



Present: Paul Tuss, Paul Reichert, Jim Atchison, Pam Haxby-Cote, Jim Davison, Roger Hopkins, Jennifer Ewan, Stephanie Ray, Tracy McIntyre, Kathie Bailey, Jason Rittal, Brian Obert, John Rogers, Sarah Converse, Cheryl Ulmer, Andy Shirliff, Chris Cerquone, Leslie Messer, Tim Guardipee, Mike O'Rourke, Kellie Danielson, Luke Walawander, Rick Edwards and Gloria O'Rourke.

Via Phone: Brett Doney, Anne Boothe, Russ Fletcher, Steve Arveschoug, and Sean Becker

1. Welcome, Introductions, Approval of Minutes

Following a welcome and introductions, President Paul Tuss requested a motion to approve the February 12, 2016 minutes. Leslie moved to approve with the amount of \$5,000 added to the information on MEDA joining MIC as a voting member. Rick seconded the motion; motion carried.

2. Financials

a. Review of Financial Reports – Rick Edwards, Treasurer
 Rick reported MEDA financials are in good standing. After a review of the reports, Kellie moved to approve them; Kathie seconded the motion. Motion carried.

b. Sponsorship request for July Symposium – John Rogers, GOED
 John Rogers requested a sponsorship from MEDA for the July 13 – 14 Main Street Montana Peer to Peer Innovation Symposium, to be held in Billings. In the future, this conference would be sustainable outside of state government and merged with other efforts such as Invest in Success. It is hoped this type of conference will fill the void with the absence of the Max Baucus economic development events.

John asked MEDA to be a major sponsor at \$5,000 along with the Montana Ambassadors. Business owners and entrepreneurs are featured but to fully build Montana's entrepreneur eco-system there is a need to have the resource people available to tap. Plans are still in the works but MEDA members would be used for Solution Rooms to provide resource information. The main site for the conference will be the Crown Plaza with overflow at the Northern; 300 – 400 people are expected. Key takeaways: learn new insights, make connections, and obtain new tools. MEDA would be asked to help promote and attend the symposium.

Discussion:

MEDA and MT Ambassadors would be the main sponsors at this level. MEDA would be recognized as the resource organization and could have a table for attendees to join MEDA.

⇒ Action Item:

John Rogers, Andy Shirliff, Davey Madison	Add Brett Doney and Tracy McIntyre to the planning committee loop for Peer-to-Peer Innovation Symposium.	ASAP
Tracy McIntyre and Brett Doney	Work with planning committee for Innovation Symposium to spotlight the economic	ASAP

	developer's role.	
Gloria	Organize table for membership sign-up	July 1

- c. Marketing Costs – including travel for MIC, MACo, etc. – Tracy McIntyre
 Tracy reported on the banner bugs progress; a new design will be available soon. Regarding the videos, Roger and Tracy suggested MEDA not create new videos, but partner with those who already have them. This would engage MEDA members and suggest the members create their own videos. MEDA would then use the state film office or possibly hire an editor to create video products. Regarding travel costs for partnering activities such as MACo and MIC, Tracy estimated \$10,000 per year.

⇒ **Action Item:**

Gloria and MEDA Members	Conduct a video inventory of the membership and create a point of access for the existing video.	ASAP
Gloria and MEDA Members	MEDA members are to send Gloria their project photos and success stories for marketing purposes.	ASAP
Marketing Committee – add Guy Gregory, MCDC to the committee.	Request a price reduction from CTA; have banner bugs ready for the symposium.	May 15/July 1

- d. Invitation to serve as panelist for Western Rural Development Center on Resource Team Assessments
 Gloria reported she received funds from our Idaho partners to travel to the WRDC conference thus no request will be made to the MEDA board for funds. She will present on a panel with Idaho and Wyoming to share about MEDA's process and learn best practices from other models.

3. Committee and/or Activity Updates

- a. Legislative Committee – Rick Edwards

1. MEDA Legislative Agenda

a. 2019 Programs. Rick reported it is hoped the funding for Montana's key economic programs will be in the Governor's budget with Plan B to have the funding in a bill. In addition, Sarah suggested monthly calls begin now to prepare for the session. Sarah explained a simple extension of the sunset for the 2019 programs is no longer possible as the statute states those funds are to be shifted to the pension fund. Thus, unless the programs are supported in the Governor's Budget, new funding must be found for the 2019 programs.

Sean reported he has penciled out a series of alternatives for funding. MDOC is in the process now of putting details to the plans and should have them available this summer. The Budget Office is interested in finding a solution for the 2.375 million each fiscal year and MDOC hopes to resolve the 2019 funding issue in the 2017 session.

b. Education and Outreach. Gloria reported MLCT and MACo have already held over a dozen rural area meetings to learn of and share legislative issues; ten more in more populated areas are being planned. MEDA needs to partner with MLCT and MACo to join their town meetings and legislative information sessions. Cheryl noted each political party is having meetings around the state; MEDA should ask to give a presentation at each meeting.

c. US Dept. of Labor Overtime Rule

After discussing the issue, the MEDA Board decided to let groups such as the Montana Nonprofit Association and others who have this issue on their platforms to take a lead on this issue. MEDA will continue to observe.

- b. Scholarship and Professional Development Committee – Anne Boothe and Kellie Danielson
 Kellie thanked Rick and NorthWestern Energy for support in the amount of \$5,000 for MEDA Professional Development. Anne and Kellie will meet soon to discuss professional development for the fall conference. The deadline for 2nd Quarter MEDA Scholarships is early in May.
- c. Awards - Kathie Bailey

Kathie said the Awards Committee will meet in the next month to tweak any changes from the first round of grant awards and send an announcement out in early June or July. Applications will be due September 1st. Kathie encouraged much more board participation in submitting nominations.

- d. Spring Conference Debrief – Pam Haxby-Cote
Pam was thanked by the board for doing an outstanding job of host.
- e. August Board Meeting and Meet-Up with MTA
It has been discussed and agreed that MEDA and MT Ambassadors will convene for a working lunch on August 11th. MEDA will hold a separate board meeting in the morning and then join a networking lunch with Montana Ambassador’s board. The Montana Ambassador Business Open pre-tournament reception is that evening at Fairmont; the tournament is on the 12th at Old Works.
- f. MEDA Fall Conference – Polson
The MEDA Fall Conference will be held in Polson, October 12 – 14th. Gubernatorial candidates should get the date on their calendars now.

⇒ **Action Items:**

MEDA Board and Gloria	Learn the dates of the pending MACo/MLCT meetings and share them with the board; Gloria will track the board response for who will participate.	ASAP
Gloria	Send a notice every month to encourage MEDA members to arrange a visit with a candidate and include a business person who will share how the use of the program(s) assisted the business.	September Note - How to track these visits are indeed happening?
Paul Tuss	Set up a meeting with several from the MEDA Board to visit with high level officials regarding funding for the 2019 programs.	Prior to May 30th
Mike and Gloria with Program Directors	Gather program summary report info for MEDA Membership use and the 2017 Legislative session	July
Rick and Sarah	Begin scheduling monthly meetings for the Legislative Committee	June
Kellie and Anne	Professional Development and Scholarship Committee to meet.	June
Kathie and Awards Committee	Tweak last year’s application criteria; announce award round is open Sept. 1 st .	
Paul Tuss and Gypsy	Contact Gubernatorial Candidates for October 12 – 14 MEDA conference.	May

4. MIC – Jason Rittal and Brian Obert

- a. Members of MIC and Update
Jason reported on the newly elected board for Montana Infrastructure Coalition (MIC): Webb Brown, Chair; Vice Chairs Jason Rittal and Tim Burton; Secretary Jon Metropoulos, and three At Large including Jay Skoog, Cary Hegreberg, and Chris Cavazos. RFP’s have been received for the project and will be awarded soon. Tim Guardipee asked for Tribal members to be notified and included.
- b. Jason and Multiple Proxies
Jason wanted the board to know that serving as MEDA’s representative he may also have the proxy for other entities. The MEDA Board understands that Jason may have a “yes” vote for one organization and a “no” vote for another as he represents MEDA. Sarah, Jason, Brian and Tracy were thanked for their participation in MIC.

⇒ **Action Items:**

Gloria	Send out MIC Narrative/Talking Points to the board.	Done
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5. Strategic Imperatives Update

- a. Discussion of need to re-format existing Strategic Plan to include benchmarks, etc.
Jason and the board observed that MEDA has good momentum going and should continue that rather than take the time to reformat the current plan. An evaluation can be made by looking at the previous year's activities and observing progress.
- b. Partnership with MDOC and Partnership Building
 1. Contract with MDOC – Sean Becker. Meg O’Leary, Karyl Tobel, and Sean Becker were thanked profusely for putting in place the new contract between MDOC and MEDA. It was felt an MOU was not needed at this time as the contract work items are detailed.
 2. Conflict of Interest – Sean Becker.
Sean was told by the State’s legal team that he nor any member of MDOC may serve on the MEDA Board as a monetary contract is in place between the two entities. Sean asked for the minutes of the meeting to reflect that as a state employee with fiduciary responsibilities to both MDOC and MEDA, he hereby submits his resignation to the MEDA Board. The Executive Committee will review the ex-officio language in the by-laws and determine if a new category of board member needs to be added which would include those representing partners such as MDOC, USDA, SBA, HUD, etc.
- c. Marketing – Tracy McIntyre
As marketing activities were discussed previously, Tracy strongly urged board members to become more involved with social media and “like” each other’s pages and the MEDA page.
- d. Relevancy – Steve Arveschoug and James Grunke
Steve said he and James will meet to determine progress and begin addressing other issues beyond infrastructure as the strategic plan outlines.
- e. Membership – Roger Hopkins
Roger said that for various reasons including his “ex officio” status, a new Chair is needed for this committee. Gloria is to contact Chris Cerquone and ask him to serve as Chair and re-engage this group.

⇒ Action Items:

Executive Committee	Review by-laws regarding Ex Officio and determine if a new category of board member should be identified to provide ex officio status for MDOC, USDA, SBA, HUD, etc.	Prior to August Board Meeting
Steve and James – Relevancy Committee	Hold a meeting to review progress and next steps	Prior to August Board Meeting
Gloria, Chris, Membership Committee	Gloria is to contact Chris to serve as Membership Chair, then hold a meeting.	May/June

6. Working Group Updates

- a. Resource Team Working Group
Gloria reported the Deer Lodge assessment went very well with the process including for the first time ever the community’s growth plan as part of the team’s report. Ronan’s assessment is scheduled for May 9th and 10th. The RTA Working Group is thinking of offering a second form of an assessment along the lines of “Kickstart your Growth Plan” to help community’s take action on their plans. The MEDA Board cautioned that due diligence is needed to obtain background on the plan (is it controversial, out-of-date, etc.) before MEDA becomes engaged.
- b. RLF Working Group
This group continues to meet monthly and is a peer-to-peer informational and best practices exchange.
- c. CRDC/EDD Working Group

Paul Tuss mentioned the CRDC/EDD group is asking for EDA to hold peer reviews in Montana rather than having all of the CRDC/EDD representatives spend funds to travel to Denver. It is hoped this could be arranged for the summer meeting the CRDC/EDD Working Group holds each summer.

7. Misc.

a. Luke Walawander verbally submitted his resignation to the MEDA Board. Luke will be attending Montana Code School in May. Luke was wished the very best in his new adventure and thanked for his service to MEDA. Gloria is to contact Tracy, Nominating Committee Chair, to consider this open position on the board.

⇒ **Action Items:**

Gloria and Tracy	Nominating Committee Meeting	ASAP
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b. Brett encouraged the board to consider holding a MEDA conference with other entities or events such as the International Trade Day conference coming up on May 2nd. Brett said our partnerships would grow stronger and Montana's economic development would benefit. Several on the MEDA Board felt this would be a good idea if MEDA's issues and priorities did not get lost in the event or become a third tier of a conference.