



118 E. Seventh St; Suite 3F Anaconda, MT 59711
Ph: 406.563.5259 www.medamembers.org
info@medamembers.org

MEDA Board Meeting

February 9, 2017

11:00am – 2:00pm

Great Northern Hotel, Western Star Room

Dial in: 712.432.0175 pin 217279

Present: Stephanie Ray, Jason Rittal, Paul Tuss, Rick Edwards, Sean Becker, Davey Madison, Brian Obert, Doug Mitchell, James Grunke, Mike O'Rourke, Sarah Converse, Ken Fichtler, and Gloria O'Rourke.

On the phone: Jim Davison, Jim Atchison, Jerry Meerkatz, Anne Boothe, Tim Guardipee, Brett Doney, Steve Arveschoug, Kathie Bailey

1. Welcome, Introductions – Paul Tuss

Paul Tuss welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Doug Mitchell to share thoughts and comments with the group. Doug provided an update on the Legislative session and said the number MDOC would like to see for economic development funding is “more.” Doug said MDOC is very supportive of economic development programs, but cannot support requests for funds not included in the Governor’s Budget.

2. Approval of October Minutes

Sarah moved to approve the minutes; Rick Edwards seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. Professional Development and Scholarship Committee Update – Brett Doney and Anne Boothe

Brett requested this topic early in the meeting as he had another commitment. Brett reported this committee has met and recommended the following based on survey responses:

- a. Professional Development Training to take place two half days per year, prior to a MEDA conference. The topics would cover economic development programs and tools and be presented in the format of specific projects and how they used specific programs.
- b. In addition, two webinars would be provided in quarters that do not contain the fall or spring conference on topics of interest to economic developers.
- c. A presentation should be compiled to share with leadership around the state for members to use to inform city/county leadership and/or community leadership on the form and function of economic development.
- d. Although cost is an obstacle, bring back a national development course such as IEDC, or NDC. The \$50,000 price tag for the series is substantial; due to turnovers across the state, however, there is a need for this training.
- e. Consider bringing something similar to the Ellensburg training to Montana as discussed in our last meeting. It could be a train-the-trainer course without an intention of replacing the Ellensburg experience but rather supplementing it.

The Scholarship Rounds for 2017 have not yet begun with this meeting pending. It was noted the budget listed \$5,000 rather than \$6,000 which Anne felt was the normal amount.

Action Item: Anne is to set the schedule for the 2017 round of scholarships.

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4. Financials – Rick Edwards, Treasurer

a. Review of Financial Reports

Rick reviewed the 2016 Year End Financial Reports. Although there was a deficit, financially MEDA is in good shape. Rick reviewed the Budget vs Actual Report and explained variances. Jim Davison requested information on the \$1,800 website fee. A discussion on MEDA's website will be scheduled for the next meeting. Sarah moved to approve the financials, Brett seconded the motion; motion carried.

b. Budget for 2017

Rick reviewed the draft budget for 2017. Jason noted MIC dues will likely be annually at \$5,000. The board agreed that MEDA needs to retain its seat at the table. Chris Cerquone will be asked to see how we can increase membership and/or dues. James would like to see a review of dues structure, such as the charter organizations paying a higher cost. Brian said that MEDA has shown its relevancy as was one goal; MEDA should seek members accordingly.

As for the budget, Rick suggested adding \$2,000 more for Rotunda Day as invoices are outstanding and that would cover the MIC cost with the budget's projected income. Rick moved to approve the budget with changes expected following the conversation on MEDA dues. Jason seconded the motion; motion carried.

Action Item: Request Chris hold a meeting to provide recommendations to the MEDA board for the April meeting.

5. Committee and/or Activity Updates

a. Legislative Committee – Rick Edwards

Rick provided an update on the session saying he felt MEDA has been on defense throughout. There is authorization for the 2019 programs through FY2019. It will be essential that MEDA is fully prepared to fund these programs in the 2019 session. TIF bills are in abundance this session, most of which are extremely harmful. Infrastructure is another area of focus for MEDA with bills soon to be presented. Coal Trust Fund bills are being followed and some are supported by MEDA. The IWT bill continues to move forward.

Jason said a TIF suggestion is to reset the base so that the TIF is started over. A mechanism is needed to re-establish the taxable value so that increased tax revenue can go to schools, infrastructure, etc.

Ken said TIFs are also being studied as to how they are administered. Some communities seem to have higher costs for administration than others. Steve suggested MEDA should be bringing forth its own legislation to improve TIFS on its terms.

Paul expressed thanks to Ken, Jason, Rick, Sarah, and Brian for representing MEDA. Paul also expressed thanks to Doug and Sean for their understanding as to MEDA's position when different from the Administration.

Sarah expressed concerns for the next session as multiple economic development supporters will be termed out.

b. MIC – Jason Rittal and Brian Obert

Jason reported MIC is focusing on legislation including private partnerships, bonding, local options tax, and a fuel tax bill. MDT must not lose the federal match funds, so funding is needed in the fuel tax bill to cover it. Talk is that if local government isn't included in the revenue from the fuel tax, they will strive to kill it. The risk is no fuel bill passes and Montana leaves federal dollars on the table. Sarah said we need to be active and learn who to talk with to convince them that local revenues should be included.

Regarding MEDA's vote with MIC: Jason would vote in opposition representing MEDA within MIC if the bill does not have local funding attached. Outside of the coalition structure, MEDA should also be in opposition to the bill, if less than two cents for local funding is made available. MEDA will re-group once the

bill is dropped. Sean said the entire situation is complicated because the state can view all infrastructure as local.

6. Board Seats and Officers – Nominating Committee

Those up for re-election include Jason Rittal, Kathie Bailey Sarah Converse, Sue Taylor, Tracy McIntyre, Jim Atchison, Stephanie Ray, and Chris Cerquone. Gloria will ask Tracy McIntyre, Nominating Committee Chair, to hold a meeting. The committee needs to review the term-ending seats, recommend officers, and recommend an individual for the vacant seat. Rick Edwards and Stephanie Ray said they would serve on the committee.

Action Item: Tracy McIntyre to hold a Nominating Committee meeting.

7. 2017 MEDA Meetings

a. April Conference

After a brief discussion, the board determined to hold the next MEDA conference in early May, likely May 2nd and 3rd. A central location was preferred such as Helena, Great Falls, or Bozeman.

b. Innovate Montana and MEDA's role

Davey Madison outlined opportunities for MEDA in the Innovate Montana Symposium to be held July 11 – 13. MEDA is being asked to organize pre-conference workshops from 1pm to 4pm on July 11th. The workshops could include case studies, LEAN manufacturing, workforce, etc. It was suggested MEDA could hold its board meeting the morning of the 12th which could include a board retreat, a CRDC meeting, and/or Professional Development training. Anne will investigate if Maury Foreman is available for the Professional Development training on July 12th. The official welcome for the symposium is 1pm on July 12th.

Action Item: Gloria, Tracy and Davey will work with the Professional Development and Scholarship Committee to identify workshop ideas for the board's consideration.

c. Fall Conference

Action Item: Gloria is to check with Sue Taylor to see if Red Lodge and Beartooth RC&D would be interested in hosting the fall conference.

8. Strategic Imperatives Update

a. Partnership Building – MIC activities are improving MEDA's partnership building.

b. Marketing –

Gloria encouraged everyone to use the “what have you done for me lately” digital map that is posted on MEDA's website to showcase economic development programs, tools, and partners.

<http://www.medamembers.org/meda/resources/program-map>

c. Relevancy – Steve Arveschoug and James Grunke

Steve reminded everyone of this committee's four areas of work: 1. Build and strengthen entrepreneurs, 2. Talent attraction and workforce development, 3. Infrastructure, and 4. Business climate and regional competitiveness. Steve feels once the session is past we should lean into our role in the workforce development context. There are great in-state examples, but also explore how other states are addressing workforce challenges. Steve would like this committee to re-engage and examine workforce issues.

The Montana Chamber is considering doing a workforce report on a statewide basis which MEDA could possibly partner. Steve will talk with Webb and report back to MEDA.

d. Membership – Chris Cerquone

This group has not met recently. Gloria will contact Chris regarding the board's previous discussion.

8. Misc.

a. Resource Team Assessments

Gloria reported the Ft. Benton Team is scheduled to return there on March 6th; Chinook and Poplar are pending assessments. The three state USDA grant to study and improve the process is being held up within the new Administration.

b. Working Group Updates

Gloria reported the Revolving Loan Fund Working Group is meeting regularly. The MEDA Tourism and Recreation Working Group is re-engaging thanks to the leadership of Dax Schieffer.

c. Misc. from the Board

1. Federal Funding: It was suggested MEDA keep a keen eye on EDA funding at the federal level. Sarah suggested scheduling a meeting with congressional staff to inform of the importance of EDA funding and other programs. MEDA should be prepared to act quickly and have letters ready to be sent out.
2. Senator Daines is the speaker for Bear Paw's Annual Meeting on February 23rd. This may be an opportune time to meet with congressional staff on the EDA funding issue.

Action Item: Paul and Gloria will work on a letter of support for EDA Funding and share it with the MEDA membership as an example for them to do likewise.