



CITY OF VENETA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MEMBERS:

HERB VLOEDMAN (CHAIR)  
BRITTANY LEHMAN (VICE-CHAIR)  
JOHN TRIBOLET

MARK DAVIS

GINA HALEY-MORRELL  
LEN GOODWIN  
MAUREEN WRIGHT  
(LIAISON)  
LEWIS RUCKER

MINUTES

Economic Development Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, January 8, 2025, 2:00 PM  
Veneta City Hall — J.W. "Bill" Smigley Room  
88184 8<sup>TH</sup> Street, Veneta, Oregon

Present: Chair Herb Vloedman, Vice Chair Brittany Lehman, Liaison Maureen Wright (phone), Member Gina Haley-Morrell, Member Lewis Rucker, Member John Tribolet, Member Len Goodwin  
Absent: Member Mark Davis (excused)  
Staff: City Administrator (CA) Matt Michel, Management Analyst (MA) Jacob Thode, City Management Intern (CMI) Jillian Liebersbach  
Other: Brian Brown, RAIN Catalysts

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1. CALL TO ORDER/REVIEW AGENDA

Chair Vloedman called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m. and reviewed the agenda.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were none.

3. MINUTES APPROVAL

a. Approval of the December 11, 2024, meeting minutes.

**MOTION:** Member Haley-Morrell **made a motion to accept the December 11, 2024, minutes as presented.** Member Rucker seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously (7-0).**

4. New Business

a. URA Signage Grant Approval

Chair Vloedman asked MA Thode for the update.

MA Thode shared last month during the BAC meeting two signage grants were approved; one to Ho Ho's Chinese Restaurant in the amount of \$1,000 and the other to West Valley Dance Studio in the amount \$273.18.

MA Thode stated both businesses would improve their signage, Ho Ho's will be replacing the bulbs and updating the actual sign and West Valley Dance Studio needed some minor repairs to their signage.

Chair Vloedman asked members if they had any questions.

There were no further questions.

Liaison Wright shared that because of the approval of the signage grant to West Valley Dance Studio we may receive another application from the Farmers Insurance Agency which was also located in the same shopping center.

Member Rucker agreed the Farmer's Agency needed a new sign.

Chair Vloedman agreed, word of mouth about the availability of these grants, was a good for the program.

b. RAIN Catalyst Announcements

Chair Vloedman asked Brian Brown to introduce himself and address the members.

Mr. Brown stated Heather Blake sent some information to MA Thode about his new work with RAIN Catalysts. He further stated he would be replacing Ellyn Mole as she was out on leave for a few months.

Mr. Brown shared he was a web developer and designer by day and worked with RAIN Catalysts offering trainings to help entrepreneurs promote their businesses. He further stated that his role with RAIN Catalysts would continue to support entrepreneurs and take on a few other duties.

MA Thode thanked Brian for stepping into the Ellyn's role and shared a list of events RAIN Catalysts planned to host in January.

MA Thode related RAIN Catalysts scheduled events included two work sessions starting on January 21<sup>st</sup> and two entrepreneur meet-ups scheduled for the last Tuesday of each month.

Chair Vloedman asked members if they had any questions.

There were no further questions.

c. John Stephens Resignation

Chair Vloedman shared John Stephens notified MA Thode that he was resigning from the Economic Development Committee.

MA Thode shared Member Stephens believed he did not have the time to continue and was very appreciative of the learning opportunities he enjoyed with the committee and was enjoyed serving on a committee dedicated to the economic health of the city.

Chair Vloedman asked for more information about the mandated level of committee members.

MA Thode confirmed the EDC was a nine-member committee and there were currently eight members.

5. COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATES

Member Goodwin shared the Planning Commission approved the Conditional Use Permit and Site Plan Review for the Bolton Hill Sports Complex.

Member Goodwin related it was approved in a very generalized state because there were elements that needed to be finalized in the design phase. He further stated this was fairly routine and by the time the design was completed it would comply with the city's code.

Member Goodwin concluded that this approval will help the city move forward and obtain funding and complete final design for the project.

Member Haley-Morrell stated the FR Chamber of Commerce was hoping to plan a Pickleball Tournament for later this summer, as well as, adding a Corn Hole Tournament at the Chili Cook Off during the Harvest Festival.

Member Tribolet shared his business was expanding to provide services from Florence to Eugene.

There were no further updates from members.

6. STAFF REPORTS

a. Management Analyst

i. Welcome -City Management Intern

MA Thode shared that after a robust recruitment process the City hired Jillian Liebersbach as the new Community Development and City Management Intern.

MA Thode stated CMI Liebersbach was a Senior undergraduate student majoring in Economics and minoring in Science Communication at the University of Oregon.

MA Thode was enthusiastic about CMI Liebersbach experience in data and communications and was excited to work with her on upcoming projects. Economic Development Report

MA Thode shared CMI Liebersbach would be supporting the City's Facebook page and would create a website for the Fern Ridge Advocates for the Unhoused Group, as well as, identify the economic development projects that fit with her goals.

CMI Liebersbach greeted the committee members and stated MA Thode covered all of the important information. She further stated that when she saw the opportunity posted she applied right away and was excited to learn and contribute to the City's mission.

Chair Vloedman asked if anyone had any questions.

The Committee welcomed CMI Liebersbach and thanked her for her work.

b. Economic Development Report

MA Thode stated there was a brief summary of the Economic State of the City as of January 8, 2025 and it provided more graphs and information about the housing statistics. He further stated the numbers were largely the same and the only addition this month those numbers were certified by Portland State University and they believe the City will grow by 2.4%.

MA Thode reported in addition to the population numbers he provided building permit information for the year 2024 which showed 41 commercial permits and 144 residential permits which totaled \$512,511 in fees to the city and an increase of 19 million in property values.

MA Thode shared employment numbers changed significantly this was due because we pulled from the Longitudinal Employment of Household Dynamics which provides a more accurate detail of commuter patterns along with employment

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MA Thode highlighted that this report indicated there were 778 jobs in the city; down from 2,000 reported last month. He further stated the larger number counted residents who work outside of the City.

MA Thode concluded the top three industries also changed and were a combination of food services, retail/trade and public administration; he further noted 132 jobs of the 778 were workers that also lived in Veneta.

MA Thode turned the floor over to Chair Vloedman.

Member Rucker thanked MA Thode for his work and the clarified data.

Member Goodwin asked if there was a rationale for Veneta to grow faster in the decades beyond 2030.

MA Thode responded it was likely due to a higher number of natural deaths that were outpacing birthrates causing the next few years to be lower. Birthrate is expected to outpace natural deaths once again in Oregon by 2030.

Member Haley-Morrell asked if they could receive data on new businesses relocating into the city.

MA Thode responded he would work to provide that information.

Chair Vloedman asked if the current residential developments are the ones that are in planning or in process.

MA Thode stated it was a mixture and some of them were tentative.

Member Goodwin believed most of these developments had been reviewed by the Planning Commission.

Member Goodwin asked what the selection area was outside of the city.

MA Thode responded the commuting-employment data reported was limited to City limits. For someone residing outside of City limits, the data was not specific and could only indicate that these workers were anywhere in Lane County, excluding Veneta.

Member Goodwin believed it would be good to know where the workers who worked in the City lived; if they lived close by, i.e. Crow, Elmira, it would be good to know the detail in order for the City to connect or engage with these workers.

Chair Vloedman asked MA Thode to share historical data so the members could have comparison numbers.

MA Thode confirmed Member Rucker's comment that there was job loss in the City over the last two years.

c. Economic Identity Update -Final Deliverables

MA Thode presented the deliverables Altar Media presented to businesses at the Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce last month.

MA Thode related that Altar Media wanted there to be a "see, hear and feel" quality to the brand that speaks to the value of our community.

MA Thode showed members the final logo, work mark and variations of the taglines, Engage, Explore, Enjoy, created for the City. He further stated RAC cards, three videos, tourism and influencer plans and social media launch communication were also provided with the final deliverables.

MA Thode shared they discussed the next phase of the project with the Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce and wanted to hear ideas from the Economic Development Committee.

MA Thode suggested drafting a survey to the community to ask how they were currently marketing themselves and if the new deliverables would work with their current promotions.

MA Thode turned the floor back to Chair Vloedman.

Member Haley-Morrell believed that surveying the constituents was a good idea and would lend to a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the deliverables.

Chair Vloedman hoped that there could be samples shared for each deliverable and how businesses can use each one. He also liked the ideas of hearing from other Veneta businesses and partnering with them on these new marketing opportunities.

Member Lehman wondered how the map could be used with the word marks and if there were opportunities to envision a passport at each Veneta location.

Member Goodwin encouraged the City and the Chamber to make this logo a pervasive feature of their communications. He further stated that was how you persuade businesses to take advantage of it too.

Member Tribolet asked if it was possible for the city to do a mailing where each businesses submit their own flyer to be inserted in their own pages.



Member Haley-Morrell mentioned that they hoped to design a Welcome to Veneta webpage in the near future.

Liaison Wright agreed that the city needed to show businesses how to use these tools. She asked if Altar Media could provide a tool kit for these marketing pieces.

Member Haley-Morrell stated a tool kit was not included in the deliverables list.

Further discussion ensued about how best to educate businesses to implement the logo and the brand guides.

CA Michel shared that the Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce contract was funded by Lane County and supported a part-time staff person to help facilitate activities that the Chamber sponsored.

CA Michel stated the Identity Program was at a critical point and our business community asked for these marketing pieces. He further stated the city and FRCC discussed surveying Veneta businesses to build the tool-kit from the ground up instead of building it at City Hall.

CA Michel believed the business feedback about how they were using the logo and guides was very important before we start building the tool kit.

Member Goodwin stated the City would need to show their commitment to the logo and keywords to encourage businesses to make it part of their business marketing.

MA Thode presented the RAC cards and showed how particular businesses fit into each word mark. He further stated businesses can be added to these cards as they get more involved with the brand guides.

Member Lehman wondered if this engagement could be more community based.

Chair Vloedman recommended that the city make it simple for businesses to use some of these marketing pieces, i.e. tagline or hashtag these word marks.

MA Thode concluded that the city would send a survey to businesses to ask what their current strategies are, weaknesses and strengths and their current identity and based on this discussion, some examples of how they would plug in their own business to this to this new brand.

CMI Liebersbach believed the brand guides was a good first start.

Liaison Wright believed that new businesses in Veneta should be given some kind of welcome kit and how to use the brand guide.

Chair Vloedman also wanted to have RAC cards, at his business, to help support other Veneta businesses. He asked how he could purchase the cards.

MA Thode stated he would add that information in the simple tool kit.

Member Lehman encouraged the City to send out an email about where these products can be purchased. She further stated the city should make this as simple as possible and have a sense of urgency about the communication.

d. Real World Lane County Update

MA Thode reported CA Michel and he would be traveling to the UO to work with the student team working on the "Real World Lane County" project with Veneta.

MA Thode shared the team will present to the EDC on March 12<sup>th</sup> and report out on their recommendation for the downtown blocks the city recently purchased.

7. OTHER

a. City Council/BAC Work Session Scheduled for February 24, 2025

Chair Vloedman stated the joint session with EDC/BAC would meet with City Council on Monday, February 24; after the next session.

Member Goodwin asked if there was an agenda or topics for this meeting.

MA Thode stated it would cover the same topics as last year

CA Michel stated last year we talked about purchasing the downtown block and the budget. He further stated to please let MA Thode know if you have other topic items.

Chair Vloedman asked members to bring their topics to the next meeting.

Member Goodwin asked to add the Identity Study survey and roll out to the agenda as a topic item.

Chair Vloedman directed MA Thode to add that topic to the list.

CA Michel added that the budget would be an important topic to discuss since the Urban Renewal Agency had allocated their funding to other projects.

b. CO.Starters Sessions starting in Late January



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MA Thode reported that Member Mark Davis recommended this be added to the agenda for today and it was announced officially that CO. Starters Session was starting in late January.

MA Thode shared it was offered in other cities and that the program was not available in Veneta; he further stated when it was offered in Veneta there was low attendance.

MA Thode mentioned if members were interested they could find out more about it and register.

c. EDC Reappointments

MA Thode stated there were two representatives from the EDC appointed to the BAC and their terms were expiring. He further stated both members agreed to continue to serve on the BAC.

Motion: Chair Vloedman **made a motion to recommend reappointment of Members Haley-Morrell and Lehman as Liaisons to the Business Assistance Committee to the City Council.** Liaison Wright seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously (7-0).**

Chair Vloedman asked if there were any other items to address.

There were none.

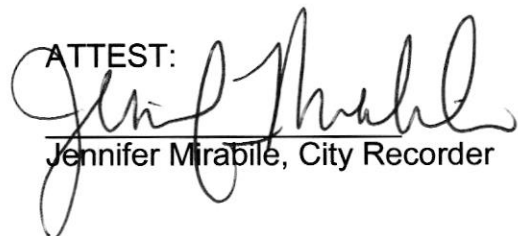
8. NEXT MEETING

a. February 12, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

9. ADJOURN

Chair Vloedman adjourned the meeting of the Veneta Economic Development Committee at 3:22 p.m.

  
Chair Herb Vloedman

ATTEST:  
  
Jennifer Mirabile, City Recorder