



# Eastern Oregon Border Region Economic Development Board

April 1, 2024

Ontario, OR

## Attendance

**Members Present:** Dana Young, Nickie Shira, Taylor Rembowski, Andrew Maeda, Cheri Hung, Montessa Young, Ron Haidle

**Members Present Via Zoom:** Melisa Drugge, Business Oregon

**Staff Present:** Shawna Peterson, Executive Director; Emily Conlon, Board Coordinator

**Guests Present:** Ken Hart, Valley Family Healthcare; Mark Redmond, Malheur ESD; Lisa Reeser, Pool Committee Member; Matt Mejia, Ontario Recreation District Board Member; Toni Davila, Ontario Recreation District; Deborah Folden, City of Ontario Mayor; Feather Sams-Huesties, Business Oregon; Theresa Martinez, Malheur ESD; Dani Maeda, Community Member; Kristia Simmons, Community Member; Lisa Maeda, Community Member; Megan Cook, Ontario Recreation District Board Member; Greg Simmons, Community Member; Lionel Segura, Community Member; Justine Segura, Community Member

Meeting was called to order at 3:03pm.

## Welcome, Introductions, Minute Approval

Chair Dana Young opened the meeting and board members and guests made introductions.

Cheri Hung made a motion to approve the March 4, 2024 meeting minutes. Nickie Shira seconded the motion and all present board members voted in favor.

## Public Comment

Ken Hart, Mark Redmond, and Deborah Folden all commented on their support of the ORD Community Recreation Center.

## Fiscal Report

Executive Director Shawna Peterson reviewed the OCF fiscal report/statements. As of March 25, 2024, the Border Board fund has a total of \$5,631,568.82. The board also reviewed Executive Director Shawna Peterson's financial report detailing expenses and disbursements for the month, which included an "Additions to Fund" spreadsheet that shows investment returns, incentive program replenishment, and border fund 2020 and 2023 appropriation.

## Executive Director Update

Executive Director Shawna Peterson submitted an executive summary and reported her activities since last month's meeting. Board Staff will schedule work group meetings in the upcoming

month to advance the Leadership Program and Business Incubator concepts. Board Staff will be putting together review packages for board members to review and score applications prior to the May board meeting.

Last Thursday, the SB16/70 Advisory Board met to review four applications. Five new two acre lots were approved at the meeting. This is the second meeting and so far, a total of 12 two acre lots have been approved. The advisory board will meet monthly and Peterson will keep border board members up to date on applications.

Peterson will be attending the upcoming Oregon Transport Commission visit to Ontario at the beginning of May on behalf of the border board. She is also working to reschedule the Agri-Beef tour and will notify board members when a new date is set.

### **Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program**

The board reviewed the first Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program application. The program is facilitated by Community in Action and offers an up to \$15,000 0% interest loan to residential property owners looking to make exterior enhancements to their property. After discussion, Ron Haidle moved to approve application #1-Kacey Beall and Jared Sizemore in the amount of \$15,000 repayable over 5 years at \$250 per month. Taylor Rembowski seconded the motion and all present board member voted in favor.

### **Incentive Program Application Approvals**

The board considered one re-application for the tax incentive portion of the Competitive Housing Incentive Program. Andrew Maeda made a motion to approve applications #75 in the amount of \$1,500. Ron Haidle seconded the motion and all present board members voted in favor.

### **Land Use Review Board Update**

Executive Director Peterson covered this update in her Executive Director Update.

### **Leadership Program Update**

Executive Director Shawna Peterson has been working with Rural Development Initiatives (RDI) and REAL Oregon to help structure the border board's leadership program. She has also started a running list of potential participants and looks forward to progressing this project.

### **Strategic Fund Application Discussion**

The board entered into discussion regarding the most recently submitted Strategic Fund Application from the Ontario Recreation District (ORD). Submitted by ORD Executive Director Andrew Maeda, the application includes a request for \$909,793.34 to fund the ORD Ontario Community Recreation Center. Funds would be used for: demolition of roof, exterior walls, existing beams and pilasters, and other building components, remove and modify existing mechanical and electrical systems, insulate newly exposed walls, repair and replace pool equipment & components, add family restrooms, open building up between splash pad & pool, and associated fees and project costs.

Questions and discussion regarding the application included the following:

- **Budget.** The board discussed the budget and sustainability of the project long term. Maeda highlighted that the budget reflects and overestimated expenses figure and underestimated revenue figure; he commented that the ORD's pool would be unique from surrounding aquatic centers in that there is a tax district with a splash pad and recreation department attached to it, all helping bring in additional revenue. They discussed the high maintenance costs associated with running a pool and how the ORD will combat those costs.
- **Data.** Asked about where data was taken from, Maeda answered that data was pulled from surveying similar entities and looking at rural statistics and statewide aquatic center trends.
- **NOVA.** The board discussed asked about the potential to expand the ORD into a county-wide recreation district including Nyssa, Ontario, Vale, and Adrian ("NOVA") and the likelihood that this plan would increase the tax base. Andrew Maeda commented that this concept is unique in youth rec sports programs, and something that could very likely happen within ORD in the future.
- **Phasing.** The board also asked about switching phasing and building the gym prior to the pool. Maeda commented that the decision to build the pool first is based on community surveys; ORD is focusing on getting a pool up and running because it is what community members want first and foremost.
- **Contingency funds.** Maeda informed the board that he built in a considerable contingency for staffing, labor, materials and supplies; he explained that prices could go up, and he wanted to have room in the budget for those price increases as bids for the project are received. The board discussed the ability to require ORD to use the reserve of funding in the budget for pool upkeep and maintenance only.
- **Excess funding.** The board discussed overage of grant awards and how they would handle ORD spending, or returning, funds left over. The proposed plan is the most basic form for project completion; additional funding would be spent on add-ons to the project, as approved by the border board.

Nickie Shira moved to approve the Ontario Recreation District Strategic Fund grant application, awarding a grant in the amount of \$909,793.34. Montessa Young seconded the motion. After discussion, Nickie Shira moved to amend the motion adding a requirement as a condition of the grant award that the ORD board adopt a policy, reviewed and approved by Border Board staff, creating a mandatory contingency fund within the ORD annual budget to support maintenance and repairs of the aquatic center. Montessa Young seconded the motion as amended. All present board members voted in favor.

## Next Meeting / Agenda

The board will review new grant applications at the upcoming May meeting. The next board meeting is May 6, 2024. Agenda items will include a Fiscal Report from Oregon Community Foundation, an executive director update, and grant applications discussion.

Meeting closed at 4:50pm.

Approved by: Dr. Dana M. Young \_\_\_\_\_ Date  
Dana Young, Board Chair  
Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Board