

Depoe Bay Economic Development Committee
Regular Meeting – Thursday, November 7, 2013 - 7:00 pm
Depoe Bay City Hall

Present: Chair Michael Kiefer, Noelle Achen, Bob Blessinger, Pat Dunlop (via telephone), Robert Gambino, Michael Granat (arrived 7:06 pm)
Absent: Ken White
City Staff: City Recorder P. Murray

Chair Kiefer called the meeting to order and established a quorum at 7:00 pm.

Approve Minutes – October 3, 2013 Regular Meeting

MOTION: Gambino moved to approve the minutes as written. Blessinger seconded.

VOTE: Motion passed.

AYES: Achen, Blessinger, Dunlop, Gambino, Kiefer

Public Input Mayor A. J. Mattila said he has offered to have the northern section of the League of Oregon Cities (LOC) February meeting in Depoe Bay and he wants to give them a taste of Depoe Bay. He asked for the Committee's assistance to prepare a grand welcome for the group. He explained that the meetings are usually about two hours long, include a lunch which is either host or no-host, and attendees include representatives from the Governor's office, various state agencies and other cities. Discussion ensued, including: bringing the matter to the Council for funding, offering rooms for attendees overnight stay, involving different local restaurants with each contributing a part of a meal, having it at the NFK Kids Zone and using their kitchen, invite attendees to arrive Friday night for a meet & greet with overnight stay and the lunch meeting the next day. Blessinger offered his business, Harbor Lights, for the meet & greet and overnight stay. Zeke Olsen, present in the audience, offered to bring food to the Neighbors For Kids (NFK) location for the lunch meeting. Kiefer suggested that a Committee member approach local restaurants to ask about participating. Olsen suggested that the Mayor do this. Mattila advised that these are closed meetings for attendees only, previous topics have included dredging and economics. He wants to leave the planning for this in the Committee's hands. Further discussion included: no need for PSA's since the meeting is not public, question of donations v. purchases, and other details to be addressed.

Mayor Mattila referred to an email from Chuck Connell (copy attached to the original of these minutes) which he'd had distributed to the Committee, saying that he believes Mr. Connell would be a real asset to the community, the City and the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Connell, present in the audience, said he uses video to capture food, art and culture and for creating new marketing channels on the internet; he loves the coast and plans to settle here and would like to get financial support for what he's doing. He suggested creating a library of tourist related videos which could be used over and over, and noted that You Tube is working on making it so features can be added to videos. He is looking at \$500 a month for 4 to 6 months.

Kiefer suggested sending this on to the City Council to see if he (Connell) would be able to get the funds.

MOTION: Dunlop moved to make that motion. Blessinger seconded.

Kiefer said that he's asking for \$500 a month for a 4 to 6 month contract, and the motion is to pass this on to the City Council to see if they would approve this. Granat asked how this promotion would work. Connell said today it would be using Linked In, Twitter, Instagram, and the like but there will be more in 6 months. He described Linked In as Facebook for professionals and said the internet is for big companies and small businesses are dying for education. Granat asked if he is providing this service for other cities. Connell replied no, Depoe Bay would be his first city.

Kiefer called for the vote. Mattila suggested that Mr. Connell put together a proposal that the Council could review and then decide if the city could use his service. Discussion ensued.

MOTION AMENDMENT: Gambino suggested amending the motion to include a presentation at the Council meeting from Mr. Connell. Dunlop and Blessinger accepted the amendment to the motion.

VOTE: Motion, as amended, passed.

AYES: Achen, Blessinger, Dunlop, Gambino, Kiefer

ABSTAIN: Granat

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. Photo Sitting With Professional Santa Claus Event-Neighbors For Kids

Liz Martin, Neighbors For Kids (NFK) Board of Directors member, said she wished to clarify, for the record, that this is a City event with NFK hosting and providing the venue. She stressed that the City funding is not coming to NFK, explaining that there seems to be some confusion on this point. Achen reported that she has been working with NFK, identifying items for the event and has found it difficult to keep within the \$700 budget. She has costs for hot chocolate, \$10.00/50 packets or \$55.00/case of 300 packets; cookies \$50.00/500 cookies; \$50.00 for advertising- printing and distributing flyers at schools, day care facilities and community bulletin boards. Kiefer asked if more money is needed for advertising. Achen replied that most ads (PSA) will be free. Gambino offered to use his camera for photos. Achen explained that the photos will be do-it-yourself with people using their own cameras. Achen continued: the event will be on Friday December 13 and Saturday December 14; tinsel trees cost \$36.00; red fabric for wall cover is expensive, but may be able to get that cost down to \$100.00; \$150.00 for a photo scene set; and costs for lights. Dunlop suggested applying for funding from Walmart, they will fund local groups. Connell suggested asking the Newport Performing Art Center to borrow stage curtains. Brief discussion followed regarding storage of items purchased for use in following years. Discussion on advertising included: asking the Chamber of Commerce to help in getting the word out and distributing flyers-Granat said he cannot commit but will take it to the Chamber Board of Directors; PSA's on local radio stations, local newspapers, the Oregonian, Statesman Journal, Register Guard, Lincoln County News, Lincoln County Dispatch and Craig's List. Achen will prepare the flyers. Gambino and Olsen will work on the PSA's. Achen will finalize the event budget and take to the November 19 City Council meeting for approval. She noted that NFK has about 10 volunteers to help during the event. It was suggested to also buy bottled water for the event.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Making a Positive Impact on Depoe Bay's Economy-Member Ideas and Discussion

Kiefer asked for ideas and discussion tonight, starting with his proposal relating to vacation rentals. He referred to City Ordinance # 234 which he'd had copies distributed to members (copy attached to the original of these minutes), saying there are only a couple places in Depoe Bay where vacation rentals are allowed. He said if vacation rentals were opened up throughout the city there would be more jobs, such as maintenance and housekeeping, and more opportunities for visitors to be in houses in residential areas. He said there may be parking issues, homes should go through an inspection process before being rented, there should be a minimum rental amount, and this shouldn't cause much competition with existing vacation rentals because it is a different clientele. He has worked in the industry and has seen very few problems when vacation rentals operate in residential areas. Blessinger said the city cannot regulate rental fees, and Lincoln City has been battling this very thing for years, and vacation rentals are losing. He said that 75% of police calls there are related to vacation rentals. Kiefer replied that while he worked for Horizon Rentals with 100 rentals, there never was any problems. He plans to rewrite the ordinance to bring back for the Committee's consideration to refer to the City Council. He asked members to review Ordinance 234 and be prepared to discuss at the next meeting.

Achen said she has researched the online world and feels that it is not being used to full potential to advertise Depoe Bay. She reviewed examples, such as Trip Advisor where Depoe Bay comes up twice out of 180 attractions, and the Oregon Coast Visitors Guide which still lists closed businesses. Kiefer said that the Chamber of Commerce does business, the City EDC does community. Achen feels the Chamber website need improvement. Granat said the Chamber is looking for new website ideas. Discussion followed, including Beach Connections (on the internet) often features Depoe Bay; billboards are costly and motels are getting out of billboards since there is no way to measure results; getting a Facebook page. Achen said that Depoe Bay is the Whale Watching Capital of the World, there needs to be something to do in the harbor, such as a marine attraction or museum. Finally, she feels that Depoe Bay needs to promote its cute little beach and develop a pathway access to the beach. She will bring more information on her ideas to the next meeting.

Blessinger said he has a list of ideas. He suggests adding a farmers market, craft fair and food vendors to the existing Salmon Bake and Boat Show events; participate in Northwest Trade Shows with the City funding the display and businesses contributing; a holiday craft fair; a rib cook-off competition; a community garage sale. He said news media coverage outside Lincoln County is needed for every event. He is big on marketing but thumbs down on advertising. He will bring more to the next meeting and excused himself saying he had to leave to close his business. He left the meeting at 8:59 pm.

Dunlop suggests participating in military conferences, try to lure to Depoe Bay by working with the American Legion and Fire Departments.

Gambino suggests a 3rd of July parade, coupled with Gleneden's 4th of July parade, since participants are already in the area. He doesn't think the highway would work so has looked at a parade route with staging area in the parking lot on Bay and SE Williams Streets, proceeding from Bay to Winchell to Ainslee to Collins and back down Williams to the parking lot. This route is one mile. There could be a static display of the entries after the parade. He will do more research for the next meeting.

Granat said he likes the idea of spot lights on the spouting horns at the seawall, and suggests including a manual control for when the lights would be on. He'll research this idea further for the next meeting.

MEMBERSHIP REPORTS:

Granat – Chamber of Commerce reported the Chamber is working on upcoming holiday events including the Christmas Community Potluck and the Tree Lighting.

Gambino – City Council reported the Council members took the (draft) City Survey, and discussed some revisions. He and Councilors Leff and Olsen are reviewing for changes to take back to the Council.

Achen – Harbor Commission reported there was not much relating to the EDC at the October Harbor Commission meeting. She got a lot of non-answers and inadequate explanations on why meetings have been canceled.

Kiefer- Planning Commission reported there has not been a meeting so nothing to report.

Dunlop – Transportation System Plan Community Advisory Committee reported that while she was disappointed with the low attendance at the October meetings, it was a good meeting and open house. She likes the concept of changing the highway lane configuration to 3 lanes with bike lanes. ODOT is looking into bus shelters. After experiencing traffic back east (where she currently is) she will never complain about Depoe Bay traffic again.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS OR CONCERNS:

Granat said he doesn't think that at this time the EDC has a good marketing project fit for Mr. Wang, and it is not fair to continue with him without more direction. He also encourages bringing future event plans to the Chamber of Commerce, but don't just bring ideas, include support and details. Kiefer feels the Chamber's focus is business. Dunlop disagreed, she feels the Chamber is more community oriented. Granat noted the recent changes in Chamber Board of Director positions. Dunlop said the new Board is great and she is seeing positive changes. Achen noted that at the last City Council meeting the Vice-Chair of the Chamber Board said that the EDC should not be doing events. She would like to work with the Chamber but feels that some members are not welcoming or cooperative. Kiefer would like to see the EDC and Chamber of Commerce work together. Granat said the Chamber's vision of approach is to submit a proposal rather than telling to do something.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Michael Kiefer, Chair

Pery Murray, City Recorder