Minutes

Community Revitalization Team

Wednesday, May 4, 2022

5:30 PM- 7:00 PM

484 N. Broadway, Burns OR

**Attendees: In person Zoom**

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| Pete Runnels-Harney County Judge | Patty Dorroh-Harney County Commissioner |
| Kirby Letham-City of Hines | Amber Wares-Symmetry Care |
| Darin Henry- Community Member | Tucker Billman-OTEC |
| Judy Erwin-City of Burns | Feather Sams-Huesties-Business Oregon |
| Heather Smith-City of Burns | Logan Hunt-Burns Paiute Tribe |
| Dan Brown-City of Burns | Gretchen Bates-TVCC |
| Curt Blackburn-Jett Blackburn Real Estate | Bill Hart-Community Member |
| Colby Marshall-Jett Blackburn Real Estate | **Zoom:** |
| Barbara Cannady-Fair Value Auctions | Clayton Crowhurst-NW Housing Alternatives |
| Becky Cunningham-Rimrock Recycling | Kristin Connell-UEC Business Center |
| Will Keady-HC Economic Development | Greg Smith-HC Economic Development |
| Denise Rose-HC Economic Development | Sherri Smith-Morrow Development Corporation |
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**1. Introductions:** Greg Smith opened the meeting and welcomed everyone and asked either Judge Runnels or Denise Rose to run the meeting in person. The judge volunteered Denise.

**2.** **Old Business:** the minutes were provided on the website for the April meeting. There were no changes or comments.

**3. New business:**

1. **Regular Reports**

**City of Burns, Dan Brown –** Water project in financing stage, and an audit of the sewer system showed the ponds are in good shape with some capacity still available. Hoping for a CDB Grant or congressionally directed spending. Street project and airport engineering in process for bid. Systems development fee structure revisions will be looked at in the budget process.

**County Court, Judge Pete Runnels-** Working with Rural Fire Protection Districts to get mapping and set up for a new district in North Harney area. They plan for 2023 completion dates, funding is coming from Sage Grouse preservation funds. Change of zoning in Crystal Crane Hot Springs to add RV and tent spots was approved at County Court. Also, at that meeting the court agreed to submit a bid on the Lincoln property for a jail and justice center. Budget process will likely go one more meeting after next week. The Court had a request from the Parks & Rec Director for financial assistance for pool repairs and replacement solar panels. They voted to donate $125,000 from their ARPA funds.

**City of Hines, Kirby Letham-** similar comments related to the Burns sewer process. They are working on a sewer master plan due next fall. Not as large a process as the water system replacement. Some ARPA funds will be used for the study and as well as to replace elements of the lift station by the sewer ponds. Water system will really be done this summer, he promises to not talk about Hines Water process again! Metered usage will likely begin for Hines residents in the late summer or early fall. To date the city has applied for TGM (transportation planning), OR Emergency Management for flood assessment in the King Street area, Safe Routes to School for planning, OR Parks and Rec. planning for renovation of parks. Budget season, next meeting is May 24th. The Obsidian Days breakfast will be sponsored by the Hines Fire Department June 11th. Tucker asked a few questions about the pump station work planned. He offered letters of recommendation from OTEC for any grants that promote safety and/or economic development.

**Burns Paiute Tribe, Logan Hunt-** They have hired a new employee in the Economic Development Department to work on codes and policies for new business foundation building. Strategic Plan work starting as well as the CEDS process starting in June. They will have a community input opportunity on the SWOT. There are several grants they are waiting to hear about. Also trying to hire a part time community outreach person to work with entrepreneurs in the tribe.

**Harney County Economic Development, Greg Smith-** Focus has been housing, business financing and getting the word out. The initial invoice for the First Home has been processed and there are inquiries coming in about the house. Also working to prioritize opportunities and direction related to housing development. Working with three different entrepreneurs at different stages of obtaining financing, two are for the purchase of local businesses. Getting word out is an ongoing task. We have several podcasts on pertinent topics for business owners. This will be coordinated with our TVCC SBDC partners. Also getting information out via social media. Asked the group to help circulate the information.

Barb Cannady commented that she expected Guy McKay from WorkSource Oregon to be here tonight. She outlined his intent to get out and go door to door for businesses. Greg would like to coordinate so that Economic Development can go with him.

**Other Community Updates:**

**TVCC, Gretchen Bates –** expressed her appreciation for how much is going on in the county and asked how the CRT information is dispersed to the community. Response was that the email list of about 160 and word of mouth are likely the best sources. The committee work and meeting minutes are posted on the economic development website. Suggestions welcome.

On the TVCC front, she has reactivated an advisory committee and had a recruiter here for the Bird Festival to visit local High Schools. They will be working to offer more classes online for HS age students for $45 a credit. Also developing more adult education classes for subjects such as gardening and canning. Registration is in mid-May and summer classes starts June 21st. Colby commented on the value to high school students to earn college credit for a low price; it is an amazing opportunity for local youth. His daughter has benefited from this type of program. Tucker outlined scholarship opportunities through OTEC to help work on keeping student and graduate talent in Eastern Oregon. Logan asked how many classes would be offered in person here in Harney County. Gretchen mentioned that most adult ed would be in person.

**Committee Reports as needed:** no reports from Infrastructure, Small Business and Workforce Committees.

**Housing Committee:** Denise reported that since the committee started tracking new home construction in 2020, there have been a total of 19 homes completed (certificate of occupancy issued). Five were new manufactured homes, and the majority of the construction was in the county.

1. **Focus Work:**

**Housing Next Projects Discussion:**

**Manufactured Home replacement program, Kristin Connell -**State of Oregon in cooperation with USDA is funding a loan program at UEC for energy inefficient mobile home replacement. The USDA Program allocated $3 million to spend in a 10-year period and will apply to any home built before 1994 and verified as no longer energy efficient. UEC has partnered with a local manufactured home company and have about five stock plans to choose from. They will work closely with the State of Oregon for gap financing. Applicants need to own the home and the property it is placed on and provide sound credit background, collateral and a loan application, but there are no income level requirements. Follows a similar loan process as a bank. Homeowner can get up to $50K per double wide and $75K triple wide from the state if owner can put some cash in. State can assist up to $15K for removal and recycling of old home. Owner must stay in the home for at least 10 years.

Greg feels this could really be a success in Harney County as well. We need to start by talking to the electric cooperatives locally. Logan asked about the funding sources. Greg answered with USDA funding to UEC to create a program for replacement. He wondered how it would work on the reservation for non-owners of homes. Greg felt it could work well, there are exceptions that should allow participation.

Colby mentioned from real estate perspective this could be a great benefit. Currently most federally backed loans will not qualify older manufactured homes. Many of them are on property out in the county and this brings a lot of value going as far as 25 years in the future. Some discussion about the recycling of older homes.

Tucker mentioned that OTEC would be very interested if the community is motivated and behind making it work, they would be onboard.

**OTEC ARC-GIS system presentation, Tucker Billman-** gave a short demonstration of the program he uses for the OTEC Board of Directors to talk about projects in communities. He shared the ARC GIS presentation created for Harney County and included projects currently in the works. It has real time mapping capacity.

He also shared the details from the REDLG revolving loan fund through cooperatives. Funds can be held up to 10 years and continue to loan for a small interest rate as loans are repaid. Could fund housing or economic development projects. Colby shared thoughts from the last Housing Committee regarding local loans for refurbishing (windows, doors, roof, HVAC) homes to the point they could qualify for USDA or Veterans loan programs. To keep a program local Tucker suggested the RESP program for those who need energy efficiency and don’t have the funds upfront to make repairs and wait for a rebate. It is a much less restrictive program. They would like to work with Harney Electric as well.

**Northwest Housing Alternatives, Clayton Crowhurst** – introduced his company and what they are hoping to work on in smaller communities in Oregon. Offered a presentation of various levels of housing they develop for the group when we feel the time is right.

Adjourned 6:55 PM