

WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
SISTERS CITY COUNCIL
520 E. CASCADE AVENUE
APRIL 2, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lon Kellstrom	Mayor
Bill Merrill	Councilor President
Sharlene Weed	Councilor
Pat Thompson	Councilor
Jerry Bogart	Councilor

STAFF PRESENT:

Eileen Stein	City Manager
Eric Porter	Comm. Dev. Director
Brad Grimm	Public Works Director
Lisa Young	Finance Director
Laura Lehman	Associate Planner
Kathy Nelson	City Recorder

DESCHUTES COUNTY:

Alan Unger	Commissioner
Dennis Luke	Commissioner
Tammy Baney	Commissioner
Dave Kanner	County Administrator
Nick Lelack	County Comm. Dev. Director

GUESTS:

Mathias Perle	UDWC Proj Manager
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1. Quarterly Meeting with Deschutes County Commissioners

A. Welcome and Introductions

The joint meeting of the County Commissioners and Sisters City Council was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Mayor Kellstrom and Commissioner Baney. Introductions were given and **Mayor Kellstrom** welcomed the County staff and visitors.

B. Whychus Creek Restoration Plan

Mathias Perle, Project Manager for the Upper Deschutes Watershed Council provided a recap, update, summary of proposed restoration and management actions and next steps for the Whychus Creek Restoration and Management Plan. He discussed the four main problems that affect Whychus Creek as 1) bank erosion, 2) the creek's naturally dynamic system, 3) development patterns on or near the creek, and 4) decades of past fixes that have made the problems worse. He stated the management plan is holistic in approach and applies the latest technology while promoting fixes that protect property and stream health while always keeping the future in mind.

Mr. Perle discussed the 52 proposed restoration and management actions stating there are four principal actions for the entire four mile project. The actions include bank stabilization, berm modification, habitat enhancement and structural improvements. He stated the plan will be finalized after soliciting feedback from the community. On a parallel track the UDWC will work to help the City develop partnerships, refine projects, develop funding sources and implement the actual projects.

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Mr. Perle stated that Action 31 is the likely first project because of the interest of affected landowners in the Creekside and Timber Creek neighborhoods, the ongoing problem of erosion and the opportunity the action provides for habitat improvements. He discussed briefly the feedback received at the March 31st community meeting.

Mr. Perle fielded questions related to issues surrounding Whychus Creek such as water temperature, the Timber Creek Bridge and the cost versus benefit of certain actions.

Mayor Kellstrom thanked Mr. Perle for attending and providing valuable information on Whychus Creek.

C. Status Reports

1. County Comprehensive Plan Update

Deschutes County Planner Terry Payne stated the Comprehensive Plan update is coming to the end of the first phase which has included a review of the current plan, panel discussions with the steering committee and experts as well as hosting meetings with local agencies and citizens to receive input. She stated the second phase will be to rewrite a draft of the plan and send it back out for review through another series of community and agency meetings. She stated the final step of adoption is expected to take place in February 2010. She added that the community meeting in Sisters was attended by an organized group of citizens who submitted written testimony against the development of additional destination resorts in the region.

2. County Transportation System Plan (TSP) Update

Deschutes County Planning Director Nick Lelack stated the TSP update began last year with the goal of finishing by the end of 2009. He stated that input has been received as it relates to Sisters from Community Development Director Eric Porter and Public Works Director Brad Grimm, members of the technical advisory committee (TAC). County staff, the County Commissioners and the Council also discussed the impact of the City's TSP update on the outcome, long range planning for traffic in the region and some of the issues encountered in determining the best solution for traffic flow in Sisters.

3. Destination Resort Mapping

County Planning Director Lelack stated County staff has been working with the Board of Commissioners and the County Planning Commissioners on the remapping of destination resorts. He stated the County will begin its major outreach program to get feedback by meeting with cities, counties, environmental groups and other interested agencies.

Manager Stein stated that the City's concern with respect to the discussion on destination resorts and economic development is the impact of this development on traffic and water. There was

additional conversation regarding the pros and cons on the impacts of destination resorts and the idea of local control.

Councilor Weed distributed a handout from Central Oregon Land Watch summarizing the damaging economic impacts destination resorts have on taxpayers and voiced her concern.

Councilor Merrill stated it is difficult to obtain information on destination resorts that is not ideologically driven by both sides.

4. City Budget Update

Manager Stein reported that unlike most Central Oregon cities, Sisters Planning Department is general fund supported, and as a result of that the City is not facing budget shortfalls. She stated the City has a healthy contingency fund and the budget session will include discussions on what other programs or services the City can offer. She stated the proposed upcoming budget will not reduce any staff positions but will not ask for any cost of living adjustments. She stated that after meeting with members of the legislature recently she is not confident that cities will receive State shared revenue from liquor and cigarettes and so the proposed budget will also take that into consideration. She stated a utility rate study will propose changes in the sewer and water rates that will be neutral to the average rate payer.

5. Transportation Projects

Manager Stein brought up the topic of a local gas tax and how the State's possible higher gas tax may pre-empt the City's ability to impose such a tax on the local level. Discussion ensued regarding the transportation funding package being considered at the state level and regional transportation funding needs.

6. Economic Development

Mayor Kellstrom reported that economic development has gotten well underway in a short period of time and he is pleased with the progress made so far. He discussed the joint enterprise zone application with the City of Redmond and stated that the Sisters Business Attraction and Retention Team (SBART) was created with the purpose of encouraging new and existing businesses to invest in Sisters. **Manager Stein** stated that a rewrite of the business relocation guide is underway with plans to post the new guide on the Sisters County website with links from other agencies such as the City and Chamber of Commerce. She stated the seven economic sectors that make sense in Sisters are also under review with plans to update the strategic plan.

7. Other Business

Manager Stein thanked the County for its assistance with regard to the rezoning of the property slated for the Fire Training Facility. She reported the Fire District is hoping to receive stimulus funding that will allow moving forward with the building sooner than previously expected.

Commissioner Baney asked how the County might better serve the City. **Manager Stein** stated that the Federal Highway Bill, which earmarks funds for certain projects, is up for renewal next year and the City might want support from the County with regard to funding projects for Highway 20.

Councilor Bogart voiced his concern with regard to losing control on the local level as it relates to land use and asked the County to stand with the City as a united front against the State as he feels that right may be at stake. **Commissioner Baney** agreed, stating there is a need to be proactive on the County level also.

Mayor Kellstrom thanked the Commissioners and County staff for attending the workshop.

The meeting recessed at 9:59 a.m. the meeting reconvened at 10:05 a.m.

2. Regards to Rural Conference Report

Councilor Weed and **Councilor Bogart** reported on the Regard to Rural conference, hosted by Rural Development Initiatives (RDI). **Councilor Bogart** stated the concept of buying locally was an important mindset that really can make a difference. He stressed the need to make sure that local people realize their option of buying locally and what a huge multiplying affect it can have on the economy if those monies stay within the city. He cited the example of how hiring local businesses to perform work, buying from local vendors and working with a local bank can all make an economic difference to the community.

Councilor Weed discussed the concept of using the resources at hand, including adequate affordable and work force housing so families can stay and spent money in the same community where they work. She stated that donating locally to support agencies in one's own community was an idea also presented at the conference. She stated a formula that shows the increased cost to a City by not hiring locally was presented and that can help justify buying and hiring locally and even the bid process for local versus non-local vendors.

Councilor Weed stated another strategy presented at the workshop is to encourage citizens to conserve energy, which in turn saves citizens money and provides additional disposable income for them to spend in their community. She suggested applying to have a Resource Assistance for Rural Environment (RARE) intern work with the City to launch a "*think local*" campaign.

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Councilor Weed also discussed the benefits of participating in the *Main Street* program to provide a sense of community, help transform the downtown core and assist with economic development. **Manager Stein** reported that staff had attended a *Main Street* workshop recently and noted the Sisters Village Association has assembled to promote the program.

Councilor Merrill stated what the City needs to work at changing its severely distressed community designation. He stated there are several organizations such as SBART, the Chamber of Commerce, Community Action Team of Sisters (CATS), the City and Sisters Village Association that are all doing good work, but the City needs a director to manage the entire effort into a coordinated program. **Mayor Kellstrom** stated there is significant ongoing effort and progress is being made. **Manager Stein** stated there is a plan for the City, CATS and the Chamber of Commerce to share the lead on this effort. She stated a meeting of the involved agencies and community members will occur on April 22nd to discuss an update of the Sisters Economic Development Strategy. She stated some of the goals have already been accomplished and others will need to be a coordinated effort. She stated how the strategies of how this will all link together, including addressing the severely distressed community designation, will be a focus of the joint workshop the Council will have with the Planning Commission next week.

3. Preview April 9, 2009 Workshop and Regular Meeting

Manager Stein provided an overview of the joint workshop with the Planning Commission, regular meeting and Urban Renewal Agency meeting for the upcoming week.

4. City Manager Update

There was no update.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Nelson, City Recorder

Lon Kellstrom, Mayor