



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, February 12, 2025, 2:00 PM
Veneta City Hall — J.W. "Bill" Smigley Room
88184 8TH Street, Veneta, Oregon

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

1. CALL TO ORDER/REVIEW AGENDA

Chair Vloedman called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and reviewed the agenda.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Alexa Benson and Park Board Council Liaison, 88154 5th Street, Veneta Oregon

Ms. Benson stated she was attending the meeting to thank members for supporting last year's events which included Veneta Fourth's, Movies in the Park, and Veneta Haunts. She further stated these events were also recently added as official Park Board events.

Ms. Benson shared she was starting another organization and a website to collect volunteer information and to calendar Veneta events.

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Vice-Chair Lehman was excited to share she knew of a business that might be interested in opening another shop in Veneta. She further stated this business was a consignment and second-hand clothes store.

Chair Vloedman asked Vice-Chair Lehman to share those positive updates with members as well as the challenges businesses run into when thinking about operating in Veneta; this information would keep the members informed.

Chair Vloedman asked Vice-Chair Lehman to share information about inventory in the city.

Discussion ensued about available commercial lots in the city and if the city's website was updated with this information.

CA Michel mentioned the city used tax assessments records to identify those properties and Associate Planner Daniel Findlay could research that earlier process and rerun it.

Member Goodwin shared the Planning Commission approved the amendments to the Veneta Zoning and Development Code, except for the design standards for the highway commercial zones; they asked staff to further research this topic, otherwise he believed the amendments would go before the City Council for final approval this month.

Member Goodwin asked if the city had any information that would cause concern about the about the viability of the grant that ODOT received for the Highway 126 Project.

CA Michel shared he talked with two ODOT members and they expected there would be no problems with this grant and it would move forward.

CA Michel announced in two weeks, Kevin Urban, would start as the city's new Community Development Director. He shared Mr. Urban's education landscape architecture degree and his work relevant work experiences, in Texas and Oregon, with members.

CA Michel shared that there was health practice interested in purchasing one of the downtown lots; he further stated staff was just starting the process to consider what types of services should be located in those downtown blocks to best serve the community.

CA Michel concluded that from earlier discussions businesses for those downtown blocks should include those that bring foot traffic to that area.

Liaison Wright asked who should businesses contact if they want to support the Dog Park opening.

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MA Thode stated the Real World Lane County student group was working on a report about how best to use the downtown lots owned by the city.

MA Thode stated the students developed a survey to solicit feedback from community members.

MA Thode concluded that the student group would present at the next meeting on March 13, 2025.

Chair Vloedman asked if members had any questions.
There were none.

iii. Proposed Changes to Economic Programming

MA Thode shared that \$90,000 worth of funding was going to sunset with the Urban Renewal Agency in 2030 and there were discussions about finding other funding sources for a few of the committee's grant programs.

MA Thode stated he recommended reallocating funding for the Community Building Grant Program to the Park Board; he further stated the Park Board supports events like Music in the Park, Movies in the Park, Veneta Fourth.

MA Thode reported this change would free up about \$10,000 with the EDC budget; and reduce the EDC's budget request to \$31,000, instead of \$41,000.

MA Thode shared how the Park Board received their money from the General Fund along with sponsorship and donations.

CA Michel shared the Park Board had uncovered their own revenue stream in signage at the Veneta events they host.

Chair Vloedman asked if the Dog Park was under the Park Board purview and if there were benches in the Dog Park.

CA Michel responded that the Dog Park was under the Park Board's portfolio and that they had purchased two benches for the park.

Member Goodwin shared he thought this was a great idea and could offer a lot of efficiency for the city and ensure committees were not working at cross purposes.

CA Michel stated the name we call these programs in this environment was placemaking and economic development and in the Park Board realm they were Parks and Rec programs; this change would free up the EDC to reassess and maximize their attention to the city.

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MA Thode stated the Business Grant Program's proposed change would bring a level of funding detail to this grant. He further stated if you are eligible you can receive up to \$25,000.

MA Thode shared it would be clearer if there were levels of funding highlighted in this grant to help businesses consider how much they should apply for when applying.

CA Michel shared these two grants were meant to compliment each other; the one focused on new development and the other on existing property.

Vice-Chair Lehman reminded members that the committee updated the eligibility criteria recently and wondered if this additional detail would make the program too complex.

MA Thode agreed that was a valid concern and the funding could run out without this type of tier system and that's what the committee needs to determine if they are ok with that.

Liaison Wright stated she would keep it as it is for now since it was not being used and the budget was not being depleted on an annual basis.

CONSENSUS: The Committee reached consensus to change the Business Development grant name and the changes to the CDIP program.

b. City Management Intern

i. Economic Identity Toolkit

CMI Liebersbach reported that the Committee wanted something more tangible and this is a guidance document for new businesses.

CMI Liebersbach shared it gives examples about promotions and links to the actual brand guide we received from the vendor for this resource.

CMI Liebersbach stated we have been sharing this document with anyone who was involved with this project.

MA Thode stated this is the first document new and current businesses will receive.

CMI Liebersbach stated we negotiated with the chamber to push this information out to businesses and we increased the city payments to the chamber to help us with this project.

Member Goodwin said this was a good first step and the guidance document he was looking for.

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CONSENSUS: The Committee reached consensus to update the plan entirely and reevaluate each of those goals and ensure they are actionable.

MA Thode reported the current plan was comprised of the introduction, environmental scan, visions and goal setting sections along with an appendix of economic documents. He asked if the committee wanted to retain this in its current form or make some changes.

Chair Vloedman asked if we should use the same framework.

MA Thode asked what type of bones should this document include.

Member Goodwin hoped that we were not going to do this project in house.

MA Thode stated IPRE would not have availability until July to do this however, they offered resources for us to continue forward.

Member Goodwin believed the past plan worked fine and he recommended the committee take advantage of new thinking.

Vice-Chair Lehman believed the structure worked and we need to brainstorm about next steps forward and then give that information to a known economic plan developer to have them give us an update.

MA Thode believed it was funded for \$10,000 through IPRE and if we did it through the EDA – University Center, it would be free.

MA Thode stated the committee would like staff to find out how much this project would cost.

CMI Liebersbach stated they learned they could a lot of the work and then IPRE could come in this summer and finish it up dependent on the staff work.

MA Thode restated the committee's agreement about this project.

Chair Vloedman also agreed this was a good timeline for this project and that they hoped to complete it this year.

CONSENSUS: The Committee reached consensus that the framework works and they would like to have staff investigate more options and report back.

6. OTHER

- a. UO Real World Student Presentation at March EDC Meeting