

South County Leadership Collaborative
Wednesday February 12, 2020
5:30-7:00 p.m.
Meriwether Place 1070 Columbia Blvd.
St. Helens, OR 97051

Special Session Minutes

February 12, 2020

Columbia County Commissioners Present: Alex Tardif, Commission Chair
Henry Heimuller, Budget Officer

St. Helens Council Members Present: Rick Scholl, Mayor
Doug Morten, Council President
Keith Locke, Councilor
Steve Topaz, Councilor

Scappoose Council Members Present: Scott Burge, Mayor
Megan Greisen, Councilor
Joel Haugen, Councilor
Josh Poling, Councilor
Brandon Lesowske, Councilor
Peter McHugh, Councilor

Columbia City Council Members Present: Casey Wheeler, Mayor
Sally Ann Marson, Councilor
Susan Ziglinski, Councilor
Doug Calkins, Planning Commissioner

Port of Columbia County Commissioners Present: Larry Ericksen, Commission President
Nancy Ward, Commission Secretary



Meeting came to order at 5:40 p.m.

1. Welcome & Opening Comments – St. Helens Government Affairs & Project Support Specialist Rachael Barry
2. Examples of collaborative work already being done – Port of Columbia County Executive Director Doug Hayes provided a status update on the regional rail study and St. Helens partnership for industrial site marketing.
3. South County Priorities Exercise: Strength Weakness Opportunities Threats (SWOT) – Scappoose City Manager Mike Sykes provided an overview of the structure and purpose of the exercise and Jennifer Purcell introduced herself providing information about the Governor's Regional Solutions Team, their function and the state Agencies represented on the team. The group was asked to offer items in each category, then to mark items as their top three priorities. (for ease of reading, items with more than five dots are highlighted)

Strengths	count	Opportunities	count
• Solid Foundation/Geology	1	• Expand Fiber optics	2
• Location/proximity to Portland and recreation	1	• Smart Growth – strategic vision, growth goals, intentional growth	3
• Relationships among leaders	7	• Be smart	7
• Opportunity Zone/Enterprise Zone designations	1	• Broadband study	2
• Airport	1	• MS/HS career pathways and higher ed partnerships	1
• Comparative tax rate	1	• “one voice” recruitment	2
• Public Safety/Safe communities	1	• Jointly market the region	1
• Workforce	1	• Professional branding	2
• Crown-Zellerbach Trail	1	• Invest in youth	5
• Strong public administration	1	• Marine-based industry	3
• Water Supply	1	• Introduction of innovation	2
• Good public schools	1	• Develop infrastructure (roads, water, wastewater)	6
• Rural atmosphere	1	• Fund/support sustainable transit system	9
• Community-driven	1	• River commerce/trade	3
• Volunteerism	1	• Tourism – outdoor recreation destination (regional)	3
• Small Businesses	3	• Develop marketable industrial properties	3
• Opportunity to serve future generations	7	• OMIC	3
• Available land for industrial development	8	• Rail – move people	3
• River	7	• Collaborative/collective problem solving	
• People/community	1		
• OMIC/PCC/OIT/Higher Ed	1		
• Proximity to I-5	1		
• Gravel	6		
• Timber resources	2		
• Recreation/trails/natural env.	1		
• Railroad			
• River access/public access			

Weaknesses	count	Threats	
• Cut off from Metro	6	• Limited Media sources	
• Transportation System		• We don't speak with one coordinated voice	
• Traffic Congestion	7	• Complexity and nuance of policy decisions	1
• Rail system bisects downtowns	1	• Not reconvening these meetings	1
• Historical perception of workforce	2	• Lack of regional transportation corridor	6
• Need for vocational training in HS	4	• Aging infrastructure (roads, bridges, etc.)	
• Aging and inadequate infrastructure	1	• Potential for isolation of communities	4
• Portland perception of rural	6	• Cyber terrorism	1
• Lack of industry/jobs	1	• Stuck/Lack of upward mobility; poverty mentality	1
• Land use regulations	1	• Out-commute threat to local businesses, volunteer-based org., taxes, transportation	12
• Lack of coordinated marketing message	1	• Artificial intelligence	1
• History of out-sourcing/lack of focus on sustainability	8	• Online shopping	
• 80% out-commuter rate	2	• Half-truths, lack of factual info	
• Lack of retail	6	• State legislature – need for region to be heard; lack of coordinated message	3
• Potential high train traffic	1	• Outdated land use laws	3
• High gas prices	2	• Urban-Rural Divide	2
• Future is unknown/uncertain	1	• Congressional funding	2
• Lack of coordinated tourism	1	• Competition for attention/resources	1
• Lack of lodging (short term)	4	• Conflicting public opinion- development vs. status quo	
• Lack of activities for youth and access to resources	3	• Earthquake	2
• No hospital	2	• Traffic	2
• Don't appreciate and advertise our resources (best kept secret)	1	• Landslides	
• Lack of affordable housing	2		
• Poor mental health services	1		
• NIMBY's (not in my backyard)	2		
• Lack of appreciation for what outsiders bring	1		
• No Costco	2		
• Lack of Golf courses			

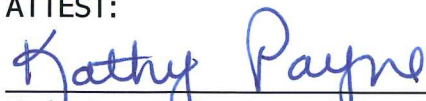
4. Next Steps - Mike Sykes. The notes will be prepared and distributed to all participants, the Boards and Commissions will evaluate and make any additional comments. Staff leaders will also review, evaluate, and make additional comment. Elected and staff leaders are encouraged to flush strategies and tactics already in use to move the identified priorities forward.

A future date will be identified for the group to reconvene.

5. Closing remarks – Mary McArthur. Mary shared information on the role of the Columbia-Pacific Economic Development District and its connection to the federal Economic Development Administration. She offered support and appreciation for this group's convening and shared the federal focus on regional and collaboration and coordination when making grants and offering financial support.

Respectfully submitted by Rachael Barry, Government Affairs & Project Support Specialist.

ATTEST:



Kathy Payne, City Recorder



Rick Scholl, Mayor