



Harney County Economic Development

Minutes
Community Response Team
Thursday November 14, 2019

Attendees:

Pete Runnels-Harney County Judge	Jerry Staley-Biodynamics of Oregon
Kirby Letham-City of Hines	Tracy Kennedy-Burns Paiute Tribe
Jen Hoke-Harney District Hospital	Chris Holloway-Small Business Development Center
Dennis Davis-City of Burns	Misti Porter-TVCC Outreach
Becky Cunningham-Rimrock Recycling	Zelly-Community Member
Kyle Johnson-Community Member	Anna Gahley-High Desert Partnership
Lola Johnson-HC Chamber of Commerce	Tara Thissel-Burns District, BLM
Scott Fairley-Business Oregon	Curt Blackburn-Blackburn Real Estate
Deanna Thrall-Community Member	Denise Rose-HC Economic Development
Dustin Thrall-Youth Entrepreneur Program	

1. **Denise Rose** welcomed the group and called the meeting to order. Greg sent his regrets; he was unable to attend this evening due to illness.
2. **Old Business:** October meeting minutes were provided via the website with email reminders. By general agreement, there were no changes or additions to the minutes.
3. **New Business:**

A. Regular Reports:

Harney County Court, Judge Runnels- Mi Wave and Business Oregon are working on financing applications with the county for the broadband network. The process is moving slowly. Three sheriff candidates have been forwarded to the County Court for consideration for appointment to fill the remainder of Dave Ward’s term. The Tax Office is very busy as Karen Zabala is getting in place and looking for a replacement for her position. The same in the Juvenile Department as Brooke Hatley is moving into Lori Cheek’s position. There are many personnel placements at the county right now. The Brownfield grant has gone in again this year.

Burns Paiute Tribe, Tracy Kennedy – The hemp production plant is up and running and they are beginning to process hemp grown in the local fields. The facility is currently employing 15 people on two shifts. The Cultural Center downtown is the next project, with plans drawn up and exterior work planned to begin by the end of the year. New Tribal Council members were elected, Cecil Dick and Lucas Samor. Cecil was also elected the Tribal Council Chair.

City of Burns-Dennis Davis, Interim City Administrator-Sidewalk work on Highway 20/395 is being reworked as they missed the ADA specifications by 1/8". There has been discussion about the colors of the concrete not matching now, but no action. The restroom project in Washington Park is delayed due to attorney review of documents.

Business Oregon, Scott Fairly-Business Oregon Director Chris Harder who visited the community a month ago has resigned and will be taking a position for the City of Portland. He was very impressed with what was going on in business here. Karen Homolac of the Business Oregon Brownfields financing program was also here to meet with real estate agents, planners and administrators about property rehab options and funding. The DLCD has appointed Tamara Mabbot as the new Eastern Oregon Field Representative.

City of Hines, Kirby Letham- Projects still in the works include the water project. Citizens should be seeing visible changes over the next 2 months. About 250 test holes have been dug and they have found no issues with the current plan. Contractors hope to start digging soon. The last water rate increase was incorporated in the October billing. More money for street repairs has become available through the Small City Allotment funds and will mean about \$100,000 for Hines in both 2020 and 2021. The leaf bins will be available in Hines Park for Friday afternoon only.

Housing Committee, Curt Blackburn-A work group meeting was last week with most of the participants in attendance. Discussion was held about a tax base incentive program that could entice development of residential construction projects. The group has looked at programs from several other communities and has divided up assignments for members to work on. Incentives for home buyers were also discussed. The next meeting of the Housing Work Group will be November 25th at 1:30 where a timeline and schedule for work will be discussed as reports are presented. Kirby Letham talked about the creation of a flyer once the details are worked out for marketing the concept to contractors and developers.

Infrastructure Committee, Pete Runnels- work done on infrastructure efforts was reported in the County Court comments.

Workforce Committee, Anna Gahley- The Youth Entrepreneur program is going well with six young men participating in the program from Burns High School. A mentor-match process has been helpful for keeping the participants engaged. Those who successfully complete their business objectives will be attending a Leadership and Innovation Tour in Seattle in June 2020. Dustin Thrall, one of the participants, spoke about his business and experience with the program so far. Misti Porter from the TVCC Outreach Center in Burns spoke about the apprenticeship programs that are already in place or being created through the college. Courses online are available for plumbing and electrical; CNA and CMA are very close, and they are investigating industrial manufacturing training that may be useful for the pellet mill.

Small Business Development Committee, Myndi Hemphill-no report

Harney County Economic Development, Denise Rose– The office continues to work with a base of 8-10 business owners or potential owners. We saw one new client this month, and congratulations to The Country Washboard Laundromat, just opened in Hines. The Cash Flow class this noon was attended by 19 people. And a brief outline of the visit from Karen Homolac of Business Oregon was given. The office is working with the housing work group as they gather information on incentive programs.

B. Focus Reports:

At the request of Misti Porter from TVCC, the group held a brainstorming session for courses that may be of interest to Harney County residents. She has researched archives from the college and found a number of classes that have been offered in the past, both for credit and non-credit. Ideas included:

- Photography
- Office skills
- Several hobby and craft lesson based classes
- Mechanics, welding (already on her list)
- Tie in to artist in residence projects
- Entrepreneurship
- Personal finances
- Equipment operator -various, construction

Judge Runnels shared the success story of the high school student who was proactive and has been able to do a lot of job shadowing at the county health office.

Second request came from Chris Holoway of SBDC who is responsible for setting up the slate of business support classes for 2020. Ideas for him from the group included :

- Publishing workshop (both electronic and tips for physical books)
- Quick Books
- Social Media
- Technology of business, POS systems, online resources and inventory tracking etc.

The last order of business was a discussion of the date for the January meeting. The first Wednesday of the month is on the 1st, so the group decided to move the January meeting to the 8th.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 PM.

