

MEETING SUMMARY- SOUTHERN OREGON REGIONAL SOLUTIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Date: October 17, 2016

Meeting location: SOREC, 569 Hanley Road, Central Point, OR

Committee members present:

Bill Thorndike, convener*

Emily Mostue, The Carpenter Foundation*

Steve Roe, Roe Motors*

Councilor Jonathan Bilden, City of Eagle Point*

Commissioner Simon Hare, Josephine County

John Roberts, Oregon Water Resources Commission

Regional Solutions Team:

Art Anderson, Department of Transportation

Mary Baker, Business Oregon – IFA [via phone]

Kate Jackson, Department of Environmental Quality

Josh LeBombard, Department of Land Conservation and Development

Amy Gilroy, Oregon Department of Agriculture [via phone]

Alex Campbell, Coordinator, Governor's Office

Guests:

Rich Roseberg, Director - SOREC

Kenny Houck, Menno Kraai, Kate Dwyer -- Illinois Valley Community Development Organization

Advisory Committee (AC) Members & Terms (Bill Thorndike)

Alex reviewed the existing appointments and terms. Two members terms are recently expired: Commissioner Simon Hare and John Roberts. Commissioner Hare stated that the new Josephine County Commission may change assignments in 2017, so another appointment might be called for. John Roberts said that he will continue his service with Oregon Water Resources Commission. Alex will follow up with him off-line to explore his willingness to continue on the AC.

Alex noted that, with Peter Angstadt's retirement, the AC no longer has a higher ed representative. He also raised the question, in the context of the Governor's interest in equity and inclusion, of exploring additional AC members from traditionally under-represented communities. The committee members discussed the pros (better, broader representation, especially in the context of allocating resources), cons (becoming larger, less nimble, more bureaucratic), and challenges (e.g., does one invite all of the tribes with interest in the area) of taking on such an expansion. The consensus was to invite a higher ed representation from SOU at this time.

****ACTION: Alex will clarify John Roberts' interest in continuing; follow up with Josephine County after the election regarding their preferred representation; and continue discussions with SOU about an administrator serving on the AC.***

AC Role & Impact (Bill Thorndike)

Alex noted at the last meeting they had discussed establishing liaison committee members for each project. Based on the poll of AC members' interests, that did not appear to make sense. With particular projects that match AC members' interests and expertise, that will work, but not all. The question of how best to make impact with the Advisory Committee remains.

Bill Thorndike suggested that the greatest value of the AC may be in maintaining focus on the "big picture" and identifying key issues.

Commissioner Hare stated that Cascadia preparedness may be a topic that is important to all elements of the region and that dovetails with state priorities. Perhaps resiliency should be used as a lens to apply to all projects? Commissioner Hare, through Association of Oregon Counties, is working with others to establish a "Rural Caucus" (similar to the "Coastal Caucus"). Resiliency and rural/urban cooperation could be a focus of such an effort. Hosting a conference on those and related aspects of Cascadia could be a useful effort.

Steve Roe noted that challenges of resiliency planning for Asante and Rogue Regional are significant, could even be thought of as an "unfunded mandate."

Art Anderson outlined the proposal that ODOT staff and TRADCO members are advocating: a "triage" approach that would focus a relatively small investment (\$35-\$55 million) that would ensure that commerce could continue to flow in and out of the valley in case of a major earthquake. Bill Thorndike invited further discussion of the topic when Regional Solutions support could be helpful. Commissioner Hare stated that, similarly, post-election/post-Oregon Business Summit would be a good time for the AC to get together again.

****ACTION: Alex will explore possible roles for the Regional Solutions Team and/or AC in disaster preparedness planning.***

Process for Selecting Projects (Alex Campbell)

Rather than developing a tiered system, Alex has just removed the Novalis project from the project list. In the future, projects will be brought to the AC to make sure there are no objections.

In that vein, Alex and the team have begun working with the Ashland Rowing Club on their proposal to establish a new 'aquatic center,' i.e., boat house and center for non-motorized

boating on Emigrant Lake. The proposed site is within the county park and appears to be non-controversial.

Illinois Valley Rural Resource Forum (IV CDO)

Representatives of the IV CDO presented some of the top priorities from their recently completed 20/20 Community Vision & Strategic Plan to a gathering in Illinois Valley. That meeting was organized by USDA, in partnership with Regional Solutions and others, to try to match resources with the top priority projects.

The 20/20 Community Vision & Strategic Plan is the third major strategic plan that IV CDO has completed in its history, and the specific action items proposed—in many cases—build upon successful projects identified in the earlier plans.

The Plan was developed with extensive community involvement and identifies numerous priorities. The theme of the document is “Living with Nature” and the top ten implementation strategies are:

1. Public Safety & Law Enforcement
2. Access to Shelter & Healthy Food
3. Community Development & Beautification
4. Lodging & Community Gathering Places
5. Community Pride & Participation
6. Healthy People
7. Watershed & Natural Habitat Conservation
8. Promote Regional Tourism
9. Small Local Business Success
10. Rural Skills, Vocational Training, & Job Preparedness

The planning process has identified a need for greater capacity (staffing) to support implementation and to represent the community in regional forums.

Committee members expressed appreciation for the presentation and hearing about the positive work that is going on in Illinois Valley.

****ACTION: Team members will review the specific action steps defined in the document to identify places that positive engagement from state agencies could be most useful, e.g., improved signage on state highways.***

Project Status Updates (SO Regional Solutions Team)

- *North Valley Business Park* (Mary Baker, IFA)

Engineering study examining replacement waste water treatment approaches for the area has been expanded, at Josephine County's request and with additional funding from the County, to include the nearby county airport and associated property. Overall study is 85 to 90% complete.

- *Grants Pass Airport Taxiway* (Mary Baker)

IFA has pre-funded the project to allow work on engineering and design to proceed in time to match FAA construction funding time-frame. Contract to engage WH Pacific to complete the work is expected to be approved by Josephine County Commission on October 19.

- *WISE/Little Butte Irrigation* (Kate Jackson, DEQ)

Work on WISE by HDR under a revised work order from Bureau of Reclamation should recommence in November. Medford Water Commission is working to contract the research and analysis of water rights under the grant received earlier this year. IFA and Soil and Water Conservation District staff are looking at contributing Regional Solutions funding to a piping project below Bradshaw Gap that would serve as a demonstration project for WISE. The Oregon Water Resources Commission toured several WISE project locations as part of their recent meeting in the Rogue Valley.

- *Airport One Industrial Park* (Larry Holzgang)

Construction of a new warehouse and distribution center for American Tire is underway. Team will be initiating discussions with landowner and City of Medford regarding storm water capacity constraints on further development at the site.

- *Spaulding Industrial Park* (Larry Holzgang)

Rogue Valley Door has purchased a 20 acre parcel and begun planning for partial (re-) development of the site. City of Grants Pass has updated infrastructure cost estimates for development of the site that are much higher than previously thought. Urban renewal could buy down some of that cost, but it could still inhibit development.

Public Comment

Public comment was invited, but none was made.