



Eastern Oregon Border Region Economic Development Board

January 8, 2024

Ontario, OR

Attendance

Members Present: Nickie Shira, Taylor Rembowski, Ron Haidle, Andrew Maeda, Montessa Young

Members Present Via Zoom: Dana Young, Board Chair

Staff Present Via Zoom: Emily Conlon, Board Coordinator

Staff Present: Shawna Peterson, Executive Director

Guests Present: Travis Johnson, Malheur County Sherriff; Michael Iwai, City of Ontario Chief of Police; Lindsay Grosvenor, Oregon Food Bank; Dan Cummings, City of Ontario City Manager; Jim Maret, City of Nyssa City Manager; Tim Stephenson, Vale Textiles; Donald Ballou, City of Nyssa Chief of Police; Tory Stinett, Greater Eastern Oregon Development Corporation; Feather Sams-Huesties, Business Oregon; Clint Benson, City of Ontario Fire Chief

Meeting was called to order at 3:00pm.

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 December 4th 2023 meeting minutes. Ron Haidle seconded the motion and all present board members voted in favor.

Public Comment

Tory Stinett with the Greater Eastern Oregon Development Corporation introduced herself to the board. She is currently working on a comprehensive economic development plan for Malheur and surrounding counties.

Fiscal Report

As December 31, 2023, the Border Board fund has a total of \$5,896,749.39. 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. She remains in personal contact with Senator Findley and Representative Owens as they had to Salem for legislative days. She along with Courtney Warner-Crowell of the Oregon Governor's office conducted interviews with four strong candidates for Bill

Johnson's board seat. Courtney will continue that process in making recommendations to the County Court. Peterson continues to work on logistics of the Business Incubator concept, and is planning to pick up with Work Group discussions once Bill Johnson's board seat is filled.

Executive Director Peterson is scheduled to present at REAL Oregon in February, and will be meeting with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) representatives when they conduct their site visit to Malheur County later this month.

Guest Business Update – Tim Stephenson

Tim Stephenson gave the Border Board an update on a new business coming to the Border Region. Formerly from Adrian, Stephenson has come back to the Border Region from Portland to start a new business in Vale. He has plans of purchasing property on the eastside of Vale and start a mushroom plant that will produce mycelium leather. Stephenson emphasized the sustainable production of mycelium leather over cow leather, and is excited about the potential to tap into the mycelium leather market early on. Stephenson, along with board member Taylor Rembowski, excited about the potential for clean job creation in the Border Region.

Incentive Program Application Approvals

The board considered one application for the Competitive Housing Incentive Program (CHIP), one application for the Property Improvement Rebate Program (PIRP), and two applications for the tax incentive portion of the Competitive Housing Incentive Program. Ron Haidle made a motion to approve CHIP application #53 in the amount of \$6,000, PIRP application #10 in the amount of \$20,000, and CHIP re-applications #66 and #67 in the amount of \$1,500 each, for a total of \$29,000. Nickie Shira seconded the motion and all present board members voted in favor.

Taylor Rembowski suggested extending an invitation to attend an upcoming board meeting to Adele Schaffeld to discuss how the board can promote the housing incentive programs. Executive Director Peterson will reach out to Adele Schaffeld as well as the City of Ontario Building Department.

Board Strategic Fund Application

The board reviewed a Strategic Fund Grant Application from the City of Ontario Police Department (OPD). The OPD is requesting \$428,037.84 from the border board to implement the use of Motorola Flex software across the City of Ontario Police Department, the City of Ontario Fire Department, the Malheur County Sheriff's Office, and the City of Nyssa Police Department. As provided by Police Chief Iwai and Sheriff Johnson, this update will allow for standardized digital reporting that can be accessed in real-time by all dispatchers and working officers from their patrol vehicles; the project will greatly enhance communication and technology across local law enforcement agencies.

Discussion regarding this application included the following points:

- **Ensuring all patrol cars will have laptops in them.** A portion of grant funds will be used to purchase laptops for patrol vehicles.
- **Opportunity to have access to accurate data, eliminating manual data collection.** The Motorola Flex update will allow officers to input standardized reporting into the database which will update in real time and can be accessed across the participating law

enforcement agencies. The applicant emphasized that this aspect of the project will save time and resources, as they have previously had to rely on manual entries to collect data. Having accurate reporting data enhances law enforcement's ability to ensure safety in the Border Region.

- **Budgeting to sustain the software update.** The applicant provided budgeting that shows how they will maintain the software and technology updates in the future and after grant funding is spent.
- **Reporting requirements back to the Border Board to update on progress and project success.** The Board proposed working in collaboration with the applicant to access data relating to the board's work and economic development in the Border Region as a reporting requirement from the applicant.
- **Opportunity for rural and other local fire departments and law enforcement agencies to participate in the future.** While the applicant is currently comprised of the Ontario Police Department, the Ontario Fire Department, Malheur County Sheriff's Office, and the Nyssa Police Department, there is the opportunity for other local law enforcement agencies to participate in the collaborative software update in the future.

After discussion, Ron Haidle made a motion to approve the Ontario Police Department's Strategic Fund grant request in the amount \$428,037.84. Dana Young seconded the motion and all present board members voted in favor.

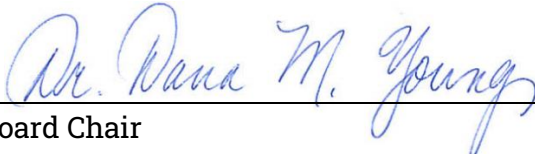
Budget Discussion

Executive Director Peterson presented a draft multi-year budget for board review. They discussed more aggressive spending in the next 3 years and creating the potential to receive further funding from the legislature in the future. The board will review the budget and provide comments and suggestions to Executive Director Peterson prior to the February board meeting.

Next Meeting / Agenda

The next board meeting is February 5th, 2024. Agenda items will include a Fiscal Report from Oregon Community Foundation, an executive director update, a legislative update, and time to discuss the housing incentive programs with local building officials.

Meeting closed at 4:55pm.

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