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**MDOC MEDA Opportunity Call  
 September 28, 2016  
 10:30am – 11:30am**

**On the call from MDOC: Sean Becker, Gus Byrom, Angie DeYoung, Annmarie Robinson, Joe Ramler, Norm Dwyer and Carolyn Jones.**

**On the call from MEDA: Sue Taylor (Facilitator), Gloria Hawkins, Anne Boothe, Gypsy Ray, Jim Davison, Paddy Fleming, Tori Matejovsky, Janet Camel, and others who called in late who were not identified.**

**Welcome and Program Updates**

Sean Becker welcomed everyone to the call and requested the following program updates from MDOC:

<b>CDBG – Gus Byrom</b>	Gus Byrom reported staff are busy getting results out for housing and planning grant applications. Kelly Lynch is now with MLCT so MDOC is seeking a Division Administrator, as well as for someone to fill Allison Mouch's position as the Planning Bureau Chief.
<b>Office of Trade and Int'l Relations – Angie DeYoung</b>	Angie DeYoung reported on updates to the program. The Domestic Tradeshow program now has funding in place to help tourism related businesses. Angie is waiting to announce publicly that the export promotions grant has been approved, which is a very big deal. This year's grants: \$278,000 was expended for more than 100 export activities to assist Montana businesses. This is an extremely well leveraged and impactful program. Sean added the big news – China is now accepting Montana beef.
<b>Montana Tourism and visitmt Report - Norm Dwyer and Joe Ramler</b>	Those on the call learned VisitMT has gained 44% in traffic each year. A winter campaign is about to launch; ski info has been upgraded on the website. There are 8,000 business listings on the website. Web page visit time is about 2 minutes and most traffic goes directly to the businesses. Visitmt averaged 2 million visitors last year. It is important that the businesses listed keep their information current.  Joe Ramler provided a tourism research update. One research project is targeted to the Montana brand and how it relates to our audience, and identifies customers

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	<p>demographically. Joe clarified it isn't about more people but about people spending more dollars in Montana. Additional research involves our neighboring and similar state competitors. Surveys are either wrapped up or in the works to obtain more data; phone interviews are also being conducted with visual samples discussed. Another aspect of the research is conducting focus groups which are being held around the country.</p> <p>Internally, Joe recently presented to a large conference audience in Florida describing how Montana's electronic tagging tracks those interested in all things Montana. The data is evidence of who is seeing the marketing, verifies if it is worth the cost, and provides more direct marketing information. In other words, Montana now knows how much it costs to get a visitor here and how much they spend when they arrive. Marketing approaches can be adjusted accordingly. Joe may be contacted at 841.2729.</p>
<b>BSTF – Annmarie Robinson</b>	Annmarie reported meetings are taking place to review applications received. The next deadline is October 26 <sup>th</sup> . It looks like workforce training funds will be obligated by the end of the year.
<b>Indian Equity Grants – Margaret George</b>	Margaret George reported the Indian Equity Fund (IEF) Small Business Grant round is now open.
<b>MicroLoans – Carolyn Jones</b>	Carolyn reported two entities were just recertified including Montana Community Development Corp. and Bear Paw Development Corp.

### **MEDA Update**

Sue Taylor reminded everyone to register for the fast approaching MEDA conference. Sue then asked CRDC/EDD representatives to share updates of interest to the group.

<b>Beartooth RC&amp;D – Sue Taylor</b>	Sue was pleased to report on Beartooth's participation in a housing workshop with a cooperative model focus. This is a great fit for the "magic middle" of people who make a little too much money to qualify for low income housing. Beartooth is also a partner in a coal study which would help the area deal with the loss of coal development.
<b>Lake County Community Development – Gypsy Ray</b>	Gypsy parked illegally to bring her report from IEDC. Gypsy is receiving great benefit from being at IEDC. She reported on the MEDA fall conference preparations and encouraged everyone to register. The branding and tourism workshop will be held prior to MEDA on October 12 <sup>th</sup> . Gypsy also has some large community facility studies going on – which also includes a new jail.
<b>Great Northern Development – Tori Matejovsky</b>	Tori Matejovsky reported on housing needs and also benefited from the cooperative model workshop. Great Northern is now CDFI eligible.
<b>MMEC – Paddy Fleming</b>	Paddy Fleming reminded everyone of the manufacturing conference next week. There is a heavy economic development focus for this conference.
<b>Anaconda Local Development – Jim Davison</b>	Jim Davison reported on an upgrade to Anaconda's city water system which has been in process for over 15 years. A Tax Increment Finance District is again producing which will go toward more development. Anaconda is an example of the importance of TIFs.

<b>MBAC – Brian Obert</b>	Brian Obert is preparing for a ribbon cutting in White Sulpher Springs for new highway, gutters and sidewalks as well as several other big projects. Townsend is having a big brewfest this weekend.
<b>S&amp;K Tribes – Janet Camel</b>	Janet Camel reported receiving a \$1m grant to work with partners to continue job training and unemployment needs. Also working on a Hot Springs Bath House project.
<b>Triangle Communications – Anne Boothe</b>	Anne Boothe thanked MDOC for their outreach efforts. Several events are pending in Ft. Benton, Big Timber and Columbus.