

The Economic Alliance
Board Meeting
May 27, 2009

Attending Board Members:

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| Jim Martin, Chairman | Coleen Couch, Treasurer | Rich Watson |
| John Andrist, Past Chairman | Nan Kallunki, Secretary | Gail Howe |
| Hank Raymond, 1st Vice Chair | Andy Lampe | |
| Lael Duncan, 2 nd Vice Chair | George Brady | |

Absent Board Members:

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| Kate Jones | Jerome Thiel | Michael Blake |
| Susan Cooksey | Tom Gehring | Kary Nichols |
| Mary Watson | Pam Leslie | |
| Nespelem/Coulee Dam Area #1 & #2 Vacant | At-Large #2 Vacant | |

Staff & Guests:

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| Carolyn Davis, Admin. Assistant | Sheila Corsen, Omak Chronicle |
| Kyle Desautel, Colville Tribal Planning Director | Jon Wyss, Gebber Farms |
| John Belcher, Principal Omak High School | |

Chairman, Jim Martin called the meeting to order and introductions were made.

Approval of Minutes: Coleen Couch made a motion to approve the minutes from March 24, 2009 and April 22, 2009. Lael Duncan seconded. Motion passed.

Board Business:

Vacant Positions: There are still two vacant positions for the Grand Coulee/Nespelem area. Kyle Desautel and Kanee St. Paul are both interested in these positions. John Belcher, Omak High School Principal is still interested in the vacant At-Large #2 position vacated by Bob Risinger. Lael Duncan made a motion to seat John Belcher to the remaining term of the vacant At-Large Position #2. Rich Watson seconded. Motion passed.

Employee Handbook: Jim Martin stated that this has been reviewed by the Executive Committee and send to the entire board for review with minor changes. Hank Raymond made a motion to approve the Employee Handbook. Rich Watson seconded. Motion passed.

Check Signing Authority: Because of the change of officers, a new signature card needed to be filled out for the bank. We need to remove Bob Risinger and Pam Leslie and add Coleen Couch and Nan Kullunki. Lael Duncan made a motion to remove Bob Risinger and Pam Leslie from the check signing authority and add Treasurer Coleen Couch and Secretary Nan Kullunki. Rich Watson Seconded. Motion passed.

Executive Director Evaluation: Jim Martin recapped the recent evaluation of the Executive Director by the Executive Committee. They used a tool provided by the Okanogan County Community Action Council. A written evaluation will be placed in Roni Holder-Diefenbach's personnel file. The Executive Committee also recommended a 3% increase in pay for the Executive Director retroactive back to the anniversary date of hire. Discussion about completing this evaluation prior to setting the budget for the year. Lael Duncan made a motion to give the Executive Director a 3% increase in pay from the anniversary date of hire to May and then a 5% increase from June and forward. Hank Raymond seconded. Motion passed, with one opposed.

Old Business:

2009 Workplan Development: John Andrist made a motion to approve the 2009 Workplan. Lael Duncan seconded. Motion pass.

Guest Speaker: Jon Wyss with Gebbers Farms spoke about the expansion project of Gebbers. This company will be 100 years old and will be celebrating that with different activities. The new building in Brewster is a pre-size, cold storage, and cherry operation. This will help pack fruit locally rather than shipping to Chelan and Douglas Counties. The new building is very energy efficient. The Pre-size operation should be operating in about two weeks and then have a least a temporary cherry processing when season starts. Hope to be up and running at full capacity by fall. Jon stated that the new pre-size will reduce staff, but new packing operations will make up the difference. They will have about 960 – 1,100 employees, not counting seasonal employees.

Jon also spoke about the updating of the Okanogan County Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance. He stated that the Planning Commission has worked many long hours to review the Comprehensive Plan. He felt that the Comprehensive Plan was an overview and the Zoning Ordinances were the blue print. These documents are still in the planning process and there is plenty of time to offer comments. He felt that as you read through the draft that some sections are missing because they are not finished yet. Jon spoke about how this document will impact businesses in Okanogan County. Okanogan County is not required to plan under the Growth Management Act because we have a population under 50,000. Projected growth for the next 30 years it is expected that Okanogan County will still be under 50,000 population. It was asked how the Tribe plays into the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that the Tribe is minimum requirements, although the Tribe does have an intergovernmental agreement with Okanogan County. The plan determines where businesses can grow and cities can expand. He encouraged everyone to read the latest version so they aren't commenting on something that has already been corrected. Comment as a private citizen and it is best to offer alternative language. He encouraged everyone to be respectful in comments and mindful that others have different opinions.

Executive Director Reports:

Roni Holder-Diefenbach, Executive Director, spoke about current activities. She has attended a lot of meeting in May – VIA 97; Worforce Development Council, Non Profit Summit, Economic Recovery & Transformation Forum, NCW EDD & RC&D, Worker Retraining Advisory Committee, and Community Survivors. Roni stated that she has heard the same message around the state: The importance of collaboration, strategic planning, regionalism, and partnership. She has also been working on hosting three training opportunities in June: (1) Economic Development Commission; (2) Government Contracting & 8a Contracting; (3) Exporting & Internation Trade training. Roni also reported that in May our SBDC Business Advisor, Lew Blakeney, has met with 13 new and existing clients seeking assistance in startup, expansion or retention business services.

Roni also reported that we have heard back from the Washington Economic Development Association (WEDA) that funding for Associate Development Organizations (ADOs), such as the Economic Alliance, would be less than anticipated. She also thanked the Colville Tribal Enterprise Corporation (CTEC) for their contribution to the Economic Alliance.

Roni stated that she sent out an email regarding the annual Golf Scramble and received three responses. Also discussed whether to hold the annual event with the Executive Committee. It was felt that we should look at doing something else rather than this time consuming event with little return on investment. Holding a business recognition event of some sort was discussed. He stated that he is looking for volunteers to sit on an ad hoc committee to look at development of a business recognition dinner or some such event.

Standing Committee Reports:

Treasurers Report: A monthly cash flow was distributed to Board members. Coleen Couch reported that the budget is still inline with projections. Doing good with carryover month-to-month, which helps the budget.

Communication Committee: No Report.

Infrastructure Committee: Andy Lampe reported that the county did sign a contract with the town of Twisp on the Glover Street Project. This was one of the approved projects at the last prioritization process.

Business Education Committee: WorkSource is still holding computer classes and has vouchers for the Microsoft Elevate America e-learning project. This provides access to online training courses.

New Business:

Hank Raymond reported that the Tribe will open an IT center with 10 computers in Nespelem. This will be open to the public in the evening.

Meeting adjourned 1:00 p.m.

Next Meeting June 24, 2009 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Koala Street Grill. Please mark your calendars!

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Davis, Administrative Assistant