



Harney County Economic Development

Minutes
Community Revitalization Team
Wednesday, September 1, 2021
5:30 PM- 7:00 PM
Via Zoom

Attendees:

Pete Runnels-Harney County Judge	Patty Dorroh-Harney County Court
Kirby Letham-City of Hines	Brenda Smith – High Desert Partnership
Allison Field – Business Oregon	Dan Brown-City of Burns
Kristen Connell-UEC Business Resources Center	Irene Gonzalez- SBA
Andrea Letham- Harney County SBDC	Barb Cannady-Fair Value Auctions
Judy Erwin-City of Burns	Denise Rose-HC Economic Development
Curt Blackburn- Blackburn Real Estate	Greg Smith-HC Economic Development
Tucker Billman-OTEC	

1. Introductions Greg Smith opened the meeting and welcomed everyone by Zoom.

2. Old Business the minutes were provided on the website. Pete moved to accept the May minutes without changes. Curt seconded and the motion was carried.

3. New business

A. Regular Reports

City of Burns, Dan Brown – He is working on a tri-city housing project with Lakeview and John Day to build 100 homes in each community under RS190 shared resources, using 3D printing technology. The council is working on strategic planning. Water master plan is almost complete, and Anderson Perry has been hired through a \$314K grant to evaluate the SDC fees. J. Harland & Associates has been contracted as the city planner and they will be looking for partners to serve on a work group soon. The city has now taken responsibility to issue demolition permits.

County Court, Judge Pete Runnels – The county court meeting was packed recently due to concerns about the governor’s vaccination mandate. The Judge clarified and asked the group to help spread the word, this mandate has come from the State of Oregon, not Harney County leadership. The county is not mandating vaccinations for COVID 19. The County Health Department is very busy, doing 15-25 COVID tests a day. We have no ICU beds available in the eastern Oregon region. The county is working with ordinances in conjunction with City of Burns to try to get ahead of issues such as permitting. Fire season seems to be winding down with no serious issues locally. Fair is next weekend.

City of Hines, Kirby Letham-He expressed agreement with the Burns CM on paving project approach. The new water tank was due to go online today and will hold 800,000 gallons. They had one minor repair to make. The meter reading system and financial software implementation is the last piece of the water project. The next project will be sewer system updates and a new pump station. A sewer system master plan is in the works. Ongoing street paving projects continue, and the city has

purchased a good, used street sweeper with the revenue from the fuel tax. Kirby also mentioned that feedback on the joint Burns, Harney County, and Hines mosquito spray project has been very positive. Most residents saw a noticeable reduction in mosquitos. Greg asked to be involved in conversations around funding for equipment needs.

Burns Paiute Tribe, Logan Hunt – no report

Harney County Economic Development, Greg Smith – Most of the activity will be reported under the work groups. Greg offered greetings after his service in the State Legislature and thanked everyone for the good turnout.

Housing Committee, Pete, Curt, Denise-City of Hines is getting the engineer to survey and plat the property. The next step is to talk to Kyle regarding the permits and to be sure the proper process is followed. The Judge has received the final plans and Kyle will be rebidding the revised design. He is looking for a high school intern to work on the project. **Need:** nothing right now, but letting the community know what is going on

Workforce Availability and Skills Committee, Brenda Smith – the Harney Internship program is still working to develop the high school internships at all three high schools in the county. Funding to create more equity has enabled the program to offer some paid internships. Each business is required to offer three educational goals within the employment environment. **Need:** help spread the word about internships to businesses and students.

Infrastructure Committee, Pete Runnels -The Brownfield District Plan is coming together, and Cardno plans to present it to the community in late October. The project has funds left to evaluate several more properties. MiWave has started to draw funds from the build out project. They had equipment delivery delays so did not start as soon as hoped. The three-year plan is to provide Burns and Hines residents and many surrounding areas of the county 100MB/1GB speeds. They will be installing in fall, with the first services up and running by the end of the year. The project should be complete by the end of 2023.

Harney County SBDC, Andrea Letham- Andrea announced that the Co-Starters program is launching September 16th. The program is in partnership with High Desert Partnership and The Foundry. Co-Starters offers a series of interactive classes to help those with business ideas develop them more fully and current business owners looking for a refresh. Andrea has gone through the facilitator training and was impressed with how thorough and useful the information is. There is a fee, but scholarships are available. Contact her for more information.

Small Business Administration, Irene Gonzalez-They have been hoping to start getting happy phone calls after a long run of helping people work through the SBA programs! Most relief programs are now closed, and they are looking at results and impact to businesses from the assistance. The EIDL remains available, but there are some systems issues. A caution to business owners, SBA communicates by email and only rarely by follow up phone calls. They do not text businesses for their personal information.

Business Oregon, Allison Field-She appreciates all the great work going on in Harney County and let Dan Brown know that she would like to support the 3D Housing project. ROI grants are due at the end of the month. The Oregon Infrastructure Summit on the 13-14th to

be held virtually. HB5006 is helping fund community projects, but no further information at this time.

B. Focus Work

Brainstorming: Support for County Businesses:

- Look for the businesses we don't have, what is missing? What do you go out of town for most?
- Ask about both retail and service-based businesses, any manufacturing that makes sense.
 - Survey Monkey, prizes offered, include online as well as newspaper. Biz Harney planning a survey as well
 - Survey could almost focus on service-based businesses first
 - Survey everyone, not just businesses, discussed distribution of final version send to all our collective email lists, forwarding to local contacts
 - WorkSource Oregon could offer broad categories of employment.
- Get the word out to businesses about available services to support them.
 - Promotion at events, county fair exposure, participate in parades?
 - New business packets at cities, step by step
 - Brenda mentioned an entrepreneur summit idea; small business appreciation and networking event, potentially a regional event that also helps celebrate and inform, held here in Harney County
- Start up support
 - Startup weekends, mentors: (examples [Techstars](#) and [SCORE](#))
 - HUB night-OTEC is interesting in partnering in these activities
 - Irene mentioned Boise Entrepreneur Week, with panels for information and testimonials of those who have used resources
 - Workforce guidance and tips for adjusting to teleworking environment
- CRT role in recovery and growth could include the Brownfield work to get buildings back in use
 - Judge, Brenda, Greg, and others form committee to plan events around Brownfield sites
 - Ask this question again at October meeting and create an ongoing conversation.

Greg closed with the thought that, while improvements can always be made, Harney County has started to be a place to watch in the state. We are doing some important things and becoming a model for other communities.

Meeting adjourned at 7:02 pm