



REGIONAL SOLUTIONS OFFICE
GOVERNOR KATE BROWN

South Central Oregon Regional Solutions Advisory Committee

Representing Lake and Klamath Counties

Meeting Summary
Friday December 8th, 2017
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Klamath County Community College
Building 6 Room H138

Members present:

Jane O’Keeffe, Governor’s Convener
Derrick DeGroot, Klamath County Commissioner
Peter West, Energy Trust
Brad Winters, Lake County Commissioner
Betty Riley, Exec Dir. South Central Economic Development District
Jim Walls, Lake County Resources
Carol Westfall, Mayor, Klamath Falls

Regional Solutions Team:

Annette Liebe, Regional Solutions Coordinator
Damon Runberg, Employment Department (via conference call)
Jarod Johnson, Department of Transportation
Larry Holzgang, Business Oregon
Greg Svelund, Environmental Quality

Guests:

Rep. Werner Reschke, Legislator
Mark Willrett, Public Works Director, City of Klamath Falls
Stephanie Siebold, East Cascades Workforce Investment Board (via conference call)
Jeremy Austin, Oregon Natural Desert Association (via conference call)

After introductions Jane O’Keeffe began the meeting by sharing the sad news that Bridgitte Griffin, the private sector appointee to the Committee, passed away unexpectedly November 3rd. Jane noted that Bridgitte’s experience working in banking and in agriculture for most of her life in Klamath and Lake Counties was a tremendous asset for the Committee and will be missed. Annette will be working to identify a new private sector representative.

- I. Vacancy Report and Employment Department Update
Damon Runberg went over a hand out summarizing employment data for Klamath and Lake Counties. Overall, both counties have not yet recovered the same level of employment as existed prior to the recession in 2008. The employment department reviews online job postings to understand which jobs employers are seeking to fill. In South Central there is a very high demand for construction trades. It is not possible to determine if these construction jobs are in the residential or commercial market. One factor driving the increase is public investment in projects. Demand for construction trades is high in other areas in the Central Oregon corridor and statewide. In Klamath and Lake Counties there are a healthy number of jobs available: 350 help wanted ads per month in Klamath County and 50 per month in Lake County. Elsewhere in the state labor demand is starting to taper off with slower or stabilizing job growth.
- II. Review of Regional Solutions Priority Project Submittals
Annette reviewed each of the five projects as well as the draft ranking provided by the Regional Solutions Team. The committee by consensus requested that the ranking for the Bullard Canyon Spring Line repair and micro hydro project be upgraded to “high” for the Community Support criterion. The committee also requested that “economy” be added to the evaluation of Sustainable Community Objectives for Lake County Fairgrounds Master Plan project. The committee noted that tourism and economy are tightly connected. With those changes and after an opportunity for comment (there were none) the Committee unanimously adopted the prioritization as presented by the Regional Solutions Team. Motion was made by Klamath County Commissioner Derrick DeGroot and seconded by Jim Walls. All members voted in favor. Annette indicated the next step is to share the prioritized list with leaders in Salem.
- III. Close out of Woodstove Replacement Project. What did we accomplish to eliminate/reduce economic development barriers?
Betty Riley summarized the results of the woodstove project aimed to reduce barriers to economic development in Lakeview and Klamath Falls. In Lakeview, 121 stoves were removed and replaced with non-wood burning devices or in some cases, high efficiency wood burning devices with electric back up for red days. In Klamath Falls, 128 stoves were removed and replaced with non-wood burning devices. More than 5 tons of “credits” for new and expanding companies who need air quality permits have been created in both Klamath Falls and Lakeview. SCOEDD estimates that they have over the years replaced 25% of the stoves that could be replaced and is evaluating opportunities to apply for grants to continue these efforts. Greg Svelund, DEQ, summarized the air quality monitoring data. Both communities have come into compliance with the 24 hour particulate standard. Both need to be

diligent to ensure that there are no exceedances this year. Once 2014 drops out of the rolling three year average, things will look better since 2014 was really cold and there was a lot of air stagnation that winter.

IV. Roundtable

Annette provided an overview of the Workforce Housing Request for Information that led to the Request for Application available Monday, December 11th. Annette noted the response from Jim Walls and Lake County Resources to leverage energy incentives and use of mass timber to build workforce housing in Lakeview.

Jim Walls is working on a study to support an exception to the 21 inch rule in the Fremont/Winema Sustained Yield Unit. Jim indicated that the rule is unique to the unit and as a result it is not possible to meet ecological objectives.

Betty Riley indicated the SCOEDD will be updating the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy in the next six months. They will be able to claim success on much of the work identified in the 2013-18 strategy. Rural Tourism Studios have been completed and there are short term action plans. One goal is to highlight biking in Klamath County along with cultural and agri-tourism (farm to table dinner opportunities in both counties).

Brad Winters is convening the “Stepping Up” mental health initiative in Lake County. Goal is better coordination and working together among the Sheriff, DA and health experts.

Peter West highlighted that the Energy Trust of Oregon (ETO) is working on 49 projects to reduce electric demand by irrigation districts; they are working with the Klamath Water Users’ Association. Peter also highlighted that the cost to meet peak power demand is increasing and ETO is working in partnership with utilities to increase the intensity of the renewable power supply. Another area of focus is intercepting food waste at wastewater treatment plants as a way to increase capacity of the facilities. Gresham wastewater plant is served 100% by onsite electric generation. ETO is also working with breweries to turn waste into a revenue source. One such project is with Deschutes Brewery in Bend.

Commissioner DeGroot highlighted that the county has sold the downtown grocery store to a grocery chain. Part of the deal will be the creation of some additional park space downtown. County is also considering building a convention center and outdoor arena at the County Fairgrounds to increase visitation.

Greg Svelund indicated that DEQ expects to issue the Klamath Total Maximum Daily Load in the next couple of weeks.

Jane O’Keeffe shared that she serves on the Health District Board and that the assisted living facility in Lakeview is unable to accept patients due to a shortage of nursing and cleaning staff. CNAs are in need; the health district even has training dollars. They are flying in CNAs to get the facility open. Stephanie Siebold with the East Cascades Workforce Investment Board offered to follow up. Stephanie also acknowledged that she is aware of the need for construction trade workers and will follow up.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15.