

**Marion County Economic Development Advisory Board**  
**October 7, 2015 Meeting Minutes**  
**555 Court St NE, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Salem, OR**

**Members Present:** Nate Brown, Bill Burich, Kevin Cameron, Chad Freeman, Lesa Goff, Bob Hill, Jay Kemble, Angie Morris, AJ Nash, Jim Rasmussen, Evann Remington, Dave Tibbetts, and Renata Wakely.

**Staff and Guests Present:** Sarah Cavazos, Tamra Goettsch, Danielle Gonzalez, and Allison McKenzie

**Call to Order: 3:15pm**

**Agenda Item: Welcome, Introductions & Announcements**

**Information/Discussion:** Morris welcomed members to the meeting and apologized for starting a bit late due to compiling grant scores to prepare for the discussion. Morris moved the September minutes forward on the agenda.

**Action:** *None.*

**Agenda Item: September Minutes**

**Information/Discussion:** The minutes were reviewed, no discussion was held.

**Action:** *A motion was brought forth by Burich to approve the September minutes; a second was made by Rasmussen. The motion was voted for and approved unanimously.*

**Agenda Item: Community Projects Grant Reviews**

**Information/Discussion:** Cavazos referenced the Application Prescreening and noted that all applications were forwarded to the group and will be forwarded to the Commissioners but wanted to call attention to the WestCare project. While the project meets the ORS definition under workforce development and is able to stretch to fit the criteria of livability by getting people employed and keeping them off the street, but it does not meet the historical intent of supporting livability and community safety projects. Cavazos cautioned EDAB that Community Projects is a really small pool of funding and this application is for a social service program. The applicant has couched the application as a project in that it has twelve months duration but if we are going to start funding programs, we will be opening the door for every social service program to apply for funding who can make a case for workforce, education, or other types of safety and livability. While serving veterans is definitely something we value and recognize the need for, the project does not meet the historical intent of the grant. Comments were made by others that it didn't fit within the scope of Community Project Grants. A motion was made to exclude the application from review.

Morris acknowledged that some individuals in the room work closely with the communities applying for funds and to allow for more free flowing conversation and critique of the applications, the minutes would not reflect the names of individuals making comments.

A question was brought forth on eligibility for feasibility studies. Cavazos clarified that planning is one of the categories for Community Project Grants we would just lean on the conservative side to consider the likeliness of a project moving forward beyond a feasibility study. A question was raised regarding the eligibility of Hubbard's project based on zoning issues it being a function of planning and assumed responsibilities of the jurisdiction; there was also concern that the legislative process is unpredictable and there couldn't be a guaranteed outcome which may not be a good use of funds. Cavazos agreed that there could be cause for caution on rezoning projects given that they can take years and can fall flat; however, EDAB should consider them on a case by case basis. In Hubbard's situation, they are specifically looking at their downtown core which is definitely an economic vitality issue in small communities. Hubbard does not have their own in-house Planner and it is standard practice for small Cities to contract out their planning functions; the city has a very clear path for the downtown core and it is a small requests. Cavazos recommended that it be considered and questions answered in the group discussion.

Antique Powerland Museum – Average score is 90. Discussion: Application with the highest leverage, large volunteer investment. Great tourism project, members were impressed with the number of individuals they attract to the community. Stated it would be great if the project were completed within the timeline the applicant listed because they are hosting the Antique Truck Historical Society in 2016 which will bring about 3,000 delegates and their vehicles from all over the United States here which will have a huge economic impact to the County.

Aumsville – Average score is 77. Application is to add a second pavilion to their park. Discussion: Liked the potential for tourism, was really impressed by their summer program. Would have preferred to see a larger match. There seems to be less direct link to tourism than with the Antique Powerland Museum. Concern that there seemed to be less of an in-kind match compared to other projects and would have liked to see more volunteer labor which demonstrates a greater support for the project. Their Corn Festival is a big draw to this community and it would be a great asset for that event. Cavazos noted that in small communities like this it definitely supports community livability; the movies in the park drawing out 100 participants creates a community vibe and the enrollment numbers for their summer program is impressive. Someone shared the program has previously received a recognition award for the quality of their summer program. It would be good to provide shelter from the sun for the kids. Various comments were made in support of the project but there was concern with the level of investment compared to other applicants.

Donald – Average score of 85.5. Application to rehab their old City Hall, grant request is to cover costs of materials with labor provided by volunteers. Discussion: Concern was expressed regarding historic preservation, and didn't feel the application was taking preservation into consideration in the rehabilitation of the building. Conversation was held clarifying which building was being updated. Question was raised on the viability of using the building once rehabilitated. Question was raised on the sustainability of maintenance and operation. Others felt that the building would fill a need within the community and be an asset to the downtown area. The amount of volunteer involvement and community donation are strengths.

Hubbard – Average score of 86. Application is for funds to pay for a contracted planner to prepare a rezoning recommendation for various buildings in their downtown core. They currently have various properties with limited use which prevents brew pubs and other businesses that add life to the downtown district. The city has gone through strategic planning and this rezoning will align their zoning with their community vision and comprehensive plan. The small city does not have a planner on staff and contracts for services from COG. Discussion: Concern was expressed with funding cities for land use issues. Questions were raised about the likeliness of the project making it through the legislative process and rezones being granted. Response was given that it is possible if the project is funded that it may result in no change but if the rezone is improved it would have significant economic impact for the community. It was noted that most of the small communities in Marion County would benefit from funding to support planning but an argument was made that while it may be needed they aren't asking and this isn't a large amount. The potential upside is great compared to the amount of funds being invested.

Mt. Angel – Average score of 85. Mt. Angel received a grant in 13/14 for a façade improvement project which was very successful. Cavazos recently toured the Mt. Angel Community City and downtown area to see the remodels which were impressive. Discussion: Their prior grant leveraged over \$26,000 in business match. The question was raised why businesses aren't applying for façade improvement directly rather than cities applying for funds to redistribute. Goettsch responded that the Cities are more aware of what is needed in their communities and would have a better understanding of which business improvements they need for their community. Cavazos noted that other communities, including Keizer have expressed an interest in funding for façade improvements; façade improvements are critical to economic development in terms of downtown business districts in small communities, and are a county-wide need. Currently businesses are not eligible to apply for funding based on the criteria, Community Services will be convening a committee to look at the grant programs and a façade improvement fund can be part of that conversation. Question was raised on the sustainability and the likeliness of the group coming back every year to request more funds. Discussion was held around the success of Mt. Angel in implementing the program and the impact it has had on the community. Mt. Angel is significant to Marion County's tourism industry with the Octoberfest generating thousands of tourists each year. Discussion was held around the level of funding to award, if Mt. Angel is adjusted to two and a half times what they are putting it would match the ratio amount of Mill City's application which would be \$6,250 for Mt. Angel. Another person commented that they are looking to do larger matches of \$2,000 so we would need to round up to \$8,000 which would fund four business improvements.

Turner – Average Score of 84. Turner project for a pool feasibility study, pool has long history in the community and strong support evidenced by endowment fund and school/city partnership for maintenance. Pool services seven zip codes, is located in the heart of downtown and can see it as both a projects that builds community pride and spurs economic activity for local businesses by users coming to the pool. Project engages the community in the planning. Discussion: Impressed by the number of letters of support, city-school partnership, history of this pool in the community, attention given to how to best improve the facility, and city seems to be paying careful attention to how it

uses its resources – getting a no can be a good answer. Prefer to invest on the construction end of the project rather than funding feasibility. Concern with the potential costs and will it be feasible to move forward once the study is done. Can the project be done in a more cost effective way through partnership? Partnership is already being leveraged with OSU, feasibility for a pool would seem to be a specialty that is likely fairly costly. City and school is investing in the project which would indicate it is a high priority for them, the request is a one for one match.

KMUZ – Average Score of 81. KMUZ received a grant last year to install a new receiver tower in Corvallis which expanded its potential audience. Prior grant moved forward on schedule, reports were submitted on time and the project wrapped up nicely. This proposal is to install a backup generator to prevent outages Discussion: Didn't seem to show that there was a need. Lacked letters of support other than City of Turner where the backup generator was going to be located. Their entire funding model for this project is through grants, they have two pending applications to other foundations and won't know about the outcome of those until later but have come to this group for funding; agrees that they don't demonstrate the need. Can we make the grant contingent on the outcome of their other sources? Question was raised on the community's need for emergency broadcasting, is that currently being filled by another station in the area. Another commented that it is a need for their user audience, if this is the station you listen to this is where you will go to get your emergency updates. Another responded that they could get it from another source. Comment was made that anything we can do to support emergency readiness in our community is worthwhile. It was noted that KMUZ demonstrated need in the prior year's application noting they have gone through the FCC Administration. KMUZ reduce to \$6,750 to cover the pad, electrical or generator; award contingent on ability to secure the remaining funds.

Mill City – Average Score of 83. Mill City received a grant in 13/14 for directional signage to their downtown district; the current proposal is for a façade project they have been talking about for a while. They are working to improve their downtown core with façade improvement as well as address some damaged property that brings safety concerns. The City is investing \$1,500 and Chamber may invest \$500. Discussion: Question was raised on if these funds are limited to the Marion County side of Mill City? Linn County should match our investment. Grant should be awarded contingent and restricted to use on the Marion County side of the City. Question was raised on how big of an impact this small of a grant can actually make. Is the match with business dollar for dollar? In a small city a project benefiting four businesses can make a big impact. Concern is that a \$1,000 maximum per grantee isn't going to be worth the investment of the business and will it be utilized? Mt. Angel's project had a \$500 cap per business and they leveraged \$26,000 in business investments.

**Action:** A motion was brought forth and a second made to exclude West Care from consideration for funding and further evaluation by the group. The motion was voted for an approved unanimously.

**Action:** A motion was brought forth by Freeman to recommend funding to the Board of Commissioners to include: Antique Powerland Museum at \$7,370, Donald at \$10,018, Hubbard at \$3,500, Turner at \$10,000, Mill City at \$5,000, Aumsville at a reduce amount of \$10,000 and contingent on project's ability to move forward, Mt. Angel at a reduce amount of \$8,000, and KMUZ at a reduce amount of \$6,750 and contingent on ability to secure the remaining funds. A second was made by Remington. The motion was voted on and approved by unanimous vote.

#### **Agenda Item: Membership – Allison McKenzie Application**

**Information/Discussion:** McKenzie is the Executive Director of GROW which is the economic development group which heads up the Canyon. We have an ex officio position on our board which is a vacancy from Business Oregon, Cameron recommends we fill that vacancy with McKenzie; we need the representation of small business and the Canyon. Cameron noted that GROW, SEDCOR and Travel Salem receive Board Designated Allocations and both Travel Salem and SEDCOR are on EDAB and he believes it will be good to have GROW at the table. Morris asked for a motion to recommend McKenzie for appointment.

**Discussion:** Burich commented that McKenzie will be an excellent addition to the group; Hill commented that she will bring a valuable perspective.

**Action:** A motion was brought forth by Brown to recommend appointment of Allison McKenzie to the Economic Development Advisory Board by the Board of Commissioners; a second was made by Remington. The motion was voted for and approved unanimously.

#### **Agenda Item: Grant and Loan Ad Hoc Committee**

**Information/Discussion:** Deferred to the November meeting.

**Action:** None

**Meeting adjourned: 5:03 pm**

***EDAB Approval of Minutes: November 4, 2015***