

SOREDI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, August 13, 2024, 3 - 5:00 pm
Compass Hotel by Margaritaville - Medford, OR

	Member	Entity		Member	Entity
	Anderson, Paul	Rogue Truck Body		Hyatt, Paula	City of Ashland
X	Ayres, Jessica	City of Medford		Johnson, Kelley	City of Central Point
	Bailey, Dr. Rick	Southern Oregon University	X	LeMay, Jessica	Hunter Communications
	Bautista, Victor	Avista Utilities		Long, Juliet	Rogue Community College (ALT)
	Bristol, Sara	City of Grants Pass	X	Marple, Daniel	Herb Pharm
X	Browning, Taneea	City of Central Point (ALT)		Mayers, Robb	Outler Construction
X	Cates, Ashley	Tribal One		McCafferty, John	Cow Creek Tribe (ALT)
X	Cubic, Aaron	City of Grants Pass (Staff)	X	Meyer, Alan	Pacific Power
X	Doan, Ron	Cow Creek Tribe	X	Miller, Kaycee	Rentec Direct
X	DuBose, Chris	First Interstate Bank		Newell, Matt	Providence Health & Services
X	Eagles, Breanne	Moss Adams		Sell, Kathy	City of Eagle Point
X	Elliott, David	Boise Cascade	X	Shillam, Dr. Casey	Southern Oregon University
X	Fahey, Nick	Southern Oregon Sanitation		Spansail, Sarah	City of Medford (ALT)
	Farm, Judy	Tribal One (ALT)	X	Weber, Dr. Randy	Rogue Community College
X	Fischer, Tom	Coldwell Banker Commercial		Weiss, Harry	City of Medford (staff)
X	Holmes, TJ	Travel Medford		Williams, Claudia	Rogue Credit Union
Members Present: 17		Members Absent: 9		Member Vacancies: 2	
	SOREDI Staff		Guests		Entity
X	Padilla, Colleen - Executive Director		X	Tarantsey, Marta	Business Oregon
X	Browne, Amy – Operations Manager		X	Dotterrer, David	Jackson County
X	Roper, Terrill – Business Development Manager		X	Flynn, Ryan	Pacific Power
X	Bohl, Carrie – Communications & Business Support Manager		X	Scott, Cory	Pacific Power
X	Tadlock, Jaymes – Business Development Manager		X	Whitman, Cooper	Pacific Power
X	DeRoo, Ryan - Business Development Loan Manager		X	Pearce, Dana	City of Grants Pass
			X	Donald, Roz	Jackson County Library District

Call to Order, President's Remarks – Tom Fischer, President

The meeting was opened at 3:04 by past president, Chris DuBose, who introduced the new board president, Tom Fischer. President Fischer introduced Kaycee Miller as the new vice president, who has served on the SOREDI board four years. He also introduced Breanne Eagles as the new board secretary/treasurer who was recently appointed to the Executive Committee and has been with the SOREDI board four years.

Aaron Cubic started the new fiscal year off by passing out ice cream to all members. Thank you, Aaron!

Guest Introduction, Comments – Ryan Flynn, President of Pacific Power

Alan Meyer, SOREDI Executive Committee member, introduced new Pacific Power president, Ryan Flynn, Cooper Whitman, Jackson County's regional business representative, and Cory Scott, Pacific Power vice president for community affairs.

Ryan Flynn addressed the directors stating that he was born and raised in Oregon, attending Willamette University. He started at Pacific Corp in 2006 working for Bob Smith until assuming his

current role May 1. Wildfire risk and mitigation is why he's in this role. Pacific Corp was found liable for the Beachie Creek Fire in 2020, bringing heavy litigation costs. Running power is now becoming a liability issue. They are now advocating for a catastrophic wildfire fund for liability and individuals impacted by wildfire, no matter the cause. Utah recently passed this fund for their state. In the short term, the solution to guard against wildfires includes higher sensitivity settings with more frequent power outages and longer times without electricity in order to visually inspect lines. The goal is to reimagine the grid to meet the demands and realities of this new era.

President Fischer noted the Roundtable clipboard initiated at this meeting where directors can sign up to present information at the end of the meeting. Focus is on economic development and important news in business and/or industry. Names will be called from the list to facilitate the Roundtable portion of the meeting. This is intended to help govern time and content for those who have pertinent topics to share.

President Fischer welcomed new directors: David Elliott from Boise Cascade to take over for RJ Glover who has had a change in his responsibilities, Daniel Marple from Herb Pharm, Jessica LeMay from Hunter Communications, Victor Bautista from Avista, and Robb Mayers from Outlier Construction. Dr. Casey Shillam is the alternate for Dr. Rick Bailey who was in Taiwan. It was her second meeting.

Executive Committee Report – Kaycee Miller, Vice President

A request has been made to have more time dedicated to what the EC is working on. The EC reviews pertinent issues brought to their attention by SOREDI and reviews what is important that needs to be brought to the board at large. In response to that request, a more detailed report will be presented moving forward, derived from the EC meeting summary. The three main topics from the last meeting were the City of Medford's new membership contract, the development of SOREDI board committees, and the agenda build.

1. Medford's membership contract – The city has requested to re-evaluate the population formula to determine if it is the most equitable way to determine the jurisdiction membership fee. They have also requested a city liaison be added to the EC, which requires a bylaws change. SOREDI would like to establish a committee to evaluate this request and the population formula to bring to the Board for an official vote. SOREDI has requested an extension, to which they have agreed. The city would also like deliverables considered before payment is made and is determining what those deliverables would be.
2. Committees – Board directors have requested to be more involved in decision making and the EC discussed ways to bring more involvement. It was decided to develop committees that would pull from directors' expertise and experience. It was decided to prioritize two committees: Long-term growth and strategy (membership and Medford contract) and a Facilities Committee to consider options and timing for a permanent SOREDI home. Additional discussion occurs later in the agenda.
3. Agenda build – invite committees to present at board meetings, allow more time for EC sharing and to include staff updates from each staff member.

The EC is always happy to take questions and receive feedback from board directors.

Consent agenda – ACTION – Breanne Eagles, Secretary/Treasurer

The draft May 14, 2024, minutes were presented to the board for approval. Ron Doan made the motion to approve the minutes. Chris Dubose seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

Staff Sharing – Meaningful Connections/Insights – Colleen Padilla

Padilla welcomed **Ryan DeRoo**, the new loan business development manager, bringing SOREDI back to a full staff.

SOREDI is assisting Harry & David with their 90th anniversary tour commemorating the legacy of the pear to Southern Oregon on Sept 4th or 5th. It is for elected officials and by invitation.

SOREDI is working with RCC SBDC in relation to childcare provider training. RCC has received a grant from Business Oregon for \$45,000 to assist with staffing and training for childcare providers. Padilla will be bringing to the EC about possible grant assistance to those who have graduated from the training program and who will have an in-home daycare in Josephine County. This would be creative thinking from what SOREDI has historically done, potentially using startup funds from the Foundation.

Workforce Housing Consortium – Jackson Care Connect - \$50,000 to start consortium that pairs up with HB 3395 funding through 2027. Each district received \$399,000. The consortium would advise/create strategies for the funds. Potentially create grant/lending options for developers of workforce housing.

Weber noted that any startup childcare location would require inspection and other costs. The RCC SBDC is still in discussion about these details.

Staff Sharing – Meaningful Connections/Insights

Colleen Padilla

There were over 149 Business and partner connections by SOREDI in the period of May 13 – August 12, 2024. These connections include capturing site visits, meetings off site, referral, loan inquiries, and written support for projects and enterprise zone applicants.

Amy Browne

Office move – SOREDI is now physically located at 100 E Main St. Suite A, as a temporary office space, pending further recommendation from the Board. Mailing address is PO Box 4672, Medford, OR 97501

SOREDI is assisting Moss Adams with their succession planning luncheon event on August 20th at the Woolworth building conference room. (It has since been postponed to November 5). **Browning** noted that if there are any succession planning needs to send to her.

Innovation Hub – SOREDI has received the initial payment for this \$225,000 implementation grant. The governance committee runs under SOREDI bylaws and is a sub-committee of SOREDI. Kim Freeze has been hired as the Innovation Ecosystem Steward and the committee is considering additional hires/contractors to share in Hub responsibilities. The steward will report to the governance committee for guidance and direction, not SOREDI. Padilla noted that Alan Meyer is the board liaison to the Innovation Hub.

HB3395 – \$5M is being funneled through the state’s eleven economic districts resulting in \$399,000 to each as well as a balance to Tribal organizations. Each district will have three years to spend these housing funds by June 30, 2027. A housing consortium will be organized to focus on how these monies will be used. These funds are for both counties and will be placed in a money market and CD’s to receive interest earnings. Because workforce housing has become such a high need and is in alignment with the CEDS, SOREDI is looking forward to contributing to this effort and finding creative ways to work together with partners.

Terrill Roper

The “Summer Fun!” Industry Tour – Held in July including tours of Rogue Creamery and Weekend Beer in Grants Pass, and the City Center Wine District in downtown Medford. The next industry tour is being planned for September so stay tuned for more details about scheduled stops.

Recruitment leads – There have been several leads regarding various Southern Oregon properties. Business Oregon sent a recruitment request for a food manufacturer looking to expand, for which the former Tree Top building in Medford was included in response. Airport One property was submitted for Project VZAN as well. Project Light Speed is looking at the Cummins property in Talent and is a semiconductor manufacturer. Alan Meyer and Cooper Whitman from Pacific Power have been very helpful getting numbers and data on power. Medford is great a location for moving products due to I-5, the railroad, and MFR.

Currently there is an Industrial and Commercial Lands Portfolio being developed to provide us with an inventory of all key properties for development in the region--documenting challenges, which ones are shovel-ready, existing infrastructure, and more. Dana Pearce, Economic Development Manager for Grants Pass is assisting with this project.

Browning asked how the data is gathered when a lead comes in. Roper responded that he reaches out to developers, and not municipalities at this time and would love to have a contact to have that additional resource. For the portfolio project, they reach out to everyone who might know.

Cates asked if the interest is in for-sale properties or lease? Roper noted that both types of properties are of interest. Cates is providing a good contact as a resource.

Marta Tarantsey added that Business Oregon works with municipalities to get them involved in leads and then involve them when prospective companies arrive to see there are any zoning issues. The region only has one city who has a dedicated development staff member and who has a finger on the pulse of available properties.

Jaymes Tadlock

Succession planning – Provided 9 referrals for the Moss Adams employee stock-ownership plan (ESOP) event. There is demand for this information in this region. Businesses who have a succession plan in place to help keep doors open and jobs secure.

Mergers & Acquisitions plan – Currently, a strategy is being developed to create a cohort of referrals.

Rail Service – Tadlock has been in talks with our regional railroad who is now seeing an opportunity for more rail. The challenge currently is the lack of rail spurs. They are now exploring where new spurs could be built. They are offering a complimentary service to make the drawings for prospective spur

development. Two recent company inquiries respective to rail would be expansions and one would be new to the region.

Ryan DeRoo

First 60-days Report - Meeting with partners, SBDCs, banks, WorkSource, lenders, BBSI, Illinois Valley, Business Oregon, loan clients, and SOREDI members. The first week was Bowlarama and the SOREDI board social at Herb Pharm in Williams.

Within the first 30 days, SOREDI secured a \$50K loan with the approval of the loan committee. There are two loans in the pipeline currently – a hydrated foods manufacturer out of Ashland and a new walk-in medical clinic in Medford.

With the loan committee, SOREDI is initiating creative thinking by working to expand the maximum loan amount to \$500K to match current property values and explore ways to support workforce housing developers, and potentially non-profits, which is outside the scope of current guidelines.

There have been several leads provided including a City of Medford council member referral for a pub in Medford, a restaurant in Selma, and an e-commerce business possibility in Ashland.

Ayres noted that it's a good time to broaden owner occupant businesses, which is in turn good for downtown development.

Strategy & Growth Roundtable

1) Long-Term Strategy & Growth Committee - the top priority committee is the Long-Term Strategy & Growth Committee - 10-12 members are requested to join this committee to look at SOREDI's growth strategy and correlate the City of Medford's membership/contract request and potentially including a designated city liaison on the Executive Committee.

Fischer noted that possible changes could impact how SOREDI does business, engage members, and the general business community.

Browning is interested and wants to know the commitment level required. She thanked **Miller** for the comprehensive EC report.

Doan asked how many cities are represented on the board. Padilla responded that there are five cities and both counties represented.

Miller noted the importance of getting feedback now for branding and growth overall.

Ayres noted the entire board should have a vested interest in SOREDI's growth strategies.

Shillam is interested in serving, along with Juliet Long from RCC.

DuBose recommended keeping the committee to a workable size and noted the effort could shape the next 20 years for the agency.

Fischer noted the need to define deliverables when considering contracts.

Cates suggested a mix of private and public participation.

Holmes noted the importance of the jurisdictions having voice and seeing value in the agency's work.

Miller added that this is a topic that is important to us all. The committees help drive the topics at each board meeting, making it meaningful and impactful. Those interested, contact Tom, Kaycee or Colleen if you have questions or want to join. The committee will be established by September 15. This committee will consist of both private and public representatives. The committee will report back to the February board meeting. Padilla will present the committee results to City of Medford's March 13 Study Session. For this fiscal year Medford is paying the full population formula amount, broken into thirds.

BOARD ACTION

Browning made a motion to make the committee 10-15 board members/non-board members for the Long-Term Growth and Strategy Committee. **DuBose** seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

Facilities Committee

This is a short-term committee scheduled October through March with recommendations reported at the February 2025 board meeting. Recommendations will include whether SOREDI owns or rents, where the location will be, timing, and the amount of funds to be used should the decision be to own.

Committee members will include Board directors, SOREDI members, and community members. The first two to show interest are Robb Mayers from Outlier, and Michelle Steffens from S&J James. Tom Fischer will also participate on the committee. All committee members will be subject to signing a conflict-of-interest form.

BOARD ACTION

Shillam made a motion to create the Facilities Committee as described. **Browning** seconded. All approved. Motion carried.

Padilla will send out a separate email for each committee to provide information to board directors to help them choose their preference.

Economic Development Updates/Needs

Fischer led the Board of Directors roundtable discussion using the clipboard signup for those who wanted floor time to inform the group of economic development topics or news of interest regarding their specific business or industry.

Weber – In July, the RCC board voted to put a \$.09 bond levy measure on the ballot for both counties. This would replace an expiring bond in Josephine County and be new in Jackson County. Jackson county buildings are not suited for education and need to be upgraded. CTE programs for trades will be included.

Ayres – Medford has created a committee to help revitalize downtown. There will be an open house at the Medford Coworking Space on August 16. They have developed the Medford Downtown 2040 plan, which includes a survey to gain feedback on the draft vision and goals. Flyers are being distributed to gain involvement. To read more and access the survey [click here](#).

LeMay – Hunter Communications is working with developers to build apartments for affordable housing. They are looking at packages and pricing for this group and are working with the state-approved lifeline benefit (\$19.25 month), currently with over 800 customers. **Fischer** asked if Hunter receives reduced cost for participating in the program. LeMay responded that they have federal grants for rural service, but they would need to look for additional funding for this effort. Hunter sees it as a benefit for the community and a contribution. Hunter is currently working on expanding in Eugene and McMinnville.

Eagles – Measure 118, formerly IP 17, is a corporate gross receipt tax, C and S corporations included. It is proposing a 3% tax on gross receipts for corporations with more than \$25M in gross receipts, regardless of profitability. The carrot being offered to Oregonians is a rebate proposed to be at \$1600 per person. Guest Ryan Fynn noted that Pacific Power is heavily involved through OBI and offered help to our community to organize efforts against the measure. **Browning** noted that there are organized efforts by those even outside of Oregon. Meyer noted that Grants Pass is writing a letter in opposition. **Padilla** noted that SOREDI is established to be neutral politically but if the board directs us to, we can take a stance. Recently SOREDI posted this information in [the newsletter](#).

Holmes – Medford received funding for a conference center feasibility study that has 3-phase report. Phase 1 determined that there is a market within Medford city limits. Phases 2 & 3 will determine location. The top five locations will be provided along with financial projections and building plans on September 10 when Brian Sjothun will present to the full council first, and then provide a public document. This new venue will have significant economic impact. **Fischer** asked if this project is connected to the multi-story hotel going in by Pear Blossom Park and whether there is any fear of over-saturation in the market. **Holmes** responded that these are separate projects, though they are recommending that a hotel be attached to the conference center. June set a record with the Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) being the third highest post pandemic (TLT). Hotel occupancy is at 78% and this is with 3% in supply of rooms.

Miller – Rentec was in the news, making the Inc. 5000 list for the 8th time in a row. Rentec is the only company in Southern Oregon who made the list and only .08% of Oregon businesses are on the list. The list is for privately owned and fastest growing companies. **Fischer** commended the Rentec product and stated that it's the best out there.

Marta Tarantsey – On August 15 Business Oregon will roll out the childcare infrastructure grant. \$10M is available statewide. The funds will cover feasibility studies, construction, and improvements of immovable assets. Business OR will be working with applicants and guiding them through the process. August 15 is the first round. The goal is to help keep existing childcare providers in business, home-based as well as not-for-profits, tribally owned and private. Possible public and private partnerships.

Adjournment

President Fischer adjourned the meeting at 4:54, thanking the directors for their attendance and invited all to consider committee involvement, choosing which one they would want to contribute to.

Upcoming SOREDI Board Meetings & Events

September 10 – Club NW in Grants Pass

October 8 – Lithia, Medford

November 12 – RVCOG, Central Point

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.*

(A landing page on soredi.org houses documents from this meeting, including presentations. Please click here to access [SOREDI Board of Directors Meetings - Follow-Up Documents - SOREDI](#))