

Rainier Economic Development Council
Rainier City Hall ~ Rainier, Oregon

REDCO Regular Meeting ~ October 23, 2008

Call to Order - 6:06 p.m. - Flag Salute

Roll Call :

Present - Mike Avent, Chair David Qualman, V. Chair Dearl Taylor

Absent - Terry Grice, Treasurer Tim Navarro Paul Rice

Staff - Terry Deaton

Clatskanie Newspaper - Ruth Howard

Visitors Comments - Marina Advertising Sign

City Council member Sloan Nelson told REDCO there may be a new sign going up at the marina transient tie-up. The sign will identify ports along the Columbia River with a map, places to stop, things to see and do. Advertising slots are located around the outside edge of the sign. A private sign company is proposing this to all the towns along the river. The cost of advertising on the sign is \$2350 or \$2400 for two years, which makes it prohibitive to most local small businesses. As a merchant, Nelson asked REDCO to consider purchasing one of these advertising slots to promote businesses in Rainier as these signs would be displayed at the towns along the river. REDCO would like to review the information and present it to the Chamber to do a cost share on the project. It will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

Executive Session - 6:20 p.m. ORS 192.660 (1)(h) Consultation with attorney.

Reconvene - 6:45 p.m.

Approval of Minutes - October 23, 2008 Regular Minutes motion was made by Jennifer Dennis and 2nd by David Qualman. Unanimously approved by council.

Accounts Payable - Council approved accounts to be paid in the amount of \$8,028.63. Motion was made by David Qualman and 2nd by Jennifer Dennis to approve. Unanimously approved by council.

Unfinished Business -

REDCO Office

Staff Administrator, Deaton, told the council it would cost \$150 to set up a voicemail with the city's telephone system, plus monthly maintenance. Deaton suggested a more cost effective alternative would be to purchase cell phone and minutes as needed. No decision was made by the Council.

REDCO Staff position re-evaluation

Qualman thought the discussion of office setup was premature and wants a re-evaluation of Deaton's job description and salary. After continued discussion the Council decided Deaton is needed as Staff Administrator with the legal negotiations and possible litigation ahead. It was decided to re-evaluate the position at a future meeting. Deaton was instructed to contact other urban renewal agencies, temp agencies and schools to find equivalent pay for the REDCO staff scope of services.

Small business grant guidelines were discussed briefly noting further research is required. They will be reviewed at a later date.

REDCO By-laws were provided for Council members to review.

Authorization for attorney to proceed with negotiations.

Jennifer Dennis expressed her opinion that REDCO owes it to the community to proceed with negotiations in order to resolve the USG loan dilemma. Dearl Taylor made a motion to authorize attorney Karen Williams to negotiate a settlement with the insurance company, and if this should fail then to proceed with litigation against attorneys Sullivan and Shannon. Dennis seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous for the attorney to proceed.

Council members David Qualman and Jennifer Qualman agreed to participate with the attorney in the negotiations. Mike Avent will assist if any history is needed during these negotiations.

REDCO Secretary Position

David Qualman made the motion to appoint Jennifer Dennis to the vacant secretary position. It was seconded by Dearl Taylor. The vote was unanimous to appoint Jennifer secretary. A new signature card with Bank of America will be prepared to add her as signer on the REDCO checking account.

Wastewater Treatment Project

The waste water treatment project was not discussed with the attorney during Council's telephone conference. It will be moved to the November meeting.

Riverfront Trail Project

The Riverfront Trail project was updated by Mike Avent. The committee is continuing to obtain bids for the project, phase one and two.

Council Reports - Dearl Taylor went to the Planning Commission meeting regarding small business grants guidelines. The Planning Commission would like to place REDCO on their next agenda. They would also like to see City Council involvement with possibly a workshop before the meeting.

Jennifer Dennis encouraged the Council to keep their language professional in all email communications in order for everyone to work well together.

Mike Avent talked to the Mayor of Clatskanie, Diane Pohl. She said she would look forward to a joint meeting for a North County get together involving projects. Deaton will contact the Mayor and setup a meeting.

The Staff contract and scope of services, which was approved at the September meeting, was presented by Mike Avent. He was out of town when it was approved. He asked if the Council had any objections to him signing the contract. There were none and he signed the contract.

David Qualman wanted REDCO to know he did not feel they were staying focused on getting through the legal issues. He wants to see us get through the legal issues as quickly as possible. We do not need to be creating more work for ourselves and for our staff. If we don't come out of these legal issues on a good footing, our grant program isn't going to be worth much. It is very important REDCO stay focused.

Mike Avent noted we have a list of designated projects. REDCO should not become obsessed with the legal situation. REDCO has work to do as long as we have the funds available. As long as we are here and are spending our time, we would like to continue to work on some of the projects where the money has been set aside. He would like to see some of these projects done more as a community with local skill rather than going out and spending \$80,000 on study we never use. That's why it would be good to get creative on how to do projects with a little bit of money and impact the community by getting local people involved. Seeing new people involved in the community would be very uplifting. REDCO funds have provided many projects and for the City. If we come out of this legal situation, REDCO may be able to do more projects for the community.

As a new member to the community, Jennifer Dennis noted, we still need a urban renewal agency. Yes, if the USG deal does not go the way we would like to see it go, then REDCO would have to redefine what its responsibilities are. It feels silly to invest my time at home in research and coming here when there are plenty of other good things you and I could be doing if we are not still trying to do the whole point of what REDCO is supposed to be for right now. We need to decide what we can do for a benefit. I am willing to invest that time. She pointed out Qualman was attempting to say he does not want to use staff hours to help coordinate these things.

Qualman said partly this was true, but also I don't know if now is the time to be pushing those things. I want to see us get through the legal stuff.

Dearl Taylor pointed out, the positive things REDCO can do for the community are what I am here for. We should be working on our downtown community. REDCO should not live and die on USG. If REDCO's just going to worry about USG, let's dissolve it and give it to the City Council.

Mike Avent explained, the Council is the one who comes up with ideas and plans. Through the collective wisdom the Council makes a decision then you have a staff person to implement some of those ideas and follow up on them. The Council is too busy to have the time to follow through with the tasks. This has to be done by someone who has the time. Until we know what will be the outcome of the negotiations, we will do everything to look at cost but we need to keep moving.

Taylor appreciates Qualman's concern with the costs. The staff contact with the lawyers and all that is going on is important.

Avent would like to have someone who could look at grants, that could look at other opportunities we have even outside what we. If we do prevail in this, we have additional monies; we can spend the money in our community and make it a safer place to live. I don't mind spending a few dollars if we get more back, like the attorney. It is money well spent. Like it is with Terry, if we find out about grants and spend \$10,000 or \$15,000 a year and get \$100,000 in grants - that is money well spent. I look at things from a business perspective, if you are getting more back than you are putting in it makes sense to continue to do that.

Jennifer Dennis asked if there was anything brought up at City Council meetings that REDCO needs to be aware of for now. Avent said, no other than what is happening with A St. Streetscape. As soon as the City Council has a little better handle on it, REDCO will want to be involved in it since we have money set aside for the project. Marina Square has the ability to develop parking and greenway. It can be both and serve the community. Try to do as much for "all" the people as you can. We now have a good driving force with this council and need to start focusing on some of these things. With the times we have ahead of us, community focus and working together is important.

Deaton noted the REDCO February 2002 resolutions states a specific order for the meeting and she would begin implementing those directions.

Ruth Howard asked about the dates for meetings in November and December due to the holidays. Deaton will contact other council members to check on dates for those meetings.

Jennifer Dennis asked if we might have to have a special meeting to discuss the Wastewater Treatment project. Avent asked Deaton to ask Lars, City Administrator if they can wait until after our next meeting regarding this.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Mike Avent, Chair


Terry Deaton - Staff Administrator