Minutes

Community Revitalization Team

Wednesday, October 6, 2021

5:30 PM- 7:00 PM

Via Zoom

**Attendees:**

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| Pete Runnels-Harney County Judge | Noelle Colby-Rotell |
| Kirby Letham-City of Hines | Brenda Smith – High Desert Partnership |
| Allison Field – Business Oregon | Dan Brown-City of Burns |
| Lea Hoover-Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative | Irene Gonzalez- SBA |
| Andrea Letham- Harney County SBDC | Barb Cannady-Fair Value Auctions |
| Judy Erwin-City of Burns | Colby Marshall-Blackburn Real Estate |
| Curt Blackburn-Blackburn Real Estate | Steve Quick-Harney County School Dist. #3 |
| Aurora Potts-EcoSource Native Seed | Gretchen Bates-Treasure Valley Community College |
| Jennifer Taynton-EcoSource Native Seed | Paul Rodby-Hines McDonalds |
| Fred Flippence-Harney Electric Cooperative | Greg Smith-HC Economic Development |
| Dan Porter-Plectrum Music | Denise Rose-HC Economic Development |
| Misti Porter-Plectrum and Desert Moon Atelier | Will Keady-HC Economic Development |

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

**2.** **Old Business** the minutes were provided on the website.Kirby moved to accept the September minutes without changes.

**3. New business**

1. **Regular Reports**

**County Court, Judge Pete Runnels-**The Judge reported COVID testing has now been set up on a daily basis, Monday and Tuesday at the fairgrounds, Wednesday- Friday at the County Health Office. Numbers are down a bit. More Brownfield properties could be accommodated and those surveyed have all gotten reports back. The Fair Board is hoping to get the fair manager position announcement out soon because the position is currently vacant. Greg asked if we might have a moment of silence for some of our sicker friends and neighbors.

**City of Hines, Kirby Letham-**New water tank is online now, they are at the tail end of the project. Currently working on the pump system and wells. They continue to work with the Burns Paiute Tribe to address potential culturally sensitive areas in two places. Work is being performed jointly with the state heritage office and the tribe to get a plan in place so the lines can be installed. Harney Homes project ramping up with several of the committee attending the Hines Planning meeting. Kirby invited the Harney Homes intern Will Keady to the meeting tomorrow with the engineers. The city will install the water meter as part of the First Home project.

**Burns Paiute Tribe, Logan Hunt –** Tracy Kennedy continues to work on the Yapa Housing project. They have applied for funding for a new communications tower, and they are starting a new entrepreneur program called One for Youth. They are also moving forward on a tribal CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy).

**City of Burns**, **Dan Brown** - the Code Compliance officer has been hired, Mike Moore. They are moving forward on the Urban Renewal Agency. The city is looking at a Master Water Planning process, similar to the City of Hines. Burns, Lakeview and John Day are establishing a partnership under ORS190 to address housing shortages. A DLCD grant has been received for planning funds to benefit all three cities, from 2001-2003 HB program. They will be looking for letters of support for their application to ARPA. Steve Quick offered that he has reviewed the Urban Renewal Agency and didn’t see any negative impact to the school, and he wondered if other taxing entities had reached out to the city. Dan has not heard from anyone else but encouraged anyone with questions to contact him. He has had several citizens who wondered how it would impact their tax bill. Dan gave more detail on how the properties in the district will be impacted.

**Harney County Economic Development, Greg Smith-** the First Home financing will be secured by next week, with no payments due until the home is auctioned off. GEODC will be the fiduciary agent. His compliments to all the partners who have stepped up to “give a little” to get this house built. Cardno is continuing to work on the Brownfield Economic Development plan, and we will meet with the school board to discuss the Lincoln building disposition strategy.

**Small Business Support Committee, Dan and Misti Porter-**reported that they saw about 1200 people throughout the day at the Beer and Brats festival all the music acts made it, and it was great success, brought people downtown. They are planning for next year. Still working on bench project, businesses who want a bench should contact them. The committee is in charge of the Halloween Parade this year, and it will be on October 29th. Greg offered help for the committee. Judge Runnels offered his help, he has been involved in the past. He also suggested they look at the Dial a Ride fixed route stops which will need benches. They are in the process of obtaining funding.

**Workforce Availability and Skills Committee, Brenda Smith –** moving forward with the Harney Internship program and have some paid internships this year. All three county high school are onboard. 14 interns are connected to a business for the fall semester, she named some of the industries. Greg asked about connecting to former county high school students at a college level. She is trying to connect with Dr Henninger, Dean of the School of Business at EOU for the REV program to get credits. Andrea commented that two of the former local interns are continuing to work virtually for businesses here when they moved on to college.

**Infrastructure Committee, Pete Runnels -**MiWave is rolling now with fiber installation. They are starting to submit for funding from the public private partnership. He also described a mapping project that the county contracted with Morrow County who employed a student intern from OIT who is from Harney County. He was able to continue that work in college.

**Harney County SBDC, Andrea Letham**- Update on the Co-Starters program, which is the first in Oregon and a Shop Harney push for the holidays. Greg complimented Andrea on all the work she is doing for SBDC, he has heard wonderful things at a state level. Andrea announced she has also started doing some additional work for Biz Harney.

1. **Focus Work: Business Survey process CRT and Biz Harney**

**Greg asked Denise** to give some background on the draft survey which was emailed out this morning. The CRT group was identifying the need for clear communication and business support at the same time Biz Harney was having the same conversations, so the group developed this draft, pulling in participation from the City Managers and Judge Runnels.

The group reviewed the draft of the survey and made suggestions for some fine tuning. The judge suggested rephrasing the financial question to mention profit and loss. There was general agreement to move forward.

**Brenda Smith** – gave an overview of Biz Harney and their collaborative efforts to date. She appreciates CRT and the diversity of representation in the group. There is cross over from CRT to Biz Harney in personnel and interest in supporting small businesses in the county. One of those efforts is to begin exploring branding and community identity, inclusive of all businesses and potentially the full community. CRT is a strong base to help support this effort, Brenda felt forming strong partnerships was a good way to start. High Desert Partnership really intends to shepherd the branding effort. She described some of the key business efforts already in place, including EcoSource Native Seed project. Greg commented that funding may come into the county, and there is really no downside. Greg asked for general input and opposition, and Kirby said he felt it was a promising idea. No opposition.

**Greg** asked for roll out ideas and suggestions for moving forward. Judge Runnels suggested looking at the recipients of the Community in Action survey that just came out. The group will likely be asked to forward information on as they are able to their contacts. Fred Flippence suggested that Ruralite Magazine might publish a short article.

**Barb Cannady** offeredthe suggestion for all businesses to “like and share and follow” each other on social media platforms in order to form a supportive network among county businesses.

**General Announcements:**

**Fred Flippence** announced thatthe board of Harney County Electric Cooperative has approved capital payout of $1.8 million to members.

**Judge Runnels** shared a beautiful picture of the Steens.

**Irene Gonzales** reminded the group that October is Cyber-Security Month and she suggested spreading the word. The first week in November is National Veteran Small Business Week.  
**Gretchen Bates** announced the facility structure overhaul and remodeling as well as an IT overhaul to improve services provided by Treasure Valley Community College in Harney County. They have increased to five student testing stations.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:52 PM