



Harney County Economic Development

Minutes Community Response Team Wednesday, May 6, 2020

Attendees Via Zoom:

Pete Runnels-Harney County Court	Patty Dorroh-Harney County Court
Curt Blackburn- Blackburn Real Estate	Lola Johnson-HC Chamber of Commerce
Amber Wares-Symmetry Care	Misti Porter-TVCC Outreach
Kristen Shelman-Harney County Court	Steve Quick-HC School District #3
Sen. Lynn Findley-Oregon District 30	Michael Bonner-Wilderness Wireless
Rep. Mark Owens-Oregon District 60	Jennifer Taynton-High Desert Partnership
Larry Holzgang-Business Oregon	Jen Keady-Family Eyecare
Jen Hoke-Harney District Hospital	Forest Keady-Historic Central Hotel
Becky Cunningham-Rimrock Recycling	Kirby Letham-City of Hines
Fred Flippence-Harney Electric Cooperative	Andrea Letham-Small Business Development Center
Doug Smith -Community Member	Cynthia Crowell-Small Business Administration
Irene Gonzalez-Small Business Administration	Brenda Smith-High Desert Partnership
Greg Smith, HC Economic Development	Denise Rose-HC Economic Development
Patrick Collins, HC Economic Development	<i>Three unidentified callers- phone numbers only</i>

1. **Greg Smith** welcomed the group and called the meeting to order and discussed how we might manage the virtual discussion process.
2. **Old Business:** March meeting minutes were provided via the website with email reminders. General agreement was that the group should review and let the office know if there are corrections.
3. **New Business:**

A. Regular Reports:

Harney County Court, Pete Runnels- Judge Runnels announced the county was selected for \$600,000 in funding from the EPA for evaluation and clean up of Brownfield sites. The submission suggested three sites for evaluation, the old mill area, a former auto body shop and a vacant lot in downtown Burns. He also announced that the county and MiWave are days away from signing agreements with Business Oregon to build a public/private broadband network. Industry sector guidelines will be available soon from the State to help with the reopening process. The county will publish this information. The Economic Development Strategic Plan is ready to come before the group for comments and will be presented at a later meeting. **Commissioner Dorroh's** comments included encouraging the group to keep the momentum going on the housing projects, keep it alive. **Commissioner Shelman** thanked the collaborative group and all the businesses who helped develop

and participate in the survey for the reopen plan. The revised plan is almost ready to submit. Judge Runnels gave an overview of the submission process.

City of Burns, Dauna Wensenk via written submission- The city is holding a special meeting tonight to adopt 2 resolutions for economic relief, one a temporary utility account credit program to support local purchasing and the second to set up an economic development loan fund. The airport held an auction for surplus equipment and if all pending sales go through could net about \$100,000. The money will go toward a new fuel tank for the airport. Applications for the City Manager position will be reviewed by the recruiting agency and they will provide an update to the council on May 13th. Over 40 trees of 7 different varieties, purchased with Racine funds, have been planted in the cemetery. Finally, a street project has been proposed for 2020 and bid documents are being prepared.

City of Hines, Kirby Letham -The water project (tank, distribution lines, and system improvements) pre-bid meeting was held in the park, with social distancing. They had 25 bidders in attendance. The sprinkler system is going into Hines City park and will be more efficient for park users and staff. The vacant space in the Rite Aid plaza has been leased and is being remodeled to accommodate the VA Clinic. The utility credit program has rolled out and can provide a rebate up to \$10 per month off utility bills for presenting a local restaurant receipt. Maximum rebate is capped at \$60 per household.

Harney County Economic Development, Greg Smith – Greg reported on the series of webinars presented regarding EIDL and PPP loan assistance for COVID 19 impacted businesses. The programs have assisted close to 70 businesses to date in Harney County. HC Economic Development is participating with the Eastern Oregon Recovery Team and working with the county court on the reopen plan. Greg also discussed the Eastern Oregon Business Development loan program and the State budget issues.

Senator Lynn Findley–The senator apologized for bringing the unfortunate news that the state is facing a significant budget deficit in this biennium. General fund and the revenue sharing will experience cuts. The Rainy-Day fund is still at about 2 billion. Revenues will drop as businesses are impacted by the COVID 19 shut down and unemployment continues. The economic forecast on May 20 will discuss projections and impacts. It is not great news.

Representative Mark Owens – The budget and the 2nd quarter economic forecast are certainly at the front of everyone's mind. Total losses could top 20% after income tax, fees and federal pass through dollars are accounted for. A question was asked about how citizens can show their support for the work being done in Salem. Rep. Owens answered that to continue to push for what's currently in the budget, and representatives will continue to lobby hard for the items that didn't make it in and have an impact on Eastern Oregon. Judge Runnels expressed his appreciation for the 7:00 AM phone updates from our legislators.

B. Focus Reports: Paycheck Protection Program and Economic Injury Disaster Loan Updates

Irene Gonzalez, Small Business Administration- Irene gave an overview of the Paycheck Protection Plan, funds are still available as of this Monday. She talked through some of the challenge's businesses have experienced accessing assistance and encouraged everyone to keep checking the FAQ section of the Treasury website. The answers are updated frequently. Other reminders included seasonal payroll may be used as well as month to month.

Cynthia Crowell, Small Business Administration – was on hand to give additional information about the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program. The EIDL program is now available to agricultural operations including ranching, livestock production and related industries. Currently just ag will be able to access the application, unless you are revising an application submitted before March 29th and your application number starts with a 2.

Andrea Letham, TVCC Small Business Development Center-short introductory biography and history of her experience in the community. She has been able to work with 40 businesses through COVID 19 assistance programs such as Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, and is in contact with the banks offering Paycheck Protection Programs. She is working to keep clients updated on the rapid changes in PPP and EIDL. She has seen a number of “silver linings: with clients and shared a few examples.

SBA responses to questions from the group:

- 1. Once EIDL is approved, what is the process, how are people notified?** You will receive an invitation to set up an account with SBA and once that is complete, you should receive documents within 60 days to sign. The email will also include deadlines and rules.
- 2. PPP extension, how much longer will this be available?** It still has 8 weeks.
- 3. How does the EIDL advance mesh with the PPP?** PPP can be used as follows: 75% for payroll expenditures and the remainder can be for rent, insurance, similar business expenses. Various entities are offering offline help for businesses who aren't as advanced in bookkeeping.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 PM.