

Rockwood/West Gresham Business Coalition

Meeting Minutes December 6, 2006

The Rockwood/West Gresham Business Coalition called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Natalie Mitchell on December 6, 2006 in the Gresham Police Department Rockwood Community Office

Present:

Natalie Mitchell, Brenda Butler, Maura White-Cioeta, Alan Woolley, Kathie Minden, Ian Hefeneider, Merlin Aufdengarten, Dina Dinucci, Sarah Broderick, Dian Nunley, Curt Hugo, Paul Warr-King, Lisa Jameson, Drake Snodgrass

Opening

Introductions were made around the table

First Agenda Item

Sarah Broderick, VITA/ Tax Aide Center Coordinator shared information about the tax aide center which will open in February 2007. The tax aide center will assist low to moderate income residents in filing personal income tax returns at no cost. The center will also be seeking volunteers to be greeters and/or interpreters. Also donations are needed. Merlin proposed that if more computers are needed then contact can be made with the new Gresham Computer Recycling Center. Sarah would like to see some involvement from the businesses in the coalition. Businesses are invited to help advertise the tax aide center, as well as promote their own businesses in the center, or help sponsor special events. Contact information for Sarah: 503-816-1530, email: taxaide@weedandseedoregon.org

Second Agenda Item

Natalie introduced the Mission Statement that the small task group created on November 17th. There were no concerns or edits to the statement. Natalie informed the coalition that the statement will be open for edits until January 2007. Anyone wishing to discuss the statement can contact Natalie 503-473-9227.

Mission

To foster participation and the growth of businesses within the Rockwood community; creating a unified voice for political, economic, and social issues.

Third Agenda Item

Natalie also introduced the Objectives that the small task group created. Dina asked about how the group works on attendance/membership. Lisa asked what work has anyone done to reach out to the Hispanic business owners in the area. Kathy M. suggested we ask to use the MHCC Head Start headsets for translation purposed at coalition meetings. Curt suggested that if the coalition can get one or two Hispanic leaders to consistently come to the coalition meetings then other Hispanic business owners may feel more comfortable at the meetings. Natalie will work on outreach.

Objectives

Be a highly visible association representing and promoting local businesses and the community.

Maintain and enhance a positive image/identity for Rockwood businesses.

Fourth Agenda Item

2007 planning discussion.

The coalition agreed to meet the first Wednesday of every month, unless that day is a holiday. The next coalition meeting will be on January 10 because not everyone will be back from winter break on January 3rd. Alan wanted to know how many businesses attend the coalition. Natalie informed the coalition that there are funds available for the coalition to use towards a tool, like a map or calendar, or tasks that will help them grow and become structured. Natalie's position as outreach coordinator and the funds will be gone by 9/30/07. The group will discuss options in January. The coalition agreed to create structure to the meetings by having a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and sub-committees as needed. Natalie will work on creating a "welcome mat" letter that can be delivered to all businesses in the Rockwood/West Gresham Area in order to increase attendance and enrollment with the coalition. Maura will work on creating a link off of the Rockwood Weed & Seed website to promote the coalition; she will also help to create a press release for the January meeting. Sustainability ideas for the coalition will be addressed in March. Diane suggested a business fair in the New Year to promote the coalition and invite the community to check out businesses and owners. Portland Lutheran elementary school was suggested as a venue to look into; also the Rockwood grange and Alan suggested the large conference room at Worksource Oregon. The coalition also discussed hosting the meetings at businesses.

As a part of sustainability and organization Natalie asked coalition members to fill out business profile & interests survey to be kept in a binder along with the minutes from past meetings. The binder will also have a place for business cards to be shared. The binder will be at every meeting and will be property of the coalition when the Rockwood Weed

& Seed grant ends 9/30/07. Businesses that fill out the forms and return them to Natalie by December 15th will be entered into a drawing to win two Trailblazers tickets.

Other news

- **Drake 7 Dees received an Austin award for their family business, featured in the Oregon Business Journal**
- **Curt Hugo's Dutch Bros. Coffee on 187th and Stark will open on December 29th. Urban Renewal store front improvement grant money has helped Curt to make improvement to the lot, such as landscaping.**
- **Rico Taco and the 800 building of 181 also have received store front improvement grants**
- **A open house gathering to say farewell to Brenda Butler will be held December 13th from 1-3 at the Rockwood Community Office....please join us in wishing her well on her future successes and thank her for Making A Difference in Rockwood !!!**