



## SORED I BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENDA

Tuesday, March 12, 2024 – 3:00-5:00 pm

**ROGUE X (ROGUE CREDIT UNION COMMUNITY COMPLEX) – 901 ROSSANLY DRIVE, MEDFORD**

<b>3:00 pm</b>	<b>Meeting Call to Order, Welcoming Comments</b>	Tom Fischer, Board Vice President
<b>3:10 pm</b>	<b>Rogue X</b>	Rich Rosenthal, Medford Parks & Rec
<b>3:30 pm</b>	<b>Executive Committee Report</b>	Tom Fischer, Board Vice President
<b>3:35 pm</b>	<b>Consent Agenda - ACTION</b> <i>Meeting summary for February 13, 2024</i>	Steve Vincent, Past President
<b>3:40 pm</b>	<b>Agency Report</b>	Colleen Padilla, Executive Director
<b>3:50 pm</b>	<b>Strategy &amp; Roundtable Sharing</b>	Colleen Padilla, Board of Directors
<b>4:30 pm</b>	<b>April Agenda Build, New Business</b>	All
<b>4:40 pm</b>	<b>Adjourn</b>	Tom Fischer, Board Vice President
<b>4:45 pm</b>	<b>Rogue X Tour (optional)</b>	Sandi Sherman, Recreation Supervisor

### Upcoming SOREDI Board Meetings & Social Events

*April 9 – Taprock, Grants Pass*

*May 14 – Pacific Power, Medford*

*June 6 – SOREDI Foundation's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bowl-A-Rama, Lava Lanes*

*June 11 – Board Social at Herb Pharm grounds, Williams*

***Our Vision:*** *To be the most business-friendly region on the west coast.*

***Our Mission:*** *Advance business in Southern Oregon to foster economic vitality by helping companies and entrepreneurs launch, relocate, and prosper.*

(Space has been provided on the backside of this agenda to take notes, add action items and suggest future meeting topics)

## Notes & Action Items

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### Future Meeting Topics *(Leave on table or email to [carrie@soredi.org](mailto:carrie@soredi.org))*

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## SOREDI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 12, 2024, 3 - 5:00 pm

**RogueX, Medford**

	Member	Entity	Member	Entity
X	Anderson, Paul	Rogue Truck Body	Glover, RJ	Boise Cascade
X	Ausland, Aaron	Ausland Group	Holmes, TJ	Travel Medford
X	Ayres, Jessica	City of Medford	X Hyatt, Paula	City of Ashland
X	Bailey, Dr. Rick	Southern Oregon University	Johnson, Kelley	City of Central Point
	Bochart-Leusch, Jessica	Cow Creek Tribe (ALT)	Long, Juliet	Rogue Community College (ALT)
X	Bristol, Sara	City of Grants Pass	X Meyer, Alan	Pacific Power
	Browning, Tanea	City of Central Point (ALT)	Miller, Kaycee	Rentec Direct
	Cates, Ashley	Tribal One	Newell, Matt	Providence Health & Services
	Cubic, Aaron	City of Grants Pass (Staff)	Sell, Kathy	City of Eagle Point
X	Doan, Ron	Cow Creek Tribe	Shillam, Dr. Casey	Southern Oregon University (ALT)
X	Dotterer, Dave	Jackson County Commissioner	Spansail, Sarah	City of Medford (ALT)
	DuBose, Chris	First Interstate Bank	X Vincent, Steve	Avista
	Eagles, Breanne	Moss Adams	Weber, Dr. Randy	Rogue Community College
X	Fahey, Nick	Southern Oregon Sanitation	Weiss, Harry	City of Medford (staff)
	Farm, Judy	Tribal One (ALT)	X Williams, Claudia	Rogue Credit Union
X	Fischer, Tom	Coldwell Banker Commercial		
<b>Members Present: 13</b>		<b>Members Absent: 12</b>		<b>Member Vacancies: 3</b>

	SOREDI Staff	Guests	Entity
X	Padilla, Colleen - Executive Director	X Tarantsey, Marta	Business Oregon
X	Browne, Amy – Operations Manager	X Rosenthal, Rich	City of Medford, Rogue X
X	Bohl, Carrie – Communications & Business Support Manager	X Boyle, Ray	Build It Green
X	Tadlock, Jaymes – Business Development Manager		
X	Skelton, Abigail – Project Manager		

### **Welcome and Introductions**

**Vice President Tom Fischer** opened the meeting at 3:10 to wait for quorum. Quorum reached.

### **Regional Presentation – Rich Rosenthal, Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director**

The Rogue Credit Union Community Complex, or RogueX, opened January 5, 2024. To give some history, the City of Medford has had two outdoor seasonal pools. The Hawthorne Park pool was dismantled in 2012, and the Jackson Aquatic Center is still in operation but was built in 1960 and in need of renovation. Voters continually denied funding for the renovations.

As an effort to determine the feasibility of whether Southern Oregon could sustain a convention center, a conference center, or an event center, the state funded a study that recommended an event center including year-round aquatics. RogueX does not use property tax for funding but relies upon fees, car rental tax increase beyond airport use, and an increase to the Tourism/Lodging Tax (TLT). Voters passed this proposal in 2020.

Since opening in January, there have been over 10,000 visitors and it has already hosted over a dozen tournaments. The success has prompted the County to do similar renovations to the Expo Center, minus aquatics.

## Questions

**Jessica Ayres** – Why was the old pool not renovated instead of being demolished? The cost to bring up to code would cost millions and wouldn't be part of the city budget. It made more sense to invest in a year-round facility and not to have a second pool in the same service area. Being built in 1960, it had a 25- to 30-year life to it. The RogueX is built for a 50- to 60-year lifespan.

**Sara Bristol** – Is this considered a tourism facility to use the TLT since 70% is required to be tourism dollars? There's no question this is a tourism facility. Travel Medford is involved with this project. There is a balance of tourism as well as providing for Medford to keep them from traveling too far for sports. It's a dual-purpose event center.

**Rick Bailey** – Have you been talking to school athletic programs? Yes, North and South Medford will practice here. RogueX supports Medford teams including SOU. RogueX is already at capacity, so though it is expensive to build and maintain, the benefits are already being seen.

**Alan Meyer** – It's nice to see a quality facility that's keeping humidity and chemicals out of air inside the building. He is hopeful Grants Pass and Ashland renovate their pools. The pool on North Phoenix started a swim club Rogue Rapids. In two months from startup, they are at capacity with 80 kids and 80 on the waitlist, placing top 12 in State. **Rosenthal** noted that RogueX is a complete recreation pool for both education and recreation to generate revenue to offset cost. This is what's considered a modern facility, doing more than just swimming lessons.

**Steve Vincent** – Steve was on the SOU Bboard when the pool was taken down. It was hard for the community, but the students were subsidizing a pool that they weren't asking for or using.

**Colleen Padilla** – What are the operational and employee costs? There is a budget of \$2M per year with revenues expected of \$1.4M, 75% of budget. The difference is subsidized similar to what was in the Jackson pool. They are still learning about how the budget will truly play out this first. An example is the \$20K gas bill. For the workforce, there are five new full-time staff and a small army of new part-time staff, which include 75 lifeguards. This is the highest part of the budget with \$1M going to staff.

**Bristol** – Have you had trouble finding lifeguards? Not since they've become a year-round facility. They recruit at high schools and offer \$18 p/h for a part time job.

**Paul Anderson** – Are there any green energy projects tied in? They originally considered solar, but it would've added too much physical weight and the cost to shore up the building was too high. They have added conduit out to the parking lot for future solar projects and plan to get grant funding in the next couple of years because this is an important topic for them.

**Commissioner Dotterrer** noted the good work Will Volpert is doing with the Phoenix Chamber. There are up to 50 members and started from scratch a year ago.

## Executive Committee Report – Tom Fischer, SOREDI Vice President

At the last EC meeting:

- Final details were discussed regarding the State of the Rogue Valley Breakfast
- The committee spent time defining SOREDI's role as an advisor for the prospective Southern Oregon Innovation Hub
- Due to retirements and terms ending, there was discussion about inviting new board members.

## Consent Agenda - ACTION – Steve Vincent

**Vincent** presented the February 13, 2024, board meeting minutes for approval. **Fischer** motioned to accept. **Meyer** seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

## Staff Highlights

**Amy Browne** – Focus has been on PIER and the three projects chosen as well as March budgeting.

**Dotterrer** now that it's been so long after the fires, we're not saving a businesses anymore but revitalizing them. In light of that the decision was made to hold some of the PIER funds back in reserve to see what a good use could be in the future.

**Carrie Bohl** – There are seven new SOREDI memberships this year with more inquiries. 17 of the 100 best places to work are here in Southern Oregon, 15 of which are SOREDI members. #1 for the largest company category is Adroit Construction.

**Jaymes Tadlock** The two highlights to share include the CAT tax (Oregon Corporate Activity Tax) and the Southern Oregon Association of Physicians and Providers (SOAPP) group.

Jaymes was asked by Representative Christine Goodman to pull together a group of individuals to get discussions going on the CAT and how businesses are affected here in Southern Oregon.

SOAPP recently had an event of over 300 in attendance to help bring awareness to the shortage of workforce in the health care industry here in Southern Oregon. He gave a shoutout to Tammy from WorkSource Rogue Valley (Oregon Employment Dept.) who has led the efforts for 180 individuals to get their CNAs to get on the economic ladder.

### **Support Letters**

Included in the packet are an example of two of the support letters recently provided, one of which is OSF who was recently awarded the grant of \$2.56M. Included is the response from Greg Lemhouse. To read more about this award, read [here](#)

### **Rural Capacity Funding**

The handout is included in the packet that gives an overview of the impact these funds have had. These funds are from Business Oregon and The Ford Family Foundation, which were granted to all economic development districts in Oregon.

Approximately \$86,000 total in funding went to SOREDI, which leveraged over \$1 million in additional grants to the following jurisdictions: Town of Butte Falls, City of Jacksonville, City of Phoenix, City of Rogue River, City of Talent.

### **Outbound Recruitment Revisited**

Efforts are being renewed post-COVID shut down. Outbound recruitment efforts involve trade shows, site consultants, and private businesses site visits by development managers.

Per Business Oregon's invitation, SOREDI will attend Select USA in June where the focus is mostly on foreign direct investment. A good place to get attention on Southern Oregon.

Inbound recruitment leads and referrals typically come from Business Oregon, consultants, real estate professionals and direct inquiry. Because we don't have many shovel-ready properties or enough water/electrical capacity for manufacturing, many projects do not move forward with Southern Oregon.

Padilla referenced slides from the State of the Rogue Valley Breakfast presentation by [Paige Webster](#). For recruiting companies, top considerations include having property ready for market and that the location is good for distribution. #9 on typically on the consideration list is quality of life for employees.

Target industry clusters for Southern Oregon according to Webster:

#1 is healthcare and then followed by retail, hospitality, and manufacturing.

Webster Consulting suggest these new clusters:

AI/Remote Work, E-Commerce Distribution, FDI (Foreign Direct Investment), Data Centers, Outdoor Manufacturing

Padilla noted the data centers would not be in Southern Oregon's best interest due to the high need for water and land and the low job creation.

### **2024 Bowlarama**

Thursday, June 6, 2024. Through March 31, a \$1,000 Anchor Team sponsorship is \$750.

Like the One Rogue Valley annual report presented at the recent breakfast, there will be a Foundation publication called the Bowlarin including sponsorship ads and stories pertinent to the Foundation's impact.

### **Strategy, Priorities & Round Table Sharing**

**Fischer** asked members if they have new ideas of what SOREDI could be doing and would like to share. **Padilla** added that we would also like to hear what's new in their world.

**Vincent** – In the past, the Southern Oregon Angel Investor Network (SOAIN) has been active with 10 different investments and several different investors. He and Tadlock are currently meeting with a company that might be SOAIN ready. He strongly believes it's time to get that effort going again, typically for projects \$100K to \$500K though there have been investors for different amounts. Capital funding for regional entrepreneurs is needed but we need to find credible companies. **Meyer** – are they the same group now as they were before? Yes, a core group of 10-12 investors and they don't want projects less than \$25K.

**Meyer** – When it comes to the cost for energy in Southern Oregon, it's not an energy problem at .08/Kwh. It's the loads that are the problem. Bringing in a data center would use 40 times what one city currently uses. PacifiCorp doesn't want to risk raising rates to taxpayers. There are plans to increase the load, but it will take time and public dollars to do so and is 20-30 years out. We can serve current needs and reasonable growth, especially with the new transfer station being built. "It takes a lot of money to watch cat videos."

**Ron Doan** – An organization like SOREDI in Roseburg called the Umpqua Economic Development Partnership (UEDP), is looking to pattern its organization after SOREDI. Brian Prawitz is the new leader there. May 14 & 15 is the Southern Oregon Economic Summit in Canyonville at Seven Feathers. He is supportive of getting Josephine County's support back to SOREDI.

**Claudia Williams** – The breakfast was well received, including the site selection presentation. It was a great resource for businesses.

**Aaron Ausland** – The Architecture Billings Index, a monthly tool used to predict nonresidential construction activity 9-12 months ahead, is on its 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> month of decline, which means community infrastructure is declining and it hasn't been that way for 40 years. There is, however, momentum towards fully integrated deliverability, which is design-to-delivery services provided by one company. Which Ausland has created for their clients. The Ausland Group currently has a \$35M Army National Guard contract, the Ashland Armory, and a Northern California's town historic library. On this project, they partnered with the City of Yreka's \$6M renovation plan. They are also working on the Crater Lake historic Visitor's Center infrastructure \$14M and designing the new Southern Oregon Sanitation transfer station. Western Oregon University is doing its first doctoral occupational therapy in downtown Salem, of which Ausland is a part.

**Bristol** – Working on bringing Josephine County back into the fold. They are working on creating a plan for utilizing urban renewal funding and asked the members to let her know of ideas the city should be working on to use these funds. She is also working with Tadlock and Dana Pearce on this project.

**Paula Hyatt** – Early childhood learning and childcare are a huge underpinning to economic development. Kudos to Ashland YMCA for opening additional slots to help 40 individuals get back into the workforce. 52% of housing costs are a burden to families. The biggest barrier for people joining the workforce is being able to find quality childcare. SOU And RCC have been coming forward with ways to fast-track teachers and certifications. The program will cost \$75K and the Southern Oregon Education Special District is looking for ways to navigate this. Hyatt asked if we knew of ways to do this. **Dotterer** noted that the Phoenix/ Talent school district is getting their workforce together.

**Ayres** – Announced her new job in community development that provides loans with economic focus.

**Bailey** – At the end of this legislative session there was only \$63M left and the only public university receiving funding was SOU. \$6M went to SOU because they were recognized as making the hard decisions to make budgets work. The Central Hall academic building top floor is in the process of being finished.

Behavioral Health continues to be a big emphasis and SOU is partnering with Western and Eastern Oregon Universities to help with the flow of a \$400M legislative package.

Duncan Wyse, President of the Oregon Business Council, is conducting three business dialogues in Western Oregon with one in Portland, one in Eugene, and on April 12 @ 1pm, he will be at SOU. It is a community centered business conversation. Higher education doesn't make the top 10 priorities list for the State, so he wants to get the word out how important it is. Bailey asked for SOREDI's support and **Padilla** agreed to support the effort and the event.

**Nick Fahey** – Garbage is going along as normal, but recycling is going to have a statewide selection list starting next year making recycling the same everywhere in the state. The state is lacking controls to make sure things are being recycled correctly so this new list is an effort to remedy that. **Tadlock** - Does SOS use Sweed

Machinery (Gold Hill manufacturer). **Fahey** responded that SOS does not have that type of facility. **Bristol** – will it expand our options here in Southern Oregon? Yes. **Ausland** asked about recycled packaging. **Fahey** noted that there will be an economic incentive to use packaging that can be recycled, especially in the restaurant industry. **Anderson** - Rogue Truck Body is bursting at the seams and has orders through November 1, 2024. Historically they have been producing 15 trucks per month. Now they are up to 45 trucks per month. They are almost finished with the phase 2 expansion replacing an old warehouse and adding office space. They continue to have supply chain issues and it isn't clear as to why this still is. As mentioned when presenting at the August board meeting, they have taken on a product line in Colorado that went out of business and absorbing their entire customer base. This additional work requires 20-25 welders, which they don't have in Southern Oregon. The challenge they continue to face is a good workforce who want to work. Having housing available to employees is a challenge.

**Marta Tarantsey** from Business Oregon - More investments are heading to our area and will let us know when more information is available. Their DEI strategic plan has just been completed and is awaiting the 5-year development plan. Business Oregon is hosting the entire regional development team in April and then two weeks later the recruitment team May 13 & 14. **Tarantsey** requested they do a presentation at the May Board meeting for 20-25 minutes, and to hear from us as a board.

**Fischer** – A firm from Washington expanded to Medford and after opening asked Tom why Southern Oregon doesn't get employees. They've gone through 3 different states and have found this the toughest time to get employees. **Tadlock** offered to take partners to them. Fischer reports that companies are still expanding. Current interest rates make it better to expand than relocate.

### **Adjournment**

**Vice President Fischer** adjourned the meeting at 4:46, inviting those who were interested to join the RogueX tour led by Rich Rosenthal.

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June 6 – SOREDI Foundation Bowl-A-Rama, Lava Lanes

June 11 – Board Social, Herb Pharm, Williams

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*(A new landing page has been created on [soredi.org](https://soredi.org) to house documents from this meeting, including presentations. Please click here to access [SOREDI Board of Directors Meetings - Follow-Up Documents - SOREDI](#))*