

MINUTES

TOWN HALL MEETING
OF
JUNE 15, 2015
5:30 P.M.

MID-COLUMBIA SENIOR CENTER
THE DALLES, OREGON

COUNCIL PRESENT: Mayor Steve Lawrence, Linda Miller, Russ Brown, Taner Elliott

COUNCIL ABSENT: Tim McGlothlin, Dan Spatz

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Nolan Young, City Clerk Julie Krueger,
Administrative Fellow Daniel Hunter, Public Works Director Dave
Anderson, Planning Director Dick Gassman, Police Chief Jay
Waterbury

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Mayor Lawrence called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

PRESENTATION REGARDING DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mayor Lawrence talked about how the City had assembled a team to work on economic development and revitalize the downtown. He said the City partnered with several agencies, including Main Street Program and Port of The Dalles. He said a Business Development Director had been hired by a contract to help entice businesses to The Dalles. Lawrence said there were many reasons for people to come to our community, including recreational opportunities, historic downtown, weather, the river, agriculture, and others.

City Manager Young noted the City Council had adopted their annual goals, which included three goals pertaining to economic development: Develop, in partnership with Main Street, programs and activities to fill empty downtown store fronts and strengthen its economic vitality; work with the Chamber and Main Street program to maximize use of the Vertical Housing Zone, and other tools to develop upper levels of downtown buildings, including creation of housing opportunities; and during fiscal year 2015-16 budget process consider level and type of resources

to make available to economic development with emphasis on manufacturing jobs and revitalization of the downtown, and then implement that plan.

Young said the City had recently made changes to its economic development staffing, which now included a four-month intern position, a Project Coordinator, Business Development Director, and financial support for the Main Street Program.

Business Development Director Gary Rains reported that citizens would begin to see substantial success in the very near future, due to the work of the economic development team. He said they currently had eight downtown buildings with leases or letters of intent and six projects that were being put in place, including two breweries and the Neon Sign Museum. He said there were currently seven additional proposed projects being worked on. Rains said remarkable progress had been made thanks to the collaborative efforts of the team, governmental partners, local Realtors, banks, and investors.

Main Street Program Director Matthew Klebes discussed the mission of the program to revitalize the downtown, promote design, organization and re-structuring. He said facade restoration projects were being worked on and a new grant program had been developed to assist business owners in improving facades. Klebes said Main Street committees were currently working on bicycle workshops, signage, Summer Fest event, Christmas lights, a Shop Downtown campaign, and placement of additional parklets. He said the annual Main Street conference would be hosted in The Dalles this Fall, bringing over 200 people to our community.

Mayor Lawrence said the economic development team was also working to establish incubator space for start-up businesses in the downtown.

Rodger Nichols asked if there was any new information on the rodeo grounds property ownership. He said the DEQ had approved the permit for the property. City Manager Young said there was no new information to share.

Dave Griffith said the Airport had hosted a successful Fly In event over the weekend and noted the industrial park now had shovel ready lots for development.

Mayor Lawrence said the Airport was important in bringing new business to The Dalles, and reported that the Civic Auditorium's beer festival had also been a great success over the weekend.

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City Manager Young said the Airport was in the process of purchasing Hangar D, working to construct a 12,000 square foot flex building that would house Life Flight, and future businesses, and working to develop new hangar space. It was noted that many corporations were now using the Airport, which was very important to the business success of the community.

Matthew Klebes introduced Rick Leibowitz, the new Director of the Small Business Development Center.

Rodger Nichols asked if there was any movement on the golf course project at the Airport. City Manager Young said the environmental review had been completed and a timeline was being developed for the project. He said if deadlines weren't met after the timeline was implemented, a new developer may be sought for the project.

Klebes described the way finding signs proposed for the downtown, saying one side would have photographs of how the downtown looked in years past, and the other side would have maps showing businesses and amenities.

Comments were made regarding the number of out of town tourists visiting the community and participating in events, such as the Color Dash.

Tom Woods asked where the proposed Bicycle Hub would be located. City Manager Young said it was proposed to be located at the Lewis and Clark Festival Park where many amenities, such as water, electric and restrooms were already available. There was discussion regarding private bike hubs. Matthew Klebes said businesses could apply to be a bike hub, meeting just a few criteria.

Woods said he hoped the City continued to look at ways to lower sewer and water rates. City Manager Young said the rates were reviewed annually and the City was able to roll back a proposed increase last year.

Mindy McHale asked about the proposed location for the business incubator. City Manager Young said there would be one location, but it would house several start up businesses.

Nolan Hare said he hoped the City would consider a dedicated funding source to help with sponsorship of community events.

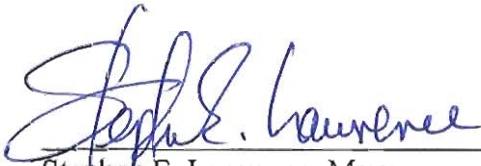
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ADJOURNMENT

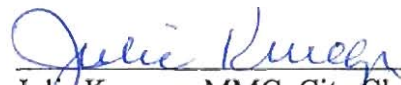
The meeting adjourned at 6:38p.m.

Submitted by/
Julie Krueger, MMC
City Clerk

SIGNED:


Stephen E. Lawrence, Mayor

ATTEST:


Julie Krueger, MMC, City Clerk