

Town of Concrete Economic Development Commission
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Town of Concrete
Economic Development Commission

Meeting Agenda

October 11, 2023 - 6 p.m.

**Economic
Development
Commission Members**

Ger van den Engh

Dinah Kinney-Chair
Pro-tem

Anne Bussiere - Chair

Wiley Moore

Vacant

Town Council Liaison

Stephanie Semro

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
4. Minutes
 - July 12, August 9 (meeting canceled), September 13
5. Old Business
 - Airport Recommendations to Council
6. New Business
 - Schedule Meeting with PSE – Discussion/Update on Trail, Visitors Center Marketing, Electric Vehicle Charging Stations
7. Other Business
8. Announcements - Next Workshop – November 8 - 6pm
9. Adjournment

Town of Concrete
Economic Development Commission Meeting
July 12, 2023

Call Meeting to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Economic Commission Members: Ger Ban den Engh, Dinah Kinney, Anne Bussiere, and John Boggs.

Sharon Riels and Wiley Moore absent.

Liaison: Stephanie Semro.

Audience Members Signed In: None.

Staff Present: Andrea Fichter, Clerk Treasurer.

Minutes: April 12, May 10, and June 14, 2023: John made a motion to approve with change regarding the Sedro-Woolley Report and recommendation from previous meeting. Dinah seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Old Business: Ger – Return on Investment for Affordable Housing, Background Information and Discussion: Anne stated the information that Ger had submitted was very interesting.

Ger stated he had submitted three different documents. He stated one of the documents discussed his views on the EDC. He stated that he was surprised and disappointed with how the commission has been functioning. He stated they are an advisory board and not an executive board. He stated he believes an advisory board needs to study and bring more board options to the Council. He stated they make recommendations and do not order the council to do things. He stated he believes this group is to play a more supportive role and to bring as much information to the council as possible so they can make educated decisions. He stated he does not believe the commission should be pushing personal agendas.

Anne stated she was surprised by the income level information that Ger had provided. Stephanie asked where that information came from. Ger stated that he got the information from official census information. Anne stated that she believes that three people having a much higher annual income could sway some of these numbers with the population being so low. Ger stated, referring to the meeting some of the commission members attended in Sedro-Woolley, that they are not doing much better than Concrete. Anne stated that Wolley has been used as a comparison because they are close.

John stated they had not given the council a directive but a recommendation.

Anne asked if there was any other old business.

John stated that he does not appreciate Ger suggesting how stupid the rest of them are. Ger stated that is not what he was trying to say.

John stated that Ger had an idea regarding more trails in the area and has only done very cursory research but spends a lot of time researching other commissioners' ideas to discourage. Ger stated this feels like a personal attack and believes it is uncalled for. John stated that more work could be done on trails, instead of criticizing everyone else's ideas and work. John stated the meeting with Woolley was to gather information and to get ideas. He stated the recommendations from the EDC to the council were well received.

Anne stated we are all different and will have different ideas. She stated she does not believe the council has given them any real direction. She stated this commission needs to work together. Anne stated that if Ger does not like how the other commission members are working on items, then maybe this commission is not for him.

Anne stated the EDC also gave a recommendation to council on Planning Commission membership, which was also well received.

Ger stated he wants to work on the trail system plan and has a meeting set up with Val to take walks around town and see what needs to be updated, removed, or added. He stated that he believes John's comments were uncalled for.

Ger stated that Concrete is not unique in its struggles. He stated he wants to work to make Concrete a more attractive place to live rather than focusing on the commercial aspect.

Anne stated that a partnership with Sedro-Woolley could be nice and could utilize the trail between Concrete and Sedro-Woolley for some combined events.

New Business: Anne reported on the meeting that she and Dinah had with the Mayor regarding workforce start. She stated they discussed starting programs within the town and at the schools to teach them basic skills, how to act or dress during interviews, how to count change, and perform basic customer service. She stated it would assist kids in getting ready for the workforce. She stated this would be a community ran program, outside of school. She stated they are planning to have another meeting later this month before the new school year starts.

Stephanie stated they are also trying to get a program up here for adults as well through Community Action.

Discussion ensued on the different options for mentoring kids and giving them options.

Other Business: Anne stated with the new change to the Planning Commission membership rules, they will need to pick an EDC commission member to attend these meetings when they start.

It was asked if the next meeting regarding airport items, could be held at the Pilots Lounge. Andrea stated that she would just need to advertise for that, and post location change ahead of time. She stated that zoom would not be available.

Announcements: Next workshop will be August 9 at 6pm at the Pilots Lounge.

Adjournment: John Boggs made a motion for adjournment at 6:34 p.m. Dinah Kinney seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Anne Bussiere, Chair

Attest: Dinah Kinney, Chair pro-tem

**Town of Concrete
Economic Development Commission Workshop
September 13, 2023**

Call Meeting to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Economic Commission Members: Ger Ban den Engh, Dinah Kinney, Anne Bussiere, Wiley Moore (via phone), and John Boggs.

Anne reported that Sharon Riels had submitted her resignation.

Liaison: Stephanie Semro.

Audience Members Signed In: Concrete Herald.

Staff Present: Andrea Fichter, Clerk Treasurer.

Minutes: Andrea stated the minutes will be presented at the regular meeting next month.

Old Business: Wiley – Airport Discussion: Anne stated that she read through most of the packet. She asked what a through the fence agreement is. Andrea explained what those are and how many there are. Andrea stated these are agreements with pilots that own property adjacent to the airport that allows them to taxi from their property to the airport.

Wiley discussed the list that he had prepared back in January. He stated item #1 was getting the BSP updated and adopted, which he said was approved by Council in May but to his embarrassment has not yet been recorded. Andrea stated there were some issues with the signature blocks on the document to be recorded. She stated it is still an official, approved document, it just has not been recorded yet.

It was stated that #2 on the list was the ALP, which is currently at WSDOT for their review.

Wiley stated item #3 was to conduct a survey of current leaseholders with vacant lots to see why they are not developing. Andrea stated this would be an easy item to complete. John stated that maybe the survey goes out with a fact sheet that states what they can do and what they cannot do. Andrea stated, that may be difficult because what they can and cannot do may depend on what type or size of hangar they are wanting to construct. She also stated that hangars do not necessarily have to be large enough to house a plane but must be aviation related so the person could have a glider, drones or use it as a shop for working on aviation related parts, as examples.

It was also stated to maybe add questions to the survey asking about other needs, airport manager and/or having committees.

Wiley stated there is one lot that needs to be reviewed for hangar construction. He stated the leaseholder has been sitting on it since 2016 and should be passed the 5-year build rule. Andrea asked which lot he was referring to. Wiley stated lot #10. Andrea stated that lot had their site plan

reviewed, which at that time was enough to satisfy the 5-year build rule. She stated that has now been changed so that site plan approval is only good for a year and building permits must be secured before the end of that year.

Discussion ensued on the value of the airport versus the value of properties in the Town Center district.

Wiley stated that he would like to see a committee of leaseholders formed that could advise the Council.

Wiley also discussed item #6 regarding the management of the fuel station. He stated it should not be Andrea's job to have to research pricing and from what vendor that fuel should be purchased.

Further discussion ensued on suggestions for encouraging leaseholders to build, and the list of items provided by Wiley.

Wiley stated that he would like to see the EDC endorse these airport items and to make a recommendation to Council for their implementation. It was a consensus of the commission to recommend these items to council with the EDC endorsement.

New Business: None.

Other Business: Anne and Dinah – Workforce Development: Anne discussed workforce development and the need for it in this community. She reported on a meeting she attended at the Burlington Chamber. She stated there were a lot of people in attendance and she has a list of good resources for people who are looking to improve their chances at employment.

It was stated that it would be good to see if they could get some of the organizations that were at the Burlington meeting to do a similar workshop or meeting in this area.

Dinah discussed Job Corp and the great opportunities that this program provides as well.

Announcements: Next meeting will be October 11.

It was also announced that Planning Commission will meet next Tuesday, and that Dinah will be attending for the EDC.

John Boggs stated that he would like to remain on the EDC distribution list but at this time he must submit his resignation due to his commitments to the HPLC and Planning Commission.

Adjournment: Dinah Kinney made a motion for adjournment at 7:07 p.m. John Boggs seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Anne Bussiere, Chair

Attest: Dinah Kinney, Chair pro-tem

To Concrete Town Council

During our Economic Development Commission meetings we have come to several points of agreement on the importance of the Concrete Airport to the citizens of the Town of Concrete and to the economic vitality of the community. One of our members owns a hangar at the Concrete Airport and has presented a list of several important issues that should be addressed and we concur with his thoughts.

We have had some discussion of several of these items and would recommend the Town Council review them and take whatever actions necessary to implement what can be done. We know that some may be out of our hands or take several years to complete, but it would be prudent to actively work on these goals.

We submit for your consideration this list of suggestions for the airport.

Sincerely,

Concrete Economic Development Commission

Anne Bussiere, commission chair

Dinah Kinney, chair pro tem

Wiley Moore

Ger van den Engh

October 11, 2023

Economic Development Commission
Town of Concrete,
Washington 98237

Council,

Please accept this document as a draft of fact finding and further suggestions for the Economic Development of the Mears Field Airport, Town of Concrete. The airport is likely the largest single contiguous land within the Town of Concrete that presently contributes significantly to the economics of the Town of Concrete. With continued attention the economics could add greater benefits both in revenue, job creation, and town efficiencies. A PowerPoint presentation is also attached to be used as a starting point for any public presentation. Please find attached a fact sheet that may answer many questions.

The following are suggested Town of Concrete action Items that can be measured and demonstrate improvements in the Mears Field economics of Concrete.

1. Initiate/complete a new Binding site Plan of the airport property to include utilities easements and delineate any recent lot-line changes. The easements will be key to eventual water and sewer engineering study.
2. Complete (with public input) the current contracted Airport Layout Plan.
 - a. This needs to be done soon to eliminate the need to shorten the 07/25-- 2602' runway surface prior to the slurry seal slated for Spring of 2023.
 - b. Define FAA Part 77 requirements both north and south of the runway. This will define recommended use of land and aviation restrictions associated with land use.
3. The present airport committee as defined by Ordinance 2.16 is not effective. Presently the airport "manager" functions also as the Airport Committee. There is no oversight or management of the manager by the committee. It is recommended this ordinance must be modified or minimally state two council members MUST comprise the Airport Committee.
4. The town improve access to the hangars and lots that don't lie on Airport Way. Presently, the vehicle access/roadway makes utilization of lots difficult for commercial deliveries or even access to the interior lots.
5. Refit the pilot lounge for enhanced value to provide increased revenue.
 - a. Reexamine the present rental agreements with any present lounge user. The 2023 town budget would indicate low rental revenue of the lounge is planned for 2023. The budget (see attached) would indicate the weekly church service rental is about \$4 per week.
 - b. Explore other revenue or community use purposes for the lounge.
6. Manage the fuel concession in concert with aviation experienced persons for a better return. After 3 years of losing operation the fuel concession in 2022 turned into a break-even business. Properly managed the fuel concession has promise of being a profitable operation.
7. Provide better security by installing automated gates and improved fencing.
8. Assist with the visual appearance of the airport by maintaining hangar number two. Presently, removal of an old water feature and occasional lawn trimming would improve the airport's general appearance.
9. Join with Airplane Owners and Pilots Organization (AOPA) professional aviation group to better manage the airport and educate the town's students.
10. Conduct a survey of current land leaseholders to understand the reluctance of building a hangar/aviation-use on a Mears field leased lot.
 - a. Understand the perceived notion that a hangar requires water and sewer.
 - b. Understand any other less obvious impediments to building.
11. The town should assemble a study group to consider selling hangar #2 for its highest and best use. Consideration should be given to selling other town property (old fire station, vacant lots, and present town shop) could accumulate enough capital to build a modern town shop on the sewer plant property.

This document should well describe the airport gem that needs polishing to provide economically pathways for the Town of Concrete to prosper and utilize the asset it possesses. The EDC should join in promoting the airport and realize the need and its importance to the Town of Concrete.

Wiley

MEARS FIELD (3W5) TOWN OF CONCRETE AIRPORT
FACT SHEET JANUARY 01, 2023

- The Mears Field (3W5) Airport is wholly owned by the Town of Concrete much like Silo Park.
- The airport is comprised of greater than 40 acres of land.
- Those 40 acres are divided by a 2017 Concrete Binding Site Plan (BSP attached-recorded in Skagit County) into lots and allocations for pilot lounge, fuel concessions, runway, taxiways and originally 51 lots (the number of lots are fewer due to lot line revisions).
- Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) Part 77 gives guidance to the engineering design of an airport and aviation easements.
- To demonstrate the compliance with Part 77 the sponsor/town is permitted to produce an engineered Airport Layout Plan (ALP). The town has chosen to expend considerable money to this end. This ALP may be made a matter of record for use at the FAA. The present ALP was approved in February of 2008 and is available on the town web site.
- The town has engaged an engineering firm to complete a new ALP for submission to the FAA. That work was projected to be completed in June of 2022 but was only received in fall of 2022. A draft has been completed and public comment has been accepted. The draft has been forwarded to the Washington Department of Transportation (WASHDOT) for review and eventual local public review before final acceptance.
- If an airport sponsor accepts FAA funding the compliance of FAA Part 77 is compulsory. FAA Part 77 is considered to only be guidance if no FAA money is accepted. However, it should be noted that any development within the near area of an airport has responsibility to meet Part 77 guidance.
- The town has not accepted any Federal funds for use at Mears Field.
- The airport lots are leased from the town by way of a land lease. Generally, the lease is very restrictive. Annual lease rent modifications are made and adjusted to CPI increases, however limited to 3%. Every five years the base rent is adjusted to compete with other local airport land lease rates, presently the lease is approximately \$0.10 per square foot.
- The lease does not define in detail additional assessments charged by the town. In recent years this has proven to be an issue of annual lease modifications. In summary, the leaseholders are assessed the airport insurance cost, funds to be used as matching funds of WASHDOT Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), and until recently an assessment to share costs with the town for water and sewer engineering to and on the airport. It should be noted the contracted firm to do this engineering is the same firm that has produced the delayed draft ALP. In that document the off-airport delineations of the sewer and water service lines are incorrect.
- There are 3 "through-the-fence" agreements with adjoining property owners that generate airport revenue.
- In 2019 the airport leaseholders agreed to accept assessments for any fuel concession shortfall. A general view is the leaseholders share costs but no active partnership in the fuel concession operation. There is an opinion of the users that better revenue and profit could be made with a joint cooperative management of the fuel concession. There is no incentive for the town to operate the concession at a profit as shortfalls are made up by the leaseholders.
- The through-the-fence agreements require those leaseholders to also share the fuel assessment.
- WASHDOT determines disbursement of state aviation tax proceeds for aviation improvements. Funds are very limited, and airports stand in line to receive funding. The current Washington State Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) considers possible improvements for Mears Field to be runway overlayment, security fencing, helipad relocation, tree removal, and runway shortening.
- Shortening the runway has economic and engineering implications for any flight operations at Mears Field. The recent ALP draft proposes the runway to be further shortened. This problem needed to be defined before the runway overlayment was done in September 2023.
- In recent years four residents engineered, installed, and connected a costly 8" town mandated water line. Their engineering design was completed to the center of the airport hangar areas but installed only

as far as needed for their hangars. This engineering work has been presented to the town but lost in recent staffing turnovers. That engineering work should be recovered and considered in any design work.

- Those residents shouldered the extreme expense of installation and additional town connection fees estimated to be greater than \$10K each.
- Unleased land exists along the south fence-line. There have been suggestions the town wants to build an industrial zone in that area. The ALP will determine if the FAA Part 77 guidance can be met and the viability of that plan. The town will also need to engineer and install proper road and utility access to affect that land utilization. The obstacles seem extreme for that use of the south fence-line. A better use would be for fly-in camping spots of which there is great desire of the Puget Sound pilot group.
- The departure of the past museum made a cost-effective sale to the town for the fuel concession and a hangar (#2) for the town equipment shed.
- The pilot lounge was built and paid for by the airport leaseholders. The town enjoys its use for town meetings and rental income. A church group has held Sunday services there. The lounge should soon be remodeled as the facilities are aged. Greater revenue should be explored as the present revenue is below market rental rates.
- Typically, the town in association with the leaseholders have sponsored an annual (ex-COVID years 2020, 2021) old-fashioned fly-in. The fly-in provides merchant revenue and visibility for the town and local area.
- No FAA funds are accepted. No state money has been accepted in the recent years. The leaseholders are taxed on real property that is collected by Skagit County. The town gets a portion of those county taxes. The airport is a profit center for the town and possibly the best local return on investment.
- The airport connects emergency services. The airport has been used as a location for the coroner pick-up of body bags brought out of the mountains, accident victims airlifted, and first responder fire crews stage from the airport. Angel Flights (donated flight services for families deemed worthy of need) have been operated from 3W5. There is a Washington aviation group called Disaster Airlift Response Team (DART) whose purpose is to fly supplies in the case of disaster. Summer of 2023 fire crews operated 7 helicopters from Mears Field to fight the Sour Dough fire east of Concrete.
- Mears Field is ideally located for flights east or west bound for emergency airport services and perfectly situated to meet aviation fuel requirements when overflying the Cascades.
- It is not publicized but there are businesses operating from the airport that supply parts to fishing fleets around the world, FAA approved photo flights, solar energy products, FAA repairmen activities, fuel concession, and home businesses.
- Future partnership with the Concrete school system could build a common bond of interest in education of the town young people.
- Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) provides resources for Airport Advocacy and High School STEM curriculum. Maximum use of the AOPA knowledge would assist in economic and local education of the Town of Concrete.
 - A search of this site will provide ample information on economic improvement of local airports.
 - <https://www.aopa.org/advocacy/airports-and-airspace/airport-advocacy>
 - AOPA has designated Jon Gunnarsson as a local representative to assist in local economic needs. He should be utilized as that local expert.
 - AOPA has developed a high school STEM curriculum for use by educators. AOPA will train and provide learning materials for teachers.
 - <https://youcanfly.aopa.org/high-school/high-school-curriculum>

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
2	AIRPORT FUND										
3											
4				Budget 2022	Budget 2023				Budget 2022	Budget 2023	
5	Revenue										
6	Beginning Cash			\$0.00	\$0.00		Beginning Balance		\$ 4,500.00	\$ 25,000.00	
7	Unreserved Beg Fund Bal.			\$0.00	\$1,400.00		Interest earned		\$ 20.00	\$ -	
8	Total Beginning Balance			\$0.00	\$1,400.00		Total		\$ 4,520.00	\$ 25,000.00	
9							Transfers				
10	TAXES						Transfer from Airport		\$ 8,000.00	\$ 3,800.00	
11	Leasehold Tax			\$0.00	\$0.00		Transfer from Airport-CFP			\$ 4,773.00	
12	Total Taxes			\$0.00	\$0.00		Total		\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,573.00	
13											
14	Fuel Sales										
15	Fuel Sales			\$17,500.00	\$20,480.00		Total		\$ 12,520.00	\$ 33,573.00	
16	Total Fuel Sales			\$17,500.00	\$20,480.00						
17											
18	Miscellaneous Revenue										
19	Waiting List			\$600.00	\$150.00		Expenses				
20	Lease Insurance			\$3,634.00	\$3,634.00						
21	Interest			\$50.00	\$0.00		DEBT SERVICE				
22	Pilot Lounge rental Hourly			\$600.00	\$200.00		Backhoe		\$ 850.00	\$ 850.00	
23	Airport Leases			\$19,750.00	\$20,400.00						
24	KSVU Rental			\$0.00	\$0.00		Capital Expenditures				
25	Lease Assessments Fuel			\$3,500.00	(\$230.00)		Capital Expenditures/EXP		\$ 11,670.00	\$ 1,500.00	
26	Airport Lease CFP			\$9,500.00	\$4,773.00		ALP Update		\$ -	\$ 1,500.00	
27	Airport Tie Downs			\$0.00	\$0.00		WSDOT CFP EXP/WAT-SEW EXT		\$ -	\$ 29,723.00	
28	Pilot Lounge rent Monthly			\$600.00	\$0.00		Total		\$ 11,670.00	\$ 32,723.00	
29	Misc			\$0.00	\$0.00						
30	Lease Deposits			\$2,000.00	\$0.00						
31	Total Misc			\$40,234.00	\$28,927.00		TOTAL USES AIRPORT RESERVE		\$ 12,520.00	\$ 33,573.00	
32											
33	Transfers										
34	Transfer in Partial Property Tax			\$12,500.00	\$12,500.00						
35	Transfer from General			\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00		Airport Reserve				
36	Total Transfers			\$42,500.00	\$42,500.00						
37							Beginning Cash and Investment				
38	Total			\$100,234.00	\$93,307.00		Unreserved Beg Fund Bal		\$ 4,500.00	\$ 25,000.00	
39							Total Beg Cash and Inv		\$ 4,500.00	\$ 25,000.00	
40	Expenses										
41	Clerk			\$12,650.00	\$10,244.00		Interest and Other Earnings				
42	Deputy Clerk			\$5,273.00	\$5,817.00		Interest Earned		\$ 20.00	\$ -	
43	Groundskeeper			\$772.00	\$866.00		Total Interest and Other		\$ 20.00	\$ -	
44	PW director			\$5,850.00	\$7,150.00						
45	PW Assistant			\$3,595.00	\$4,062.00		Transfers				
46	PW Main Worker			\$3,678.00	\$4,004.00		Transfer from airport		\$ 8,000.00	\$ 3,800.00	
47	Social Security			\$2,550.00	\$3,000.00		Transfer from airport-CFP		\$ -	\$ 4,773.00	
48	Retirement			\$3,550.00	\$4,150.00		Total		\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,573.00	
49	I&I			\$890.00	\$1,250.00						
50	Unemployment			\$75.00	\$100.00		Total Airport Reserve		\$ 12,520.00	\$ 33,573.00	
51	Med/Dental			\$10,500.00	\$10,750.00						
52	Family Leave			\$0.00	\$0.00		Town Share of WASED			\$ 12,000.00	
53	Gas/Diesel			\$1,000.00	\$1,100.00		2023 Reserve should be			\$ 45,573.00	
54	Supplies			\$200.00	\$250.00						
55	Office Supplies			\$475.00	\$1,000.00						
56	Misc Exp			\$7,862.00	\$8,372.00						
57	Engineer			\$725.00	\$800.00						
58	Clothing allow			\$204.00	\$155.00						
59	Merchant Services			\$265.00	\$300.00						
60	Online Banking			\$25.00	\$25.00						
61	Airport M/R			\$3,250.00	\$2,500.00						
62	Insurance/bonds			\$3,700.00	\$3,634.00						
63	Bias Support Agreement			\$275.00	\$400.00						
64	State Audit			\$1,750.00	\$0.00						
65	Insurance-AWC			\$3,194.00	\$3,700.00						
66	Codify Ordinances			\$35.00	\$35.00						
67	Information Tech Support			\$50.00	\$50.00						
68	Legal Services			\$750.00	\$650.00						
69	Copier Lease			\$175.00	\$350.00						
70	Assessments Return			\$300.00	\$0.00						
71	Lease Payments Returns			\$500.00	\$0.00						
72	Lease Insurance returns			\$100.00	\$0.00						
73	Fuel Station Expenses			\$14,250.00	\$0.00						
74	Airport Utilities			\$1,300.00	\$4,000.00						
75	Water and Sewer			\$1,875.00	\$1,920.00						
76	Danger Tree Removal			\$390.00	\$0.00						
77	Leasehold Excise Tax			\$0.00	\$0.00						
78	Lease Deposit Refunds			\$200.00	\$0.00						
79											
80	Total			\$93,234.00	\$84,734.00						
81											
82	Transfers										
83	Transfer to airport reserves			\$8,000.00	\$3,800.00						
84	Transfer to airport reserves-CFP				\$4,773.00						
85	Total			\$8,000.00	\$8,573.00						
86											
87	Total Uses Airport Fund			\$100,234.00	\$93,307.00						
88											
89											
90											
91											

