

The Economic Alliance Board Meeting

June 25, 2014

Koala Street Grill, Omak

Attending Board Members:

Kyle Desautel, Chairman, CCT Planner
Kurt Danison, City Planner
Coleen Couch, Treasurer, Mgr. Umpqua Bank, Brewster
Janet Wilson, City of Okanogan
Melanie Wyss, Gebbers Farm

Chris Branch, OCTC Rep.
Sheilah Kennedy, County Commissioner
Rich Watson, NCW Business Loan Fund
Mary Watson, WVC

Absent Board Members:

Alison Gillette, Twisp Works
Amanda Jackson-Mott, Secretary
Dr. Erik Swanson, Omak School Superintendent
Debbie Atuk, Business Director, Colville Tribal Federal Corp.
John Andrist, No. Cascades Broadcasting
Lanie Johns, Clerk of the Board, Okanogan County

George Brady, Cascade Biological Supply, Pateros
Arnie Marchand, Oroville VIC
Lael Duncan, OCCAC
Ted Piccolo, NNDF
Nespelem/Coulee Dam Position #2 – Vacant
Methow Valley #2 -- Vacant

Staff & Guests:

Roni Holder-Diefenbach, Executive Director
Carolyn Davis, Admin. Assistant
Nancy Nash, WorkSource

Libby Harrison, Mayor Pateros
Jon Wyss, Gebbers Farm
David Niessner, Omak Wood Products

Chairman, Kyle Desautel called the meeting to order and asked for introductions.

Kurt Danison made a motion to approve the minutes from May 28, 2014. Chris Branch seconded. Motion passed.

Guest Speaker

Jon Wyss spoke about the newest golf course in Okanogan County, Gamble Sands. He stated that it will be opened for business on August 1 and reservation can be made online at www.gamblesands.com. They recently had a soft opening and had 72 golfers, local as well as far away as Las Vegas. Everyone really liked the area and it took a lot of volunteers to help with the soft opening. He thanks Roni Holder-Diefenbach for helping. Gamble Sands is also doing stay & play packages with local lodging establishments. They also invited local restaurants to set up a booth to provide everyone with a taste of the fare and Gebbers Beef provided beef for the BBQ. Gebbers Beef is also now distributing locally.

Jon Wyss also reported that a contract has been signed with the Boys & Girls Club to bring a club to Brewster. They will start with a portable at the school and hopefully will take over the community center by October.

David Niessner, manager of the Omak Wood Products, thanked Roni Holder-Diefenbach and the Economic Alliance for helping them obtain funding to bring employees up to speed with the equipment. In February they added the second shift on the green end and produced more veneer. In April they produced 11.5 million sq. ft. of veneer. Omak Wood Products has a contract with the Tribe and they get 90 to 95% of their lumber from them, but they are always looking for new markets. They hope to be in full production soon and up to 200 employees when they start to make plywood. They need additional training funds to get the third shift operating and he will continue to work with the Economic Alliance and the state to try to secure these funds.

Executive Director Report

Roni Holder-Diefenbach distributed a report for June (see attachment #1). She has been busy with lots of meetings during the past month. The Workforce Development Council met in Okanogan at American Produce Express and Richard Johnson gave a presentation on number of graduates working with WorkSource. Roni reported that she made a presentation to the Omak Chamber along with the Okanogan County Tourism Council. A quarterly presentation was also made to the county commissioners. She put together the information on the history of the prioritization process and the .09 funds. She is still trying to get information from most of the cities about their current projects and an update of projects that have been funded by the .09 funds. Kurt Danison stated that he is working with his communities to get a report done.

Roni reported that a 8(a) certification briefing has been scheduled for July 16, 10 – noon in Okanogan. This is in conjunction with the PTAC from Spokane.

Roni reported that the brief business survey for the business community in Okanogan County was completed. This survey gathered information on what the businesses needs are for 2014. The number one concern for businesses in our area was government regulations.

Board Business

Vacant Positions: The Economic Alliance has two vacant positions on the Board, the Nespelem/Coulee Dam #2 position, the Methow Valley #2 position.

Meeting Schedule: Roni Holder-Diefenbach spoke about the difficulty of getting a quorum during the summer months for our Board meetings. She suggested that we skip meetings in July and August. Chris Branch made a motion to skip the Economic Alliance Board meeting in July and August. Rich Watson seconded. Motion passed. The next meeting will be scheduled for the fourth Wednesday of September.

Standing Committee Reports

Treasurers Report: An updated budget spreadsheet was available on the back table with actual through May. Treasurer Coleen Couch reported that we received a nice contribution from Kinross Gold of \$10,000. Roni Holder-Diefenbach reported that she is still working with CTFC to get a MOU signed to help them with their industrial area. If this is signed we should be able to bill them for the \$2,000 that we have projected in our budget.

Communication Committee: No report.

Infrastructure Committee: No report.

Business Education Committee: Mary Watson reported that there were 14 students that graduated that went through the Aero Space class. She reported that a welding class will be added this fall and also a computer repair class. They are also looking at adding a drafting and blue print reading classes. The welding class would be a one year certificate class. They are also looking at other possible classes in subjects such as Outdoor Recreation Management, Light Diesel, or programmable logic course. These would be “work-ready” kinds of courses. The WVC at Omak is expanding and will have additional classrooms this fall. The WVC Foundation has made it possible to purchase the property across from the college and one building will be torn down and a prefab structure will be constructed.

Old Business

Roni Holder-Diefenbach reported that the Economic Alliance finished the draft of the 2014 Fact Sheet on Okanogan County. We need to get some quotes for printing.

New Business

Rich Watson reported that the NCW Business Loan Fund was awarded a grant from USDA for \$142,700. This will fund a \$30,000 pilot project to introduce entrepreneurial education in four high schools. This may include actually holding classes or it may include mentoring teachers or others in how to incorporate entrepreneurial principles in various classes. \$112,700 will be earmarked for loans with a particular focus on local foods and healthy food. This does not include production but does include retail, wholesale, value added, etc. Rich was also invited to a conference by the White House Rural Council in Washington D.C. to speak about the unmet need for investments in rural America. This conference is scheduled for July 24.

Kyle Desautel reported that Tribe has started construction of the 120,000 sq. ft. casino. There will be 300 construction jobs for this year-long project and when opened, the new casino/motel will employ 300.

Rich Watson made a motion to adjourn. Chris Branch seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned 12:55 p.m.

Next Meeting September 24, 2014, 11 – 1, at the Koala Street Grill. Please mark your calendars!

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Davis, Administrative Assistant



June:

- NCW Workforce Development Meeting
- NCW Economic Development District
- OWP/Dept of Commerce-Workstart funding
- NCW EDD Prioritization Process
- Wenatchee Valley College Foundation Meeting
- PTAC-Training opportunity in government contracting
- Presentation to Okanogan County Commissioners
- Omak Chamber Presentation
- Gamble Sands Soft Opening
- NCW Business Loan Fund Meeting-6.27.14

During the month of June the Economic Alliance has been busy! We are working with Washington PTAC and the SBA to hold an 8a community briefing in Okanogan in July. We have also participated in several community meetings on workforce development and training opportunities. Carolyn and I had the opportunity to present to the Omak Chamber of Commerce on the Economic Alliance and the Okanogan County Tourism Council.

Early in the month I started preparing for our quarterly presentation to the Okanogan County Commissioners and as requested at the last board meeting sent an email out to all the municipalities in the County asking for an update on previously funded .09 projects as well as updated list of current projects that they would have if the fund was available. I only received 2 back by our presentation and that was from the City of Omak and the Town of Winthrop. The OCC were very happy to also receive from the Economic Alliance some of the historical documents on the .08/.09 funding and we will continue to work with them to monitor this fund with the hope that there will be options in the future to go back to the 40/40/20 distribution identified in the past.

Direct Small Business Assistance: January 1-June 17, 2014

Currently serving 67 clients

- **Jobs created 8.25**
- **Jobs retained 13**
- **4 new businesses started**
- **Loans obtained \$155,000**
- **Owners investment \$60,000**
- **Other capital investment \$352,000**