

## BUSINESS ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE

## MEMBERS:

MAUREEN WRIGHT (CHAIR)  
BRITTANY LEHMAN (VICE-CHAIR)  
LARISSA MAYFIELD

GINA HALEY-MORRELL  
MCKENZIE GIBSON

MINUTES

Business Assistance Committee  
Friday, April 18, 2025 9:00 AM  
Veneta City Hall – J.W. “Bill” Smigley Room  
88184 8<sup>TH</sup> Street, Veneta, Oregon

Present: Chair Maureen Wright, Vice-Chair Brittany Lehman, Member McKenzie Gibson, Member Gina Haley-Morrell (phone), Member Larissa Mayfield

Absent:

Staff: Management Analyst (MA) Jacob Thode, City Management Intern (CMI) Jillian Liebersbach, City Recorder (CR) Jennifer Mirabile

Attendees: Robert Murray

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wright called the Business Assistance Committee meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. and she asked if there were any additions to the agenda. There were none.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE

a. Approve Minutes of December 20, 2025

**MOTION:** Member Gibson made a motion to approve the December 20, 2024 meeting minutes as presented. Member Mayfield seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Chair Wright stated they would take a short break to convene an executive session based on ORS 192.355(17)(a) to review an application for a city grant.

3. Executive Session

Chair Wright called the Executive Session to order at 9:05 a.m.

Chair Wright adjourned the Executive Session at 9:46 a.m.

#### 4. RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION

Chair Wright reconvened the Business Assistance regular meeting at 9:46 a.m.

#### 5. NEW BUSINESS

##### a. Sun Frog Products Business Grant

Chair Wright asked Mr. Murray, the owner of Sun Frog Products, if he could respond to some questions from the committee.

Mr. Murray stated he was happy answer any questions.

Chair Wright asked why Mr. Murray chose Veneta for his business project. Mr. Murray stated he was familiar with the Lane County area and he was currently doing business in Portland and the facility was not ideal.

Mr. Murray shared he was looking for space up and down the I5 corridor and this space seemed to work well and was larger than what he currently was using.

Mr. Murray has a network in Eugene and a friend who would be managing the facility in Veneta. He further stated he would be working to grow the business and increasing distribution.

Chair Wright asked if Mr. Murray purchased the building or if he would be renting the building.

Mr. Murray responded that he was purchasing the building and it was closing on May 10<sup>th</sup>. He further stated he hired an engineer to ensure the building would meet the needs of his business.

MA Thode stated Mr. Murray was working with the Fire Marshall to ensure compliance with storing the chemical used for the product.

Mr. Murray stated he fully intends to purchase the building and was working with the utilities district to hook up the power.

Chair Wright asked about Sun Frog Product utilities expenses.

Mr. Murray responded he received an estimate for the utilities.

Member Gibson asked about the FTE for his company.

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Mr. Murray stated he was working and would be considered the one FTE; he further stated he bought the business in 2024 and hoped to now make it his full-time business as he was worked during the time he purchased the company.

Mr. Murray stated he hoped to hire a full-time employee for the facility. He further stated he had big aspirations for the company.

Member Gibson asked how Mr. Murray saw his business helping the economy of Veneta.

Mr. Murray responded that he prides himself on customer service and making sure the orders are correct. He further stated he felt if his company did well it would spotlight Veneta and he hoped to hire additional employees.

Chair Wright asked what he would do if the Fire Marshall stated he could not store enough product would he reject the contract.

Mr. Murray stated that it would be a deal breaker if the building could not accommodate his business.

MA Thode believed the building officials were working work with Mr. Murray to ensure the building would meet his needs and meet code requirements.

Member Lehman asked if the business increased was there a possibility to expand the building.

Mr. Murray stated the facility would expand with his business as it was three times the size of his current space.

Chair Wright asked if there were other questions from members.

Member Gibson asked about any security that had been put in place for the business. Mr. Murray stated he would put a security system in and also have an employee there from 8am to 5pm.

Chair Wright asked Mr. Murray's friend would be the Manager of the business. Mr. Murray explained his friend has a flexible lineman job where he was working on and off.

Chair Wright asked if there were any other questions.  
There were none.

Chair Wright asked for a motion on this application.

Motion:        **Member Haley-Morrell made a motion to recommend to City Council approval of Sun Frog Products \$25,000 Business Grants Program Application. Member Gibson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).**

Mr. Murray thanked the committee.

b. Anticipated Changes to Grant Programming

MA Thode shared he would be presenting changes to the Business Grant Program to the Economic Development Committee.

MA Thode briefly summarized the changes to include a tiered award system and preferences based on full-time equivalent employees.

Member Gibson shared that those criteria seemed familiar to the Veneta Rescue Grant.

7.        OLD Business

a. Recap of Signage Grant Awards

MA Thode provided pictures of the new signage at Ho Ho Restaurant and West Valley Dance Studio to show how they used their grant awards.

The Committee was happy to see those sign improvements.

b. Regional Economic Identity Rollout

CMI Liebersbach shared that the economic identity was rolled out last week and the banners on Broadway were sponsored by twenty businesses.

CMI Liebersbach stated they also purchased merchandise to go along with the economic identity rollout, including apparel.

CMI Liebersbach stated they were working on social media posts for this project.

MA Thode stated he and CMI Liebersbach were also participating with the FRCC's Logo Launchers.

c. The Attic Reimbursement Contract Extension

MA Thode shared that the Attic contract expires in August 2025 and the Smith family had a slower rollout than they anticipated; he believed it was likely they would request an extension.

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Chair Wright asked who approves the extension.

MA Thode stated it would go to the BAC for review.

Chair Wright was concerned about the food trucks and if they can be sustained for another year.

Member Mayfield also wondered if they can request documentation of retainer for the engineer for their project.

Chair Wright stated the social media chatter showed that there was dissatisfaction all around with this location.

Discussion ensued about concerns and a possible extension.

6. OTHER

There was no other discussion.

7. NEXT MEETING

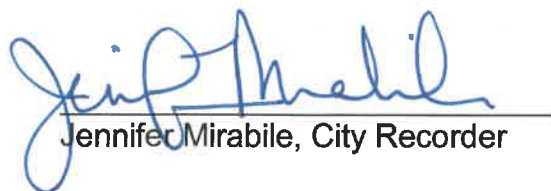
The next meeting was scheduled for Friday, May 30, 2025, 9:00 a.m.

8. ADJOURN

Chair Wright adjourned the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

ATTEST:

  
Maureen Wright, Chair

  
Jennifer Mirabile, City Recorder