



# Eastern Oregon Border Region Economic Development Board

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August 12, 2024

Ontario, OR

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## **Attendance**

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

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

**Guests Present:** Gary Wentzel, resident; Ken Hart, Valley Family Health Care

**Guests Present Via Zoom:** Melisa Drugge, Business Oregon; Feather Sams-Huesties, Business Oregon; Tory Stinett, Greater Eastern Oregon Development Corporation; Leslie Thompson, Argus Observer; Derrick Noll, Energy Trust of Oregon

Meeting was called to order at 3:01pm.

## **Welcome, Introductions, Minute Approval**

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

Ron Haidle made a motion to approve the July 8 meeting minutes as amended. Cheri Hung seconded the motion and all present board members voted in favor.

## **Public Comment**

Gary Wentzel attended the meeting to check the status of his Competitive Housing Incentive Program application. Board Staff notified him that his application was approved at the July meeting and correspondence was sent out.

## **Fiscal Report**

Executive Director Shawna Peterson reviewed the OCF fiscal report/statements. As of July 29, 2024, the Border Board fund has a total of \$4,518,033.13 The board also reviewed Executive Director Shawna Peterson's financial report detailing expenses and disbursements for the month.

## **Executive Director Update**

Executive Director Shawna Peterson submitted an executive summary and reported her activities since last month's meeting. As of August 1, the following grants are open for applications: Scott Fairley Memorial Edge Grant, Community Improvement Planning Grant, and Ready Workforce Mobilization Grant. This grant cycle will close on September 30 and the board will review applications at the November 2024 meeting.

Peterson is currently working on the annual report to the legislature and will submit that by the September 15 due date. This report will also be circulated to board members and can be put on the border board website.

### **Economic Equity Investment Program**

The Oregon legislature allocated another \$8mm to the Economic Equity Investment Program (EEIP) for 2024-2025. Executive Director Peterson proposed that the Border Board submit an application requesting a \$442,000 grant that will fund the Border Region Incentive for Growing Homeownership and Taxbase (BRIGHT) Border Board program. The program is a version of existing border board property incentive programs that will assist with mortgage paydowns and down payments for qualifying applicants in the Border Region. The program will be administered by Board Staff with a fiscal sponsor to administer payments. Taylor Rembowski made a motion to approve submitting an application for the EEIP due August 30, 2024. Nickie Shira seconded the motion and all present board members voted in favor.

### **Incentive Programs Application Approvals**

The board reviewed four Competitive Housing Incentive Program applications. Nickie Shira moved to approve applications #60-#63 in the amount of \$6,000 each for a total of \$24,000. Cheri Hung seconded the motion and all present board members voted in favor.

### **Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program**

The board reviewed four Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program applications. Taylor Rembowski made a motion to approve applications #9-#12 based on the loan request amount indicated in the Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program spreadsheet. Nickie Shira seconded the motion and all present board members voted in favor.

### **Strategic Fund Application Discussion**

The board discussed the recently submitted Strategic Fund Application from Valley Family Health Care. Cheri Hung declared a conflict of interest and will be abstaining from discussion and voting on this application. Valley Family Health Care is requesting \$300,000 for the purchase of equipment for the Ontario Health Plaza Expansion Project. Ken Hart, CEO of Valley Family Health Care, commented that the \$300,000 border board grant will leverage almost \$700,000 in additional funding for the project. Hart stressed the importance of OB/GYN and Pediatric care and the need for it in the Border Region. This expansion will allow Valley Family the space to gain additional providers for women and children medical services. Discussion regarding the application included the following:

- **Ready Workforce Mobilization Grant.** The board discussed eligibility of this request for the Ready Workforce Mobilization Grant. The grant cap is \$100,000 for this program. This program provides funding to purchase equipment, facility upgrades, start-up costs, expansion or other products and services necessary to mobilize a workforce around housing, childcare, transportation and accessibility.
- **Tax Base.** As a private not-for-profit entity, Valley Family Health Care does not pay property taxes. The board discussed funding public service projects and how that correlates to economic development. While the project will attract professionals and families to the

Border Region, it does not directly improve the tax base. The board discussed if funding social service projects is the intended purpose of the Strategic Fund.


- **State Funding.** The board discussed other state funding available to Valley Family Health Care for the proposed project services.

Taylor Rembowski made a motion to approve \$100,000 as a Ready Workforce Mobilization Grant to Valley Family Health Care for the purchase of exam and procedure room equipment. Montessa Young seconded the motion and all present board members voted in favor.

### **Next Meeting / Agenda**

The next board meeting will be on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Agenda items will include a Fiscal Report from Oregon Community Foundation, an executive director update, and Business Incubator / Maker Space discussion.

Meeting closed at 4:47pm.

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