

Economic Alliance Update

November 6, 2023

1:41 p.m.

Present: Commissioner Brummer, Commissioner Pollock, County Manager Ryan Barrett, Becky Butler

Guest(s): Todd Chaput, Richard DeBolt

Recorder: Tammy Martin

Public comment: None

Economic Development Update: Richard DeBolt said three new clients have been looking to manufacture in Lewis County: One furniture making company, and two timber companies.

Richard said the Bioeconomy Development Opportunity (BDO) zone initiative is a certification and regional risk rating program that enables economic development agencies and communities to effectively and credibly disclose feedstock and infrastructure attributes and risks and promote biobased development opportunities to developers and investors around the world. BDO designation is a technical, standards-based assessment of regional manufacturing readiness with respect to local development potential for biofuel, renewable chemical, biogas or bio-product plants. Richard said the report and rating should be out within the next 2 weeks.

Business Development: Richard encouraged Commissioner Pollock to be on the hydrogen panel on December 7. He said there will be an event open to the public in January.

Tourism: Todd spoke about completing the presentation for LTAC on behalf of DLC and White Pass Scenic Byway. WPSB will still retain branding and their 5013C status. Todd said the costs associated with staffing will be reduced due to cross-over in staffing by the Economic Alliance. Todd said approximately 35,000 people follow WPSB's social media campaigns.

Distressed Counties Funding: The last meeting was postponed because of the lack of applications, and the next meeting is in March.

Events: Annual banquet will be February 2.

Letter of Support for CEDS grant: Richard said they would like to add agriculture and tourism to the CEDS list. This would allow for the CEDS list to be federally recognized. There will be a professional company acknowledged by the EDA. Richard said the EA is using a grant to fund the vendor. The EA is asking for the Commissioners support to update the CEDS list.

Meeting adjourned 2:00 p.m.