

MID-COLUMBIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 2, 2018
4:00 p.m.
MCEDD Office and Teleconference

ATTENDANCE:

Attending: Ken Bailey, Bob Hamlin, Rod Runyon, Eric Proffitt, Gary Thompson, Dana Peck

Absent: Bill Schmitt, Bob Benton, Rex Johnston

Staff: Amanda Hoey (Executive Director), Jessica Metta (Deputy Director), Lauren Hernandez (Office Administrator), Siri Olson (Finance Operations Manager)

CALL TO ORDER:

Ken Bailey called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. A quorum was present.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES:

Rod Runyon motioned to approve the April 4, 2018, Executive Committee meeting minutes as presented. Eric Proffitt seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Siri Olson reported the Balance Sheet for the month of March 2018 shows Accounts Receivable of \$74,784.71, which reflects receivables largely due to quarterly reports for the quarter ending March 31, 2018. Loans receivable continues to increase as more loans are funded. Accounts Payable has a balance of \$5,126.83 due to wrapping up expenditures to close out the quarter. Overall, total Assets has increased \$88,903.65 since this time last year, which is partially due to the additional revenue from transportation. Even with the addition of transportation, Current Liabilities is lower as compared to this time last year.

MCEDD's Operations Budget vs Actual shows carry forward revenue from MCCOG is currently at \$105,728.23. There is approximately \$8,000 left to receive, which will include ODOT STF funding for January-March 2018, as this payment was paid to MCCOG by Wasco County at the beginning of the quarter.

MCEDD has received \$6,448.60 of Farebox Revenue, which comes from cash customers and counter sales, and is almost double of what was anticipated before the acquisition of the LINK. Expenses associated with Building Costs and owning the Transit Center are now present, including \$571.25 of plumbing repairs. There is now the expense line Vehicle Costs with a current total of \$3,041.71, which is comprised of \$741.07 of maintenance expenses and \$2,300.64 for one month of fuel.

Bob Hamlin motioned to accept the financial report as presented. Eric Proffitt seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR REPORT:

Jessica Metta reviewed highlights from the past month including:

- Attending a meeting to plan for transportation to The Dalles Farmer's Market. A list was brainstormed of places where the LINK can reach out to people who need this service. The rides will be paid for through funding from PacificSource obtained with GOBHI's help.

Discussion: Ken Bailey asked if the fund will pay for all of a rider's fare to the Farmer's Market. Jessica explained it will. She will make fliers advertising the dial-a-ride service

which will take people from their home, to the market, and then directly home again. The market will be 9am-1pm on Saturdays June 2 through October 13. This will be one of the first times the LINK is operating on Saturdays, and the focus will be the Farmer's Market. The LINK will charge an hourly rate to cover the cost of service, and the number of rides given will be tracked.

- Hiring full-time dispatcher. A part-time dispatcher will also be hired. Deanne DePaepe was promoted to full-time. The part-time position is in the process of being filled.
- Working on submitting the Transportation Growth and Development Grant, which the Executive Committee gave the authority for Kathy Fitzpatrick, Mobility Manager, to apply for. ODOT communicated that MCEDD cannot be the applicant, but it is possible Wasco County could be. Jessica will request to pass the application through Wasco County. MCEDD will complete the application and will run the program

Discussion: Siri Olson pointed out MCEDD already has a pass-through agreement with Wasco County for other transportation items, and this grant would be similar.

- Holding the 5th annual STEM career day through GTA. Approximately 700 7th graders from all over the Gorge attended, including students from Skamania County. Sixteen different businesses participated, including the dam, fish and wildlife, and various tech companies.

PERSONNEL POLICY REVISION:

Amanda Hoey explained that MCEDD has brought on additional hourly employees and has moved to a pay schedule that pays twice per month. Now, a review of PTO is needed. A potential revision is being requested to streamline the process for PTO. Currently, there is a set amount of PTO awarded at the end of the month. This made sense when payroll was done once a month. With payroll now twice a month, one potential modification for full-time employees is to divide the set amount in half and to credit it at the end of each pay period. This would leave the same total of PTO and is something that can be easily done in Quick Books to reduce the burden on financial staff.

Dana Peck joined the meeting.

Amanda explained part-time staff present more of a challenge because of what can and cannot be done in Quick Books. One proposed change is for part-time employees to accrue PTO at a prorated percentage based on the number of regular hours worked. The challenge is that Quick Books only allows up to 2 decimal points for the hours calculated. Over the course of a year, part time employees may accrue slightly less PTO than with the current system.

Discussion: Rod Runyon asked if Quick Books was functioning correctly. Amanda replied it is functional but has limitations. Siri Olson added there are limitations with all accounting systems, and Quick Books works well for MCEDD. Bob Hamlin asked if part time hours fluctuate within the week and if fluctuating hours might cause Siri to have to calculate hours by hand. Siri explained she currently calculates all part time employees' hours manually because she has to prorate the hours. The proposed policy change will fix that problem. The new system would base PTO accrual on hours worked. Amanda stated the new system would end Siri having to do manual adjustments, which is helpful because manual adjustments have a higher propensity for error and take quite a bit of time. The Executive Committee discussed the possibility of giving employees small adjustments each quarter if their PTO accrual was off due to Quick Books only allowing 2 decimals. Amanda explained alternate options include retaining the current policy, which would require manual adjustments and would allow quarterly adjustments. Another alternative is to revise the policy for fulltime employees and to make a separate policy adjustment for part time employees. Eric Proffitt stated MCEDD has a generous PTO policy to begin with, and jumping from 17 to 22 to 26 PTO hours over a 10-11 year period is very rapid. He suggested breaking down PTO

accrual into smaller increments to match what other organizations are doing. This creates a reward as employees move through the step process. Amanda stated the current PTO situation should be addressed, and the conversation about modifying PTO accrual totals can be tabled until later. The last personnel policy review was done in depth in 2012, and small segments are revised as needed. Siri stated the revised policy will better allow part time employees to know how much they will be earning. The pro-rated hourly accrual can be confusing. Eric asked what MCCOG's policy was. Siri explained MCCOG awarded sick leave as a lump sum at the beginning of the year to part-time employees to be in compliance with sick leave laws. LINK employees are new hires to MCEDD, but part time employees were allowed to transfer 20 hours of sick time and full time employees were allowed to transfer 40 hours of sick time. The new policy would be effective May 1 for the pay period taking place May 25.

Bob Hamlin motioned to approve the revised personnel policy language regarding the accrual of PTO hours and to request the MCEDD Board of Directors ratify adoption of the language. Eric Proffitt seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Amanda Hoey explained Personnel Policy language regarding fringe benefits should be reviewed and modified. No action is needed at this time, but Amanda asked for some clarity to allow for advisement on budget development. Fringe benefits include employer contributions to a 457b retirement account, medical, dental, vision, long term disability, and life insurance. Eligibility for these benefits is established in the Personnel Policy, stating "Employees who work 20 hours per week or more shall be eligible for fringe benefits as described in this policy." Hourly employees and drivers can have hour totals change week to week and month to month, which complicates fringe benefit eligibility. Options regarding fringe benefits include basing eligibility on a yearly average, basing eligibility on a monthly average, or retaining it as written. Amanda asked the Executive Committee to consider if the 20 hour threshold for fringe benefit eligibility is still the most appropriate place for MCEDD to be.

Discussion: Ken Bailey asked if employees are eligible for fringe benefits immediately or if there is a probationary period. Amanda replied employees are eligible the first full month they work. The challenge comes when some employees have 20 hours during one week but not in the next, so eligibility is reached and then dropped throughout the month. Ken asked if a three-month period would qualify most workers. Siri Olson replied it is unsure, but looking at the data would give a better idea of who is eligible. Amanda noted the current policy language is for schedules that do not vary. Rod Runyon asked if the language change is to help keep drivers. Bob Hamlin added most people taking the part time driver positions are already retired and may not be looking for benefits. Amanda stated the policy revision would be to provide clarity not to be a retention strategy. Rod stated most part time positions never qualify for benefits, and any extra hours worked result in extra pay. Eric Proffitt suggested moving the eligibility to 30 hours a week. Amanda stated a set time period would be most helpful, like the average hours worked over a month.

Bob asked how many employees utilize the fringe benefits. Amanda explained retirement contributions of 8.75% are automatic. The more costly piece is medical benefits, which one or two part time employees are accessing. Jessica Metta noted many of the drivers were hired with the intention of being part time. Eric asked if there is an opt out incentive for benefits. Amanda stated there is one, but it does not fix the issue of eligibility, which needs to be clarified. Ken stated a three month average would offer valuable information. Hours from February, March, and April could be used. Amanda stated she will bring back a proposal with proposed language using an average of hours worked over three months to

determine eligibility for fringe benefits. It is important to think through the implications of the policy for new hires. The policy language is typically reviewed by Special Districts Association of Oregon to ensure MCEDD is in compliance with state and federal regulations.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EVALUATION:

Per ORS 192.660 (i) (Performance evaluations of public officers and employees), the MCEDD Executive Committee moved into Executive Session at 4:45 p.m.

Regular Session reconvened at 5:00 p.m.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Amanda Hoey reviewed highlights from the past month including:

- Opportunity zones have been nominated.
- MCEDD staff is working with a few jurisdictions in proceeding with the application to secure EDA disaster funding.
- MCEDD staff discussed submitting a planning proposal to EDA outlining use of additional funds, if available. EDA's response was positive and indicated they would have a conversation with MCEDD in July to provide an estimation of available resources.
- The RARE application was submitted. Amanda nominated Maggie Hanna, a past RARE, for the Marshal Memorial Fellowship, and she was selected.
- MCEDD received a request from Skyline Hospital for letter of support. MCEDD typically writes letters of support for items in the regional strategy. The letter would be for Skyline's Expanding on Excellence campaign as they look at expansion and renovation of the emergency department. The project is not in the regional strategy, but supporting health care facilities is.

Discussion: The board's consensus was to approve of MCEDD sending a letter in support of Skyline's Expanding on Excellence campaign.

- Columbia River Gorge Commission staff hosted the first meeting of the group designated to discuss the economic vitality chapter of the Management Plan. The meeting was mostly an orientation. MCEDD staff has worked with economic development staff in each county on developing language for the plan. The language should connect regional, state, and local plans, and should be legally sound. There is a solid language proposal to move forward with. Ken Bailey is active on the economic vitality board.

Discussion: Ken Bailey noted Jessica Metta was at the meeting as well. There was a wide variety of participants, so coming to a consensus may present a difficulty. Ken agreed with the idea proposed at the meeting that the Management Plan should not be a huge document but a document 2-3 pages long. Ken stated that in the document, MCEDD and county economic development departments should be clearly pointed out, as the majority of economic development in the region is done by these entities. The Columbia River Gorge Commission has a strategy, but its resources should go towards planning. Amanda stated MCEDD is prepared to drive forward comments about what staff would like the plan to look like. Dana asked if the ports have a role in this process. Amanda stated Oregon and Washington ports are represented, and MCEDD staff has been communicating with them so everyone is on the same page.

- Met with Hood River Energy Group to get more logistics about the proposal presented to the Executive Committee in April. The conversation went well regarding what a partnership would look like and the role MCEDD would play. If Hood River Energy Group is able to fully secure funding by July due to the anticipated start for the coordinator in August, and with a few other conditions, Amanda's recommendation is that it would make sense to house the energy group at MCEDD. Hood River County has space for the coordinator they could offer as in-kind

contribution. MCEDD has a flexible office space that may be used by a potential AmeriCorps RARE, but it could be shared with an energy coordinator.

Discussion: Rod Runyon asked if the funding for Hood River Energy Group is entirely outside of Hood River County's current budget problems. Amanda replied the funding is separate.

PRELIMINARY SALARY SURVEY RESULTS:

Amanda Hoey explained the salary survey is part of the 2018 Work Plan. The following comparables were accessed: National Association of Development Organizations salary survey, Nonprofit Association, Oregon Economic Development Districts, Association of Washington Cities. Amanda asked if the Executive Committee approved of MCEDD purchasing updated salary data from the Non-Profit Salary Survey. The data is more limited in application and may have more data on the Executive Director, Deputy Director, Finance and Operations Manager, and Office Administrator positions, but likely will not cover positions like Driver. The cost range is \$200-\$750 depending on if the data can be obtained as MCEDD or as Four Rivers Community Corporation.

Discussion: Ken Bailey stated for the drivers and office staff, local match data is fine. The Executive Director, Deputy Director, and Finance and Operations Manager positions are the ones MCEDD should focus on. Amanda stated the driver positions salary is good in comparison with the State of Oregon average annual salary. The last data MCEDD collected regarding salaries is from 2013. The Non-Profit Salary Survey data comes from survey results of regional and local entities. Amanda does not recommend a full study, as MCEDD does not have the resources for one. The Executive Committee agreed it is important for data to come from entities with similar demographics as our region.

Gary Thompson left the meeting.

Amanda advised it will be helpful for MCEDD staff to know if the Executive Committee would like to purchase Non-Profit Salary Survey data so staff can work through the analysis. Amanda noted for transparency purposes that some MCEDD positions are on par with other salary comparisons, and some positions are not going to be able to reach the same level as other salary comparisons given fiscal constraints. MCEDD can look at the data and determine how to address these positions. When the Deputy Director position was established, the salary was placed at a step up from a Project Manager, as that is the role it served at that time. Now, the position has taken on more responsibility. The Executive Director position should be reviewed as well, as there are salary discrepancies when compared to other salary data. If MCEDD has to make a future change in Executive Director, it would be difficult to attract candidates with the current salary range. The Loan Fund Manager salary is in line, and the Dispatch and Driver positions are as well, though this could change when the Transportation Package dollars become available.

Eric Proffitt moved to approve the purchase of data from the Non-Profit Salary Survey to aid the salary study not to exceed \$750. Rod Runyon seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Amanda stated the salary survey results will be used to advise the budget to give the board flexibility. Ken asked if the Jessica Metta, Deputy Director, is at the top step of the salary schedule. Amanda answered she is not. Ken suggested steps need to be added to the Executive Director position, which may give a guideline on which direction to head with other positions. The Executive Committee came to the consensus to approve of MCEDD staff preparing a step proposal for review and recommendation.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS; COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATES:

No updates were heard.

The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for June 6 at 4:00 p.m.

ADJOURN: Meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Lauren Hernandez, Office Administrator*