

Jefferson Local Development Corporation (JLDC)

Meeting Minutes, November 28, 2007

Present: Joe Calnan, Barbara Sunderland, Pat Lewis, Bob Marks, Dick Norden, Darrell Miller, Tom Lythgoe, Tara Mastel, Tom Harrington, and Nancy Wheeler. *No guests were present at this meeting.*

1. Welcome and Overview

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. by President, Barbara Sunderland, in Whitehall at the Extension Office Conference Room. The meeting was JLDC's semi-annual Planning Session. Pat Lewis made a motion to approve the October 31st meeting minutes as published, Dick Norden seconded the motion. Motion passed.

2. JLDC Resources Available

The FY'08 JLDC budget sheet, with current income and expenses, was distributed for review by the board. Tara explained the line items and answered questions from the board.

3. JLDC Programs and Projects Overview

Tara and Tom H. reviewed and discussed the status of the following 2007-2008 JLDC programs and projects that were adopted by the JLDC board at the June 12, 2007 Annual Planning Session.

3-1. Retain and Expand Existing Businesses

a. & b. Golden Sunlight Mine/CTAC and Montana Tunnels/MTAG

Tom H. said that looking currently at business with CTAC and MTAG, there are a couple dynamics working at both mines that may affect courses of action. One is the exploration plan at GSM and approval of their 5-C pit expansion which, depending on core drill results, will probably not occur until February or March. The other is Montana Tunnels working to get approval on their EIS. Tom H. said this may involve more staff time depending on how these two situations play out. If the 5-C pit expansion becomes a reality, mine life would be extended about five years. If not, closure is slated for June, 2008, and would involve more staff time to help set up an economic development trust, an environmental trust, and help with some land exchanges with the State of Montana that have been deferred by Barrick leadership until mine closure. Staff may become involved in helping facilitate Montana Tunnels' EIS process. There is a potential for layoffs and down time the first part of the year at Montana Tunnels until the M-Pit expansion.

Joe is concerned with the EIS process delay at Montana Tunnels. Discussion followed on the contractor, the federal register posting, and the comment period. Tunnels planned to have their M-pit expansion approved by the end of the year and now it may not happen until February or March, Tom H. said. Joe asked if JLDC can do something to explore how this happened and what role JLDC can play to move it along. Joe urged staff to go back to BLM and the DEQ to see if there is anything that can be done to get the posting and comment period requirement reduced or to let the posting/comment period run concurrently, particularly since it was DEQ's contractor who overlooked the posting requirement. If BLM and DEQ are unwilling or unable to help, Joe thinks JLDC should contact the Governor's office and enlist their help. Tom H. said staff has had intervention that resulted in the BLM, the contractor, DEQ, and Montana Tunnels communicating. Tom H. has spoken with Rick Hotaling at BLM and is not sure if the process can be expedited. Tom L. said there is nothing a person can do about the federal register posting requirement and said if there's hope for an agency's cooperation, it would be BLM's as they usually bend over backwards to do everything within their power to make something work. Tom H. will again contact the BLM and look into if anything further can be done regarding the federal register and comment period.

The county is looking at forming a Resource Development Council that may involve staff participation as well as the involvement of some interested JLDC board members. Tom L. said the topic was discussed at yesterday's Commission meeting and it was agreed to be a good idea.

c. The South Campus infrastructure engineer report is favorable for expanding infrastructure across highway 69 and for developing the subdivision. More staff time may be involved in helping secure funding for the infrastructure.

Bob asked if there is a timeframe for completion of the subdivision study and the potential sewer construction project. Tom H. said there is no timeframe. The next phase is to secure funding. Staff is working with Headwaters and considering CDBG or some other type funding. He said it's about a year long process to get through the cycle. Staff expects to have more information at next month's meeting on the subdivision.

3-2. Provide Economic and Community Development Educational Opportunities

a. Tara stated she needs to provide a minimum of five training sessions per year related to economic or community development as part of her MSU tenure requirements. With potential layoffs at Montana Tunnels and some attrition at GSM due to their unknown mine life, she plans on providing entrepreneurship classes in Boulder and Whitehall. This will provide an outlet for some of the miners nervous about losing their jobs who may desire to start a business so they are able to stay in the area and also moves toward the mission of MSU Extension, which is education. Tara said she is attending an instructor training for the entrepreneurship class in San Antonio, Texas, the first part of January. Joe felt that if a course were offered specifically aimed at Montana Tunnels miners, Tara should consider offering a class in northern Jefferson County. Discussion followed. Tom L. felt Tara should consider providing a class in Clancy in addition to Boulder and Whitehall. Tara suggested Montana Tunnels conduct a survey with their employees, modeled after one recently done at GSM. She said great information was received from the survey which included information on where employees live, what they want to do if the mine closes, etc. Joe agreed with the survey suggestion and would like it included on the next MTAG meeting agenda.

3-3. Attract New Businesses

a. Tara said staff's priority is to obtain funding for the construction of the business park. The base infrastructure is needed so businesses have a place to locate and grow. Staff and Headwaters are meeting with the EDA and the Department of Commerce in Helena Tuesday to move forward with the funding.

Tara said Judie Tilman, Headwaters, is retiring at year end and has great expertise in grant writing and financing. Staff would like the board's opinion on approaching Judie with a proposal asking her if she'd be interested in contracting with JLDC after she's officially retired. Joe felt it was a good idea. Barbara agreed she would be a great asset.

b. Tom H. said the at the last monthly meeting of the Elkhorn Mine group, the stake holders involved in the group had some of the same issues as Montana Tunnels with DEQ and the timeliness of the process. Elkhorn was planning to start mining in the spring but now, if mining by next fall, they will be doing well. It's a real frustration factor and not related to any one particular mine; it's just part of the system and process. Tom H. noted in relation to Montana Tunnels, Callim is undergoing major reorganization.

3-4. Community Development

a. Horizons Program

Tara said Boulder and Whitehall have completed the Horizons Visioning process and are now into the last phase of Horizons. Both communities are developing independent development boards.

Staff will still be involved but at a much reduced time commitment.

Joe said he's frustrated by the inability to link the 1999-2000 Montana City Visioning Process done by MSU with another state agency, the Department of Transportation/highway department. MSU identified in the visioning process that it was important to have a "Welcome to Montana City" sign and the center of the new roundabout would be the ideal location for the sign. Joe said it's important to have the independent development boards to ensure the visioning process continues in the future.

Tara said the intention of the boards being developed is for them to be keepers of the vision. The two towns are incorporated and that should help. She said in Whitehall the board will be under the Town Council and their mission is to implement whatever needs to happen to achieve that vision.

b. Affordable Housing Project

In Whitehall, if NAHN was to follow through with the purchase of 11 acres, there would need to be some grant writing for infrastructure. NAHN does not have the resources to do that. Tara said it's a very competitive market to get affordable housing built in a community. If JLDC could assist them with doing the grant application, it would make it more enticing for them to do the development in Jefferson county. Tara said there is not much property available in and around Whitehall.

c. Post Mine Land Use / Walking Trails

If GSM closes, more staff time will be required. Walking trails are wanted in Whitehall and staff is helping facilitate meetings but letting the volunteers manage the project. The rest of the projects listed on the "JLDC Program and Projects Status Sheet" are mainly administrative ongoing items.

Tom L. said he previously indicated CTEP money would be available to help financially with the walking trails. He said a lot of people are asking for the money that are ready to use it right now, so someone needs to get moving on the trails immediately if they intend to use CTEP money. Tara said there is a Walking Trails meeting scheduled for next week and she will pass that information on.

Barbara said the project and budget updates reviewed in today's meeting were very informative.

3-5. Ensure the Financial Sustainability of the JLDC

Bob had a question on alternative funding sources for JLDC and, as a board member, would like further information on this. Tara said this topic was addressed at the Ad Hoc Committee meetings and Bonnie developed a one-page sheet she will distribute to board members.

4. Logo Review

Tara asked board members to break into groups of three, visit each logo station and write their likes and dislikes of each logo. She would like specifics on fonts, pictures, etc. to enable the graphic designer to know what JLDC's preference is and also what JLDC is not interested in for the new logo. Tara said there will be several rounds of revisions and she will email the next revisions to the board. After the groups finished their logo critiquing, the logos and comments were reviewed and discussed.

5. Board Business Session

a. Boulder South Campus

Tara said the office has received the final engineer report of the sewer study. The next step is meeting with Headwaters to talk about securing funding for doing the improvements. Staff has no update on the subdivision but expects to have a report for the December meeting. Staff will meet with Peter Degel of AYA next week to discuss property management, the lease, and the maintenance plan.

Bob asked if there was a summary on the sewer study as he would like to review it. Tom said there is an executive summary.

b. Montana Tunnels/MTAG

Tom H. said board members should have received a copy of the last MTAG meeting minutes. There was no meeting this past month so he has no further updates.

c. Golden Sunlight Mine/CTAC

Tom H. said the mine is drilling holes for the 5-C feasibility study and are optimistic. If 5-C is approved by Barrick, it would extend mine life about five years. A decision on 5-C is expected in February/March.

d. Community Development/Human Services

Tara said this was covered previously in the action plan with the Horizons project. A JLDC board member is needed to serve on the Whitehall Community Development Board and an Extension slot is also available.

Tom H. said the reasoning for the Whitehall Community Development Board to be part of the Town Council is that looking at the growth policy and plan and expansion of the Whitehall area, it will have a big impact to the Town Council. This group will serve as an advisory board to the Town Council to keep them informed on current community development ideas and issues. The Whitehall School District will be the region used for board membership. Barbara expressed interest in serving on the board.

Dick said Boulder's first meeting of their development group will be Tuesday with ten people on their temporary board. It will be a six-month project and the group will decide on the make up of the board; whether to be on their own or part of the city council. They will name the group and set up bylaws so the visioning project continues to be active in the future. Some temporary members of the group may become permanent board members.

e. QuickBooks Online Subscription

The current QuickBooks (QB) subscription expires in December. One of the items discussed at the Ad Hoc Committee was financial reporting and keeping the JLDC board informed. QB Online will give the Clerk and Recorder an opportunity to be able to view all financial reports. The annual subscription fee would be \$431.00 which includes all payroll updates. JLDC is currently paying \$229.00 subscription fee per year and QB is on a notebook computer. QB Online will give JLDC board members access to view reports. Tom showed and explained examples of the different reports the board members would have access to viewing. It also allows up to three users plus the accountant to have complete access. Discussion followed. Joe made a motion that JLDC subscribe to QuickBooks Online, Dick seconded the motion. Motion passed.

f. JLDC Annual Meeting Review

Tara said the 2007 annual meeting was discussed at the last meeting and there was agreement that changes need to be made. Tara asked for volunteers to serve on a committee to start planning 2008's annual meeting. Joe and Dick volunteered to be on the committee. They will take into account the suggestions from last month's meeting.

g. Appointment of Executive Committee Member

Barbara said that after reviewing the bylaws the outgoing President is to be a member of the Executive Committee, which means Joe is on the Committee. Barbara will also appoint one additional person for the Executive Committee and she asked if anyone was interested. Joe nominated Bob

Marks to be on the Executive Committee as he represents institutional knowledge of where JLDC came from and where JLDC is. Bob said he would agree to be on the committee only if nobody else showed interest. Bob also said it's the Chair's prerogative to appoint the committee member. Barbara said she would like to appoint Bob to the Executive Committee.

h. Elevator Speech

Tara said she'd like to substitute the Elevator Speech for discussion on JLDC's annual audit and suggested the board table the Elevator Speech until another meeting.

i. Audit

Tara said the board needs to decide about JLDC's audit. During the Ad Hoc Committee discussions, Bonnie Ramey, Clerk and Recorder, said the county would be willing to include JLDC's audit within their audit. Tara spoke with Bonnie this week and she is in the process of finding what the cost of the audit would be. Tara asked the board if it doesn't work out with the county's auditor or the cost is too high, would the board be okay with hiring the same auditor as JLDC has had the past few years. She said the office sent out 11 letters asking for bids and not a single person/firm returned a bid. The auditor JLDC has hired in recent years did send us a letter expressing his interest. Discussion followed. Joe suggested we contact some of those 11 firms that did not give us a bid and find out the reason why. Tara asked for official direction from the board regarding the auditor. It was decided JLDC will hire the county auditor if the price is in the ballpark and, if not, will seek assistance from the board in finding another auditor. Barbara asked Tara that, after she talks with Bonnie, if she'd find out what kind of agreement JLDC needs to have with the auditor.

6. Comments

a. Dick said the Boulder Chamber of Commerce's Christmas Bazaar is Saturday. Fifty + vendors will be selling food and wares. The Bazaar will be held from 9:00-3:00 at the old high school gym (south gym) in Boulder.

b. Joe inquired as to the wind graph results Tom H. sent via email to the board members as some were not able to open the attachment. He asked if anything on the report required JLDC's attention. Tom H. explained this was the final report GSM received from the wind developer whose lease option on the land expired. The report validates the site is pliable for wind development.

c. Tara informed the board that Andrea Sarchet, the new Agriculture/4-H Extension Agent, started working in the office November 13th. She's in her office if you'd like to introduce yourself after the meeting.

7. Adjourn

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 19th, 2:00 p.m. at the Boulder City Hall. Meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Wheeler, Notetaker