

MID-COLUMBIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2017
4:00 p.m.
MCEDD Office and Teleconference

ATTENDANCE:

In Person: Ken Bailey and Eric Proffitt

Teleconference: Jan Brending and Bob Hamlin and Bob Benton

Absent: Rex Johnston and Bill Schmitt

Staff: Sherry Wickert, Sherry Bohn and Amanda Hoey

CALL TO ORDER:

Jan Brending called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES:

Eric Proffitt moved to approve the February 1, 2017 Executive Committee meeting minutes as presented. Bob Hamlin seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

GORGE MANAGEMENT PLAN COMMENTS:

Amanda Hoey reported that at the February MCEDD Board meeting the MCEDD board reviewed MCEDD draft comments on the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Management Plan and authorized the MCEDD Executive Committee to finalize and submit comments on the scoping of plan review. Amanda noted the primary requests included the following:

- Incorporate existing economic development plans in a manner that allows the Management Plan to act as a more living document and reflect changing economies in the Gorge.
- Utilize MCEDD and its ability to convene partners to advise on necessary updates to the economic development section of the Management Plan following this Scoping Process.

Amanda asked if there were any additional comments to include, comments to revise and for the Executive Committee to approve submission of the final comments

Discussion: Ken Bailey stated that it was important to emphasize utilization of the CEDS, to build relationships between MCEDD and the commission and to allow MCEDD to assist the commission with economic development. Jan Brending requested that bullet number 2 be emphasized and broadened. Ken Bailey reemphasized the need to build a relationship with MCEDD. Eric Proffitt asked if both Oregon and Washington workforce entities were aligned regarding updating the principal economic sectors to reflect regional targeted industry and growth sectors. Amanda Hoey discussed areas of alignment and stated that it might be worth calling attention to the CEDS and the Workforce Boards within that statement for industry sectors.

Eric Proffitt moved to approve submission of the final comments to Gorge Management Plan as discussed. Ken Bailey seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

PLANNING GRANT SCOPE:

Amanda Hoey reported that annually MCEDD receives an invitation from the US Economic Development Administration to apply for a partnership planning grant. She reported that these funds are allocated to MCEDD as the designated Economic Development District to support the bi-state area in development and implementation of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Amanda noted that MCEDD proposes an annual scope of work that meets that objective

and that in the prior year, the scope of work focused predominantly on development of the CEDS as it is a major rework year. Amanda also noted that in addition, staff incorporated elements to ensure MCEDD continued to actively continue implementation strategies. Amanda requested the board provide input on the annual scope of work for the planning grant and to authorize staff to develop and submit the scope of work.

Ken Bailey moved to authorize staff to develop and submit the scope of work for the planning grant and to accept the three year planning grant, if awarded. Eric Proffitt seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

LOCAL ASSESSMENT:

Amanda Hoey reported that annually the MCEDD Board approves a funding assessment of our member entities for the next fiscal year, as recommended by the Executive Committee. She reported that the local assessments are used to leverage additional funding for the district. Amanda reported that last year, in considering a recommendation for local assessments, the Executive Committee decided to recommend no change to local assessments but to signal a potential for an increase in FY18 to better cover the need for matching funds and maintaining service levels. She noted that, in December, the Executive Committee reviewed comparisons and provided the following general direction.

- Provide analysis on options for increases over time that would get to a supporting amount equivalent to the necessary grant match for the current programs.
- Review Ports rate to consider options that base the rates to reflect differences in the size and revenue of each Port District. MCEDD has historically assessed Ports at a flat rate.

Staff presented the following options for consideration:

1. Provide a 10% annual increase in all assessments. If population increases are generally assumed to offset inflation costs, we would reach the necessary amount of funds between years six and seven, no other factors changing.
2. Provide an increase equivalent to the amount necessary to reach required match over a five year timeframe.
3. Select option 1 or 2 as the strategy for increases in per capita assessments. Vary the amount assessed to individual Port Districts to reflect their annual revenues.

Amanda requested the committee recommend a level for FY 2018 assessments and to provide a recommendation on the strategy for local assessment changes over time to the MCEDD Board of Directors.

Discussion: Bab Hamlin stated that he liked option number 1 because it was simple and easy to understand. Bob Benton expressed concern with keeping MCEDD viable and noted that he had no issues with option 1 or 2. Ken Bailey noted that he concurred with a basic 10 percent increase. In relation to the Ports rate, he preferred a flat assessment of the total to all Ports unless the ports could offer a better suggestion to the distribution of the total amount and all agree to it. Eric Proffitt stated that it would be difficult to calculate all of the ports' different revenue and that it should be kept simple. Ken Bailey stated that, with a flat fee, the small ports may eventually pay too much. Ken Bailey asked when the assessments are paid. Amanda Hoey explained the timing, noting that given the differences in fiscal years for Oregon and Washington entities, payment varies between July and December of our fiscal year. Eric Proffitt discussed the option of a base fee and then per capita charge similar to the cities and counties assessment.

Ken Bailey moved to recommend to the MCEDD Board approval of local assessment rates for FY18 based on a 10% increase in all assessments. The Port District assessment will be distributed evenly

across all five Ports as per the historical practice unless the Ports unanimously approve of a separate distribution of the total assessment. The strategy of a 10% annual increase will continue for the next 10 years and will be reassessed at the five year point. Bob Hamlin seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Amanda reported that the next regional strategy meeting was scheduled for Thursday, March 9, 2017 in Bingen, WA at Insitu's Eagle Point facility and that RSVP's are required. She also reported that the MCEDD Loan Administration Board approved a loan of \$25,000 to Dwinell, LLC dba Dwinell Country Ales to start a brewery in Goldendale, WA.

Amanda reported that staff had met with the website update contractor, Dee Holzman, and the new website is starting to look good.

Amanda also reported that the Executive Committee agreed to complete her Executive Director review a month early, given that her travel for the Marshall Fellowship will occur during the usual month for her annual review. She noted that the Committee could expect to receive a survey from the Board Chair shortly.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS

Amanda noted the next full board meeting was scheduled for Thursday, March 23, 2017 at 4 pm in White Salmon, WA.

ADJOURN: Meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Sherry Bohn, MCEDD Office Administrator*