



MEDA Board Meeting

May 2, 2017

Celtic Cowboy Dark Horse Wine Snug Room

116 1st Ave S, Great Falls, MT

7:00pm – 9:00pm

Minutes of the Meeting

Present: Rick Edwards, Jason Rittal, Brett Doney, Russ Fletcher, Stephanie Ray, Jerry Meerkatz, Paul Reichert, Leslie Messer, Paul Tuss, Anne Boothe, Kathie Bailey, Roger Hopkins, Tim Guardipee, Jim Atchison, Chris Cerquone, Sarah Converse, Jim Davison, Brian Obert, James Grunke, Sue Taylor, Mayor of Red Lodge Mike Schoenike, Mike O'Rourke, Pam Haxby-Cote, Cheryl Ulmer, John Rogers, and Gloria O'Rourke.

1. Welcome, Introductions

President Paul Tuss welcomed everyone to the meeting and requested introductions.

2. Approval of February Minutes

Sarah Converse moved to approve the February 9th minutes; Rick Edwards seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. Financials

Treasurer Rick Edwards reviewed the financials. MEDA's financials are on track and reflect the budget well. Jim Davison moved to approve the financials, Anne seconded the motion. Motion carried.

4. Board Seats and Officers – Nominating Committee

Jason stepped in for Tracy McIntyre and reviewed the recommendations to the board from the Nominating Committee. Sue moved to approve the Nominating Committee report; Jim Davison seconded the motion. Motion carried. Renewing terms 2017 - 2019: Jason Rittal, Kathie Bailey, Sarah Converse, Sue Taylor, Tracy McIntyre, Jim Atchison, Stephanie Ray, and Chris Cerquone. Officers: Past President Jason Rittal, President Paul Tuss, Vice President Steve Arveschoug, and Treasurer Rick Edwards. The list of board members and officers will be presented for a vote by the membership during the Annual Meeting tomorrow.

5. Committee and/or Activity Updates

a. Legislative Committee – Rick Edwards

1. Overview of the Session – Rick thanked everyone for pitching in during the session and will have a full report for the membership tomorrow. The 2019 programs, other key programs, infrastructure, TIFS, and workforce training were MEDA's priorities for the session. It was a very positive step for MEDA to be a part of the Montana Infrastructure Coalition. It was noted the next session will contain another fight for infrastructure funding; TIF will also be an issue due to an interim committee study. John Rogers suggested Federal watches as well

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* JIM ATCHISON, COLSTRIP * (PENDING) BUTTE * JAMES GRUNKE, MISSOULA * BRETT DONEY, GREAT FALLS *

* LESLIE MESSER, SIDNEY * ANNE BOOTHE, MALTA * CHRIS CERQUONE, MISSOULA * SARAH CONVERSE, GREAT FALLS * SUE TAYLOR, JOLIET *

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* JERRY MEERKATZ, MISSOULA * STEPHANIE RAY, LIVINGSTON * RUSS FLETCHER, MISSOULA * KATHIE BAILEY, LEWISTOWN * TIM GUARDIPEE, BILLINGS *

as it has been 24 years since the EDA was threatened for removal; USDA/RD also needs support. Jason was thanked for his great work on behalf of MEDA throughout the session.

2. Strategy for 2019 Program Funding – Rick stated the strategy for the 2019 session needs to begin as soon as possible. Pam is beginning to explore options and is already working with her staff to research the programs, what is working, what needs to change, etc. MEDA will be engaged in the process as well. Pam wants to hold the first meeting this June. Sarah emphasized the need for everyone to be engaging their legislators now. Brett suggested MEDA consider hiring a lobbyist.
3. Discussion of BEAR Program and MDLI Contract
Gloria reported the \$9,000 MDLI contributes for the BEAR Program will not be forthcoming as of July 1st due to budget cuts and changes in the IWT program. The MEDA Executive Committee will meet and plan next steps and/or a revision of BEAR; the ideas will be taken to Pam for consideration.
4. Six Mill Levy Resolution
Paul shared a Resolution which states “MEDA officially endorses the extension of the 6-Mill Levy and its passage in 2018 for the support, maintenance, and improvement of the Montana University System in the November 2018 election.” This issue is up for a vote every 10 years. Kathie Bailey moved to approve the resolution; Sarah seconded the motion. Motion carried.

b. MIC – Jason Rittal and Brian Obert

A report from MIC will be available within a few days. Jason will update the board regarding the renewing of dues as soon as he has additional information.

c. Professional Development and Scholarship Committee – Brett Doney and Anne Boothe

Anne reported the next scholarship round ends May 26th. Anne also reported on the successful pre-conference infrastructure professional development training that was held this morning. Next steps are for the Professional Development Committee to plan a training webinar.

Action Item: An educational presentation for public officials is needed. Consider using materials from DOLAC in Colorado, as well as NACo.

d. Membership Committee – Chris Cerquone

Chris reported there is good energy within the Membership Committee. He shared the following ideas being discussed by the committee:

Primary Focus - Increasing Participation/Relevancy

- a. Telling our Story - Video (who we are, highlighting success stories)
- b. Engage Educational Institutions via Blackstone/MT World Trade Center
- c. Consider sponsoring student to attend MEDA Conferences
(get business to pay conference fee)
- d. Similar to Infrastructure, Provide Leadership on Additional Issues
 - i. WF Development
 - ii. Downtown Revitalization
 - iii. Business Recruitment
 - iv. National Development Certification Training
- e. Create Quarterly Forums for People to Share Success Stories

Primary Focus – Increasing # of Members/Membership Revenue

- a. Targeted Membership Drive
 - i. Recognizing New Members
 - ii. Reaching out to lost members
 - iii. Community Planners and Local Government Members
 - iv. Engineers/Architects
 - v. Legislators
 - vi. Tribal Representatives
- b. Membership Dues
 - i. Reduce Membership Dues for Retired Economic Professionals

Next steps: The Membership Committee will narrow down these ideas and bring formal recommendations to the board. James said as turnover happens he would rather pay a fee than pay for individual dues.

Note: Pam offered the MDOC studio to showcase success stories.

6. 2017 MEDA Meetings

a. May Spring Conference – Brett Doney

Brett was thanked for his hard work in organizing the conference. Paul Tuss will moderate the Candidate Forum. MEDA attendees will have the opportunity to write questions on a notecard. Each candidate will be asked the same question(s) following their talk.

b. Innovate Montana and MEDA's role

Sara moved for MEDA to sponsor the Innovate Montana Symposium in the amount of \$1,000. Jason seconded the motion. Motion carried. Tracy McIntyre has outlined three workshops that MEDA is organizing which will take place on July 11th and 12th, prior to the symposium. MEDA Board members were encouraged to participate as mentors in Solution Lounges.

Action Item: Gloria is to send a doodle for a good MEDA Board retreat date and location. No meeting will be held in conjunction with the symposium.

c. Fall Conference – Red Lodge or Big Timber

Sue Taylor shared information on both Red Lodge and Big Timber for fall conference sites. Beartooth would serve as host. Rick moved to select Red Lodge; Kathie Bailey seconded the motion. Motion carried. Brett asked for the conference date to not conflict with MACo, MLCT, Downtown Conference, etc. Paul requested a report from NADO to be placed on the conference agenda. Kathie Bailey asked everyone to be thinking about MEDA Annual Awards.

Action Item: Sue Taylor will send Gloria suggested dates for the Fall Conference.

7. Strategic Imperatives Update

a. Partnership Building – MDOC, GOED, MACo, MLCT, MT Chamber, MIC

b. Relevancy – Steve Arveschoug and James Grunke

James suggested “workforce” to be the next topic MEDA tackles. MEDA should explore what other states are doing and explore what is happening in state as well. Pam invited a representative from MEDA to attend and discuss workforce issues at 1pm on May 9th, at Reeder's Alley. A report will be shared and options of what to do next discussed. Brian and James Grunke will attend. It was noted housing is a key part of the workforce conversation.

c. Membership – Chris Cerquone (see above report)

8. Misc.

a. Resource Team Assessments

Gloria reported a meeting date has been set for the three states – ID, WY, and MT – to meet. The grant covers a three-year period and is focused on improving the community assessment process.

b. Working Group Updates

The Revolving Loan Fund and Tourism and Recreation Working Groups are meeting quarterly. The Resource Team Assessment Working Group continues to meet monthly.