



**City of McMinnville**  
**Planning Department**  
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# MINUTES

**June 9, 2021**  
**McMinnville Economic Vitality Leadership Council**  
**Regular Meeting**

**4:00 pm**  
**Zoom Meeting**  
**McMinnville, Oregon**

**Members Present:** Carson Benner, Chris Chenoweth, Jodi Christensen, Walt Gowell, Mike Morris, John Deitz, Heather Miller, Jeff Towery, and Deven Paolo

**Members Absent:** Robert Banagay, Ellen Brittan, Dani Chisholm, Gerardo Ochoa, Steve Patterson, and Ty Rollins

**Staff Present:** Heather Richards, Heather Hadley-Blank MEDP, Jeff Knapp, Gioia Goodrum, Dave Rucklos

**Others Present** Scott Hill – Mayor and Kellie Menke – City Councilor

## 1. Call to Order

Chair Benner called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

## 2. Citizen Comments

None

## 3. Discussion

- Meeting with Biz Oregon Representatives

Arthur Chaput, Regional Development Officer for Business Oregon, introduced himself. Today the group would be discussing state resources and how they could be leveraged for projects in McMinnville.

Planning Director Richards outlined the Council membership and the three priority projects of the Council. These projects were: the Third Street Improvement Project, Innovation Center, and data project to understand better who was choosing to work in McMinnville and what employee needs were.

Wes Cochran, US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration, explained who EDA was, their mission, and what they did. He reviewed their investment priorities and funding programs. The planning branch supported local

organizations and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy captured existing economic conditions and devised strategies for economic resilience, growth, and sustainability. The Public Works branch empowered distressed communities to revitalize, expand, and upgrade their physical infrastructure to attract new industry, encourage business expansion, diversify local economies, and generate or retain long term, private sector jobs and investment. He then gave examples of past projects and Cares Act funding awards. EDA would also receive \$3 billion in ARPA funding. He described what communities/applicants should be doing now to get ready for EDA ARPA funding. He then discussed economic development integration and EDA resources.

There was discussion regarding the requirements for EDA funding and how EDA could help with the Innovation Center and resiliency projects.

Stephanie Prybyl, Business Oregon, presented information on the Ports Program and the steps if McMinnville wanted to become an inland port and create a ports district.

Planning Director Richards said McMinnville had looked into becoming an extension of the Port of Portland.

Karen Homolac, Program Manager for the Brownfields Program, explained the Brownfields Program, funding assistance, and application process.

There was discussion regarding help with the Third Street project and participation with DEQ and EPA.

Becky Baxter, Special Public Works Fund Policy Coordinator for Business Oregon, described how the Special Public Works Fund could be used for the Third Street improvements and feasibility study for the Innovation Center.

There was discussion regarding other programs that might help with the projects.

- Priority #1 – Data Collection *(led by Jeff Knapp and Gioia Goodrum)*

Gioia Goodrum, McMinnville Area Chamber of Commerce, discussed the Economic Vitality Leadership Council Action Plan and goals. One of the goals was to accelerate growth in living wage jobs across a balanced array of industry sectors and one of the first actions was to survey and collect data and then market amenities that employees needed as an attractor for workforce and business development. In McMinnville, many employees came into the City for work, many employees left the City for work, and some lived and worked in McMinnville.

Heather Hadley-Blank, MEDP, shared the area labor force numbers from the Oregon Employment Department for 2018 as well as outflow and inflow job characteristics, job counts by places, and where workers were employed.

There was discussion regarding the margin of error and trends for these numbers.

Ms. Goodrum reviewed the objective to maintain and enhance McMinnville's positive business climate. One way to do that was a survey of businesses and their employees. She listed the possible questions to ask on the survey and if the Council had other suggestions or information they wanted captured.

There was discussion regarding using the survey questions from Newberg's workforce housing survey, purpose of the survey, who would take the survey, what data they were trying to collect, reaching out to the real estate community for data, using the data they already had and comparing it to other cities, specific questions to ask on the survey, and having employers distribute the survey to employees or creating a focus group.

Chair Benner left the meeting.

#### **4. Council Member Comments**

There was discussion regarding the benefits of the information received today.

#### **5. Staff Comments**

None

#### **6. Rumor Mill**

None

#### **7. Adjournment**

Vice Chair Chenoweth adjourned the meeting at 6:07 p.m.