



Eastern Oregon Border Region Economic Development Board

October 2, 2023

Ontario, OR

Attendance

Members Present: Chair Dana Young, Taylor Rembowski, Nickie Shira, Bill Johnson, Melisa Drugge, Business Oregon

Members Present Via Zoom: Montessa Young, Ron Haidle

Staff Present: Shawna Peterson, Executive Director; Emily Conlon, Board Coordinator

Guests Present: Derrick Noll, Energy Trust of Oregon; Feather Sams-Huesties, Business Oregon, Dennis Buttice, Pioneer Place; Corey Crismon, Pioneer Place, Dan Kauffman, Fry Foods

Guests Present Via Zoom: Ken Dippman, Fry Foods, Inc.; Dawn Hert, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development

Meeting was called to order at 3:01pm.

Welcome, Introductions, Minute Approval

Chair Dana Young opened the meeting and board members and guests made introductions.

Taylor Rembowski made a motion to approve the August 7th meeting minutes. Nickie Shira seconded the motion and all present board members voted in favor.

Public Comment

Corey Crismon from Pioneer Place thanked the board for their support of Pioneer Place. He notified the board that he recently submitted an application for the Community Improvement Planning Grant that the board will be reviewing in the coming month.

Fiscal Report

As September 28, 2023, the Border Board fund has a total of \$8,225,771.48. The board also reviewed Executive Director Shawna Peterson's financial report detailing expenses and disbursements for the month.

Executive Director Update

Executive Director Shawna Peterson submitted an executive summary and reported her activities since last month's meeting.

The current cycle for the Edge, Community Improvement Planning, and Ready Workforce Mobilization grants have had a lot of interest and the board will be reviewing at least 10

applications in the coming month. Executive Director Peterson recently submitted the board's annual report to the legislature. She also asked the board to begin considering potential legislative concepts for the next session. In the month of September, she presented at the Ontario Chamber Leadership Program to discuss border board programs. She was successful in approving Vale School District's participation in the board's housing incentive programs. Executive Director Peterson also began her participation in the County's SB16/70 advisory panel along with other community members.

Application Review: Fry Foods, Inc.

Fry Foods, Inc. submitted a Strategic Fund Application requesting \$1 million from the board for a \$6.2 million dollar project at the Fry Foods' Ontario site. The application received an overall score of 82.9pts / 100pts from the board.

Discussion began regarding the Strategic Fund application from Fry Foods, Inc. Discussion included the following points:

- Job creation and types of jobs created. The board discussed the number and types of jobs created by this project.
- Innovation. The board discussed the innovativeness of the project, and how board members scored this category of the scoring sheet. Melisa Drugge encouraged the board to score each application with some level of subjectivity, as projects in this category of applications will vary.
- Border Region Image. The board discussed how the project improves the image of the Border Region, and how board members scored this category of the scoring sheet. Melisa Drugge encouraged the board to score each application with some level of subjectivity, as projects in this category of applications will vary.

Fry Foods representatives Ken Dippman and Dan Kauffman attended the meeting to answer questions and provide comments on the application. Ken Dippman provided insight into job creation and wages, property and payroll taxes, and workforce availability and skills. Dan Kauffman commented on job creation and the company's benefit packages.

After discussion, Bill Johnson made a motion to approve Fry Food's \$1 million request broken down as \$500,000 in an infrastructure loan and \$500,000 in a forgivable loan with a job creation requirement, and for Executive Director Peterson to engage Fry Foods in negotiation of the award. Taylor Rembowski seconded the motion and all present board members voted in favor.

Incentive Program Application Approvals

The board considered six applications for the Competitive Housing Incentive Program (CHIP) and one application for the tax incentive portion of the Competitive Housing Incentive Program. After discussion, the Nickie Shira made a motion to approve applications 42-46 of the CHIP in the amount of \$6,000 for a total of \$30,000. Taylor Rembowski seconded the motion and all present board members voted in favor. The board will gather more information regarding the application

submittal period of application 41 and be prepared to discuss it further at the November board meeting.

Taylor Rembowski made a motion to approve application 40 of the tax incentive portion of the Competitive Housing Incentive Program in the amount of \$1,500. Nickie Shira seconded the motion and all present board members voted in favor.

SB 16/70 Advisory Panel – Border Board participation

The board discussed border board participation in the County’s SB16/70 advisory panel. Commitment will consist of one two-hour meeting once a month at the Malheur County Courthouse. Bill Johnson made a motion to appoint Executive Director Shawna Peterson as the board’s representative on the SB16/70 advisory panel. Taylor Rembowski seconded the motion and all present board members voted in favor.

Work Groups: Business Incubator

The Business Incubator Work Group is not actively meeting at this time. The work group is looking forward to seeing how the County’s economic development position will be filled, and how this position may play a role in the board’s business incubator concept.

Work Groups: Leadership Program

The Leadership Program Work Group met once during the month of September and is making good progress on the concept. At their September meeting, the work group discussed identifying target participants, the application process, incentivizing participation, and program specifics.

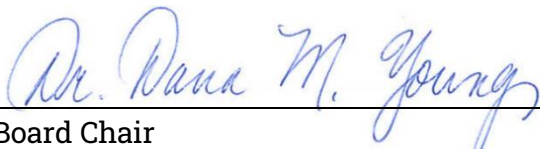
Executive Director Peterson is in communication with Rural Development Initiatives (RDI) and has a meeting scheduled in October to discuss integrating RDI’s program into the board’s leadership program in some way.

The Work Group asked board members to consider prospective candidates for the program and to send their nominations to Board Staff.

Next Meeting / Agenda

The next board meeting is November 6th, 2023. Agenda items will include a Fiscal Report from Oregon Community Foundation, an executive director update, and grant applications review.

Meeting closed at 5:10pm.

Approved by: 
Dana Young, Board Chair _____ Date
Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Board