr. Craigie updated the Commission on the County's plan to upgrade internet service in the community, noting what information the County would need from the City in order to obtain funding for projects.

Chair Moore expressed concern about the approach that Staff and the EDC was taking to implement the Roadmap and complete the identified projects. He recommended the approach be restructured and asked for suggestions about how to move forward. The Commission and Staff briefly discussed the role of the EDC and all agreed that the Roadmap could be updated. New feedback should be taken from local businesses, perhaps annually for regular Roadmap updates. Then, the EDC could advocate for projects that are relevant to the local businesses. The Commissioners agreed that business owners should be contacted personally and invited to a meeting. Additionally, the Commissioners and Staff should continue their proactive communication with the business community.

The Commission discussed the development of a town plaza, which was approved by the City Council and listed as a capital improvement project in the Vision 2037 Plan. The City still needed to develop criteria for site selection, find land, identify funding sources, and develop a design that specifies what amenities would be included. They discussed the pros and cons of hiring a real estate agent, how to present an offer to a property owner, and whether the EDC should be involved. The consensus among the Commission was that the plaza should be their priority project. Chair Moore offered to develop a list of potential project goals and objectives for the EDC to consider, and once finalized, recommend it to the City Council.

Chair Moore noted that a lot had been discussed and asked if the Commission wanted to continue with the rest of the agenda items. The consensus was to move to the Round Table portion of the meeting at this time.

- c. **Goal 3: Vibrant Main Street** – Not discussed.
- d. **Goal 4: Thriving Tourism** – Not discussed.

**3. Discuss Future Economic Development Projects** – Not discussed.

**ROUND TABLE:**

Doug Ableman announced that former EDC advisor Carolyn McCormick was retiring from the Washington County Visitors Association. He would contact her replacement as soon as possible to begin establishing a relationship. He also noted that he believed a 60-room Hampton Inn with bike storage would be good for the community.

Jolynn Becker said that late this summer, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) planned to replace the landslide sign at Highway 6 with an overhanging sign.

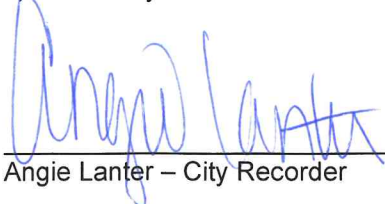
Rich Weitzel stated all of the restaurants were still open and had done well through the pandemic.

Marsha Kirk reported the March statistics on the use of Banks Vernonia Trail.

Clint Jackson noted that work had begun on the 30-unit apartment complex.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm. Next Regular Meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 5, 2021 at 6:30 pm.

Submitted by:



Angie Lanter – City Recorder