

WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
SISTERS CITY COUNCIL
520 E. CASCADE AVENUE
FEBRUARY 18, 2010

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

STAFF PRESENT:

Eileen Stein City Manager
Eric Porter Community Devel Director
Brad Grimm PW Director
Lisa Young Finance Director
Kathy Nelson City Recorder

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kellstrom at 8:04 a.m.

1. Economic Development Strategic Action Plan Discussion

Manager Stein stated the workshop was a continuation of the workshop from December 10, 2009, to review the Sisters Economic Development Strategic Action Plan. She stated she wanted to discuss the overall goals and make certain the Council was comfortable with the items ascribed to the City. The **Council** was satisfied with the *Overall Strategies* and moved on to discuss the *Identified Economic Sectors*

Retail

Councilor Weed asked about the placement of kiosks in downtown. **Councilor Merrill** stated kiosks take up a lot of space and that way-finding signs were discussed as a part of the Development Code update. **Manager Stein** stated she expects the issue of kiosks to come up during the community discussion on how citizens would like the downtown area to look with the Cascade Avenue improvement. The **Council** decided to wait and see what types of comments come from the business owners and citizens with regard to this issue before deciding if the City will participate or not.

Councilor Weed stated she thought adding signage to direct visitors to the historical downtown area was important. **Councilor Merrill** stated the matter was included in the updated Development Code.

Councilor Weed stated the issue of recreational vehicle (RV) parking is included and asked what steps have been taken to identify an area for such parking. **Councilor Merrill** stated there are no appropriate areas in the city since RV parking requires an area with drive-through capability. **Councilor Weed** stated the elementary school was a possibility but other council members did not consider the school a viable solution. **Public Works Director Grimm** stated staff considered the East Portal Park but it is not considered close enough to the downtown core. **Councilor Merrill** added the type of parking needed is also dependent on the type and size of the RV. **Mayor Kellstrom** stated RV parking has been a topic for a number of years and there is no immediate solution. **Councilor Thompson** stated he felt an even bigger issue is RV parking overnight on public streets. **Community Development Director Porter** observed the City does not have an

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ordinance prohibiting overnight parking on streets. The **Council** decided to keep the issue on the list recognizing there was not a solution at this time.

Agribusiness and Natural Resources

Councilor Weed asked for an explanation of a *right to farm ordinance*. **Manager Stein** replied she was unsure, but there is an active movement in the state to make certain that farm land is protected. She stated the issue is actually more of a conversation between those that hold farm land and the County as farming is outside the City's jurisdiction.

Councilor Weed noted that canal piping is already taking place. **Manager Stein** stated that currently Three Sisters Irrigation District (TSID) is piping its main canal, but there are other irrigation canals that could be the subject of future piping. **Director Grimm** explained TSID's project will generate hydro-electric power to bring the water to the holding pond. The energy generated through the pipes is then captured and sold back.

Councilor Weed asked what part the City is playing with the development of biomass opportunities. **Manager Stein** stated as a part of the City's economic development efforts, there has been discussion with businesses related to the biomass industry about locating in Sisters. She stated she is involved with the Central Oregon Partnership for Wildfire Risk Reduction (COPWRR) committee, a collaborative group of public agencies working to reduce wildfire risk, restore forest ecosystems and provide forest industry related jobs in Central Oregon. She stated the City is aware of the Sisters School District biomass project and will participate in the grant application related to a feasibility study for a distributed heating system using biomass. **Mayor Kellstrom** stated the Sisters Business Attraction and Retention Team (SBART) has been busy trying to get businesses to locate in Sisters. **Councilor Thompson** stated that with the proximity to the forest, opportunity will always be here. **Manager Stein** stated the biggest issue facing the City is that the federal definition of biomass excludes that material extracted from public lands.

Councilor Merrill stated he feels there is a potential impact with truckloads of product coming into the city for refinement. **Mayor Kellstrom** stated there is also the possibility of a Redmond facility opening which could make a business in Sisters not viable.

Light Industrial /Manufacturing

Councilor Weed stated she thought there was already flex space development opportunities in the light industrial district. **Director Porter** stated this referred to the idea of fast-tracking the planning process for a warehouse facility that could house several businesses. He stated the City is poised to provide that service if an application is submitted and with the updated Development Code the approval for such a project will become an administrative decision, which will shorten the process even further. **Councilor Bogart** stated another idea is to have a set of preapproved

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plans where a builder can come to the City, pull permits and begin construction immediately. **Councilor Merrill** discussed the potential of virtual buildings that can be built in 120 days.

Councilor Weed asked what is 'self-healing, route-diverse fiber service and high speed connectivity' whether it is an incentive to attract businesses and whether this capability exists in the city yet. **Mayor Kellstrom** stated he thought it related to fiber-optic lines that have already been installed and looped in the city. **Manager Stein** stated she would follow-up with Amy Tykeson, President of Bend Broadband.

Self-Employed Professionals and Home-Based Businesses

Director Porter reported the City received notice it has been chosen to be the recipient of an \$89,000 grant for an additional micro-enterprise facilitator position for the region.

Tourism, Culture/Arts and Outdoor Recreation

Councilor Weed noted the goal of having "gateways" to Sisters including having the East Portal Park restrooms open all year for visitors. She asked if there was any intention of keeping the restroom open as she foresaw it could be problematic. **Director Grimm** reported that the East Portal restroom creates the greatest number of problems with transients and vandals. The **Council** agreed to remove this strategy from the options list.

Real Estate Development

Councilor Weed stated she didn't think the City has any intention of creating a paid position for business attraction and retention and questioned whether this strategy should be removed. **Councilor Merrill** stated he thought it was a good goal for the City to keep for the future.

Councilor Weed asked how the City would maximize the tax base to assist with marketing, downtown rejuvenation and infrastructure. **Mayor Kellstrom** stated this was a long-term, on-going goal for the City.

Councilor Weed asked about the *Main Street Program* and whether the Sisters Village Association is still working on the program. **Manager Stein** stated she did not think the Village Association had the capacity to get the program going. **Director Porter** explained it is a national program and his understanding is that the Village Association is not currently meeting as it requires a lot of involved people to be feasible. **Manager Stein** added that most successful downtown programs have dedicated staff such as a downtown manager.

Councilor Merrill suggested moving the task of *establishing cooperative relationships with developments beyond the city limits* to the Tourism, Culture/Arts and Outdoor Recreation sector citing it was more applicable in that sector.

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Councilor Weed stated she felt the task of bridging the gap between those in support and those in opposition of growth was not an issue in Sisters. She stated she didn't feel anyone was not in favor of growth but rather the differences came in how that growth should occur. **Councilor Thompson** disagreed stating there has always been a difference of opinions with regard to growth.

Councilor Weed stated she hopes the task of looking for opportunities with distressed or foreclosed properties will be aided by the City. She suggested the City help inform the public about the Neighborhood Stabilization Program II funds that will become available soon.

Manager Stein stated she had met with Community Development Department staff about informing citizens on opportunities of this nature relative to the newly adopted Housing Plan.

Councilor Weed asked if the City is working with the Forest Service to develop a marketing strategy to facilitate the sale of the Barclay/Highway 20 property. **Director Porter** stated the City is actively working with the Forest Service and the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) to develop a "Quick Response Plan" to improve the marketing of the property. **Manager Stein** stated the specific development concept from a planning charette two years ago will be given to DLCD staff to assist in their work. **Councilor Bogart** stated that list was created by a previous Council and he felt it might not align with the current Council's ideas. **Manager Stein** suggested the Council review the document to see if it should be sent.

Councilor Thompson stated the City needs to identify the infrastructure issues impacting growth, specifically with regard to the Forest Service property. **Manager Stein** stated there is a need for specificity in order to know how to size infrastructure needs for the property. **Councilor Weed** requested that copies of documents given to the Forest Service and DLCD also be given to the Council.

Councilor Merrill stated he felt like assisting Sun Ranch and Three Sisters Business Park with providing shovel ready industrial sites shows favoritism and it should include all industrial property sites. **Councilor Bogart** stated the City hadn't assisted the owners and that SBART had only informed them that they must ask permission to be included on the State's list of shovel-ready properties. **Councilor Thompson** suggested adding the entire industrial zone. The Council agreed and **Councilor Bogart** stated he would take the information to SBART.

With regard to the *Overall Goals*, **Councilor Thompson** stated he feels the City needs to make certain it identifies future needs to continue to move forward. He stated a lot of the tasks for the City are related to long-range planning. **Manager Stein** stated the City will need to look at the Comprehensive Plan chapter on economic development relative to the Strategic Action Plan also. **Councilor Merrill** stated in order to move forward he feels someone needs to be in charge. **Councilor Weed** stated she felt many of the strategies are moving forward with the help of the agencies involved. **Councilor Merrill** stated the plan needs to be exercised and someone needs to

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be in charge to orchestrate the changes. **Councilor Bogart** stated in order to move to the next level someone will need to be hired but current budget constraints won't allow this.

2. Preview 02/25/10 Workshop and Regular Meeting Agenda

Manager Stein stated the February 25th workshop will focus on the Development Code update and the schedule for review. She stated in order to get through the review the Council will likely need to double up on meetings in the coming weeks. The **Council** discussed the time line for the update review schedule noting the tight timeframe and how chapters may change after the Planning Commission hearings are complete. **Mayor Kellstrom** stressed the importance of finishing the review prior to the beginning of budget season.

Manager Stein previewed the regular meeting. She stated business before the Council will include approval to apply for a grant for improvements to Clemens Park. She stated that an item related to the Community Renewable Energy Feasibility Fund (CREFF) grant, acceptance of the Timber Creek Bridge improvements and the appointment of a Budget Committee member would also be added to the agenda.

3. City Manager Update

Manager Stein stated the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) sheet about the local fuel tax was approved by the Secretary of State's office with only minor changes. She stated it will be included in the February utility bills.

Director Grimm distributed a hand out on back-in diagonal parking and a copy of Chapter 6 of the Transportation System Plan (TSP) that discusses this type of parking.

Councilor Weed stated she felt there should be some follow-up with regard to the letter received from Frank Deggendorfer regarding his concerns that he was unfairly stopped by an overzealous deputy after leaving a local establishment that serves liquor. **Manager Stein** stated a copy of the letter was sent to Captain Edwards and she would follow up with the Sheriff's Department.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Nelson, City Recorder

Lon Kellstrom, Mayor