

The Economic Alliance
Board Meeting
December 3, 2014
Koala Street Grill, Omak

Attending Board Members:

Kurt Danison, City Planner
Coleen Couch, Treasurer,
Janet Wilson, City of Okanogan
Jeff Brender, NCW Business Loan Fund
Lael Duncan, OCCAC

Dr. Erik Swanson, Omak School Superintendent
George Brady, Cascade Biological Supply, Pateros
Ted Piccolo, NNDF
Arnie Marchand, Oroville VIC

Absent Board Members:

Kyle Desautel, Chairman, CCT Planner
Amanda Jackson-Mott, Secretary
Alison Gillette, Twisp Works
Lanie Johns, Clerk of the Board, Ok County
Chris Branch, OCTC Rep
John Andrist, No. Cascades Broadcasting

Melanie Wyss, Gebbers Farm
Stacey Luckenmeyer (for Mary Watson, WVC)
Sheilah Kennedy, County Commissioner
Nespelem/Coulee Dam Position #2 – Vacant
Methow Valley #2 -- Vacant
Colville Tribal Fed. Corp. -- Vacant

Staff & Guests:

Roni Holder-Diefenbach, Executive Director
Carolyn Davis, Admin. Assistant
Scott Furman, Okanogan County Assessor
Deana Zakar, Kinross Gold

Kelly Scaf, Okanogan Co. Transportation
Ann Davidson, Pateros
Jacque Beamer, BrandQuery

Kurt Danison, 2nd Vice Chair, called the meeting to order and asked for introductions.

Approval of Minutes

Lael Duncan made a motion to approve minutes from the September 24, 2014 and October 22, 2014. Coleen Couch seconded. Motion passed.

Board Business

Election of Board Members:

It was suggested to move Melanie Wyss to the South County Position and Lael Duncan made a motion to accept the move and re-elect the following positions for an additional three year position. Ted Piccolo seconded. Motion passed.

- Kurt Danison, City Representative #1
- Amanda Jackson, Arts Community Representative
- Stacey Luckensmeyer, At Large #2 Representative
- Arnie Marchand, North County Area Representative #2
- George Brady, South County Area Representative #1

Additional Vacant Positions

- _____, Nespelem/Coulee Dam Representative #2 (term expires 2017)
- _____, Methow Valley Representative #2 (term expires 2017)
- _____, Colville Tribal Federal Corporation Representative (term expires 2016)
- _____, Central Okanogan County Representative #1 (term expires 2015)

Nomination of Board Officers for a one year term:

- Chairman, Kyle Desautel
- 1st Vice Chair, Lanie Johns
- 2nd Vice Chair, Kurt Danison
- Secretary, Lael Duncan
- Treasurer, Janet Wilson

Kurt Danison called for additional nominations from the floor. There were none and Arnie Marchand made a motion to approve the nominations as presented. Coleen Couch seconded. Motion passed.

Roni Holder-Diefenbach also asked if each Board member would select an alternate that could attend Board meetings if they were unable to attend.

Guest Speaker

Jacque Beamer, owner of BrandQuery, spoke about the second phase of the emergency tourism market that was to start in February. She spoke about why this two phase approach was taken to promote the area after the fire. She stated that they wanted to touch on the “good news” from the burned area. The TV campaign was used to saturate the market along with a social media campaign. BrandQuery had to feed posts to the Okanogan County Tourism Council and then the Tourism Council would post them on their Facebook and other social media sites. The second phase might be different depending on what the committee decides to do. Word of mouth is the strongest form of advertising. There is \$38,000 left and BrandQuery has a plan, but needs to have a sit down meeting with the local group to figure out the best way to go. It is hoped to have a meeting in January.

Guest Speaker

Deana Zakar, Kinross Gold Government Relations Specialist for the past five years, spoke about the mill and the upcoming mill closure in 2015. Kinross Gold employs 215 people, plus contracts with an additional 130 local businesses. From the socio-economic study that was done, this equates to \$19 million in direct payroll and \$27 million in total overall payroll in Okanogan and Ferry Counties. The Majority of employees want to stay in the local area and they are looking to see if these employees would qualify for re-training. Kinross has been holding meetings in Republic and Oroville to minimize the impacts of the closure and they are holding business startup training at the Republic High School. Currently Kinross pays \$1.4 million in property taxes and will pay a lot less when the mine closes, which will be a direct loss to Okanogan County. Charitable contributions that they have done over the past years will also be impacted. Scott Furman, Okanogan County Assessor spoke about how lack of Kinross Gold taxes would affect every taxing district especially in the Oroville area, such as the School District, EMS District, and Hospital District.

Executive Director Report

(see attachment #1). Roni Holder-Diefenbach reported that during November, we received word from the Department of Commerce that Omak Wood Products was awarded an additional \$50,000 from the Governors Workstart Funding for additional training of the new Plywood line. She has also been working with David Niessner on contract details, as this is a totally separate contract then the first award. The initial \$100,000 contract will be closed out by the end of December. The new funds will have to be spent by June 30, 2015.

Roni Holder-Diefenbach reported that Jennifer Korfiatis, Economic District Coordinator, has resigned. The District is looking for a new coordinator, but is also doing a re-visioning for the District and she sits on this committee.

Roni Holder-Diefenbach reported that she, Kurt Danison, and Chris Branch will be evaluating the Public Facility Funding (.09) process. They hope to go through a ranking process the first of the year and get priority infrastructure projects from each of the cities.

Standing Committee Reports

Finance/Budget Committee: Coleen Couch reported that the Economic Alliance has built a good reserve, but in 2015 we would probably not be receiving funds from Kinross Gold and the ADO funds from the Department of Commerce will probably see a 3 to 5% reduction.

Infrastructure Committee: No Report

Business Education Committee: No Report.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Meeting adjourned 1:00 p.m.

Next Meeting January 28, 2015, 11:00 – 1:00, at the Koala Street Grill. Please mark your calendars!

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Davis, Administrative Assistant

Attachment #1



ECONOMIC ALLIANCE
November 2014
Executive Director Report:

November:

- NCW EDD
- NCW Workforce Development Meeting
- Wenatchee Valley College-Omak Foundation
- WVC-Vocational Education Committee
- NCW Business Loan Fund Credit Committee Meeting
- Destination Based Sales Tax Training
- Washington Federal-Business Banking
- Worksouce/Kinross
- Board Elections

November has been a very busy month with the Holiday Season here. We have been working on a re-visioning committee made up of different entities to discuss the restructure of the NCW EDD. This is very important as it is the organization that represents regional economic development in our area.

We also received word from the Department of Commerce that Omak Wood Products was awarded an additional \$50,000.00 from the Governors Workstart Funding for additional training of the new Plywood line. I have been working with David Niessner on contract details, as this is a totally separate contract then the first awarded. We will also be closing out the initial \$100,000 contract by the end of December. These funds will have to be spent by June 30, 2015.

This month we have been also working on filling our vacant board positions which has been a priority. We have a few long standing vacant positions from the Coulee Dam/Nespelem area as well as the Methow Valley. We hope to get word by the end of December on who will fill those positions. The Winthrop Chamber and CTFC are assisting us in locating representatives from their areas.

The Economic Alliance partnered with the EDD and WVC to host the Destination Sales Tax Training this month and we had 4 individuals attend. We are working with the DOR to identify other training opportunities for small businesses that we can bring to the Okanogan County area.

I have also been working with the EA Infrastructure chair and vice chair to update the .09 Prioritization Process application so we can start the process to gather projects to rank from our county. We might not have funding at this time but we understand the importance of ranking these projects for other outside funding opportunities.