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## **MEDA BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Fairmont Hot Springs, Ponderosa Room  
Dial in 712.432.0175 pin 217279  
June 19, 2015 12:15PM – 2:00PM

**Present: Roger Hopkins, Jim Davison, Paul Tuss, James Grunke, Ken Richardson, Jim Smitham, Linda Kendrick, Jason Rittal, Kellie Danielson, Steve Arveschoug, Rick Edwards, Mike O'Rourke, Leslie Messer, Tracy McIntyre, Kathie Bailey, Sarah Converse, and Gloria O'Rourke. Joining the Board Meeting via Conference Call: Luke Walawander, Sean Becker, Brian Obert, and Anne Boothe.**

### **1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes**

President Jason Rittal welcomed everyone to the MEDA Board Meeting and requested a motion to approve the May 5<sup>th</sup> minutes. Leslie moved to approve; Rick seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **2. Financials**

Treasurer Rick Edwards reviewed the financial reports and noted NorthWestern Energy may provide Professional Development funding. The spring conference financials were reviewed; if all comes in as it should, MEDA should make a profit of several thousand dollars. Tracy moved to approve the financials; Steve seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **3. MEDA/MDOC Contract**

An action item from the MEDA Board Planning Retreat is for Paul and Jason to compile a letter to the leadership of MDOC to request regular meetings to improve communication, especially through this transition period. Sean mentioned an MOU would help clarify the working relationship between MEDA and MDOC; Tracy and Rick will begin drafting the MOU. The MDOC/MEDA contract expires July 31, 2016.

### **4. BEAR Program Discussion**

John Rogers sent a memo to the MEDA Board to trigger a conversation on the MEDA BEAR Program and the reduction of the GOED budget. With the onset of the IWT Grant Program, BEAR Team leadership is being done more often by Job Service and other partners rather than economic developers. Mike and Gloria were asked to meet with MDLI leadership to determine what data is needed for the IWT process and create a spreadsheet or use current existing software the state already provides. Current contract language may need to be revised to reflect program changes.

### **5. MEDS Contract and Review**

The Montana Economic Development Services (MEDS) draft contract was discussed as it expires on June 30, 2015. As the contract with MDOC is critical to the function of MEDA, it was recommended that MEDS be at the table with for creation of the MOU. Gloria will draft a matrix for a Performance Review; the Executive Committee will conduct the review. Rick moved to extend the MEDS contract as is for one more

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year with the caveat that if the BEAR Program changes the contract will be amended. Linda seconded the motion; motion carried.

## **6. May Meeting with MT Dept. of Commerce Update**

Jason reviewed highlights of the May 18th meeting which was held with Meg O'Leary, Sean Becker, and Jennifer Olson, Ken Richardson, and the MEDA Executive Committee. Highlights included: MDOC will be involved in the MEDA Fall Conference to provide a session on program and structural changes; MDOC and MEDA will schedule regular conference calls to keep lines of communication open; as a local filter is important when a project is pending, economic developers should be brought into the communication loop; and CDD is brainstorming internally to see how to mesh processes and build one application.

## **7. Fall Conference Update**

Steve shared that a committee has formed and held one meeting thus far. The President of CHS will be the keynote on October 13<sup>th</sup> at lunch. An infrastructure focus will likely be held at some point during the conference as it is a strategic imperative of MEDA. A wide span of partners will be invited to participate and compile solutions to funding infrastructure.

## **8. Conference Proposal from Lake County; Helena Location**

Gypsy Ray, Lake County Community Development, proposed hosting the MEDA Fall Conference in 2016. The MEDA Spring Conference could be held in conjunction with the MT Ambassador Conference. Linda moved to approve the request to have Lake County Community Development host the Fall 2016 Conference; Kathie seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

The conversation to hold every fall meeting in Helena was reviewed. It was decided to abandon this decision and keep the options open for fall conference locations.

## **9. MEDA: Name, By-Laws, Presence**

The board retreat discussion concluded that while there is a desire and need to expand MEDA's role and mobilize partners in support of key strategic imperatives, there is no cause at this time to change the name of the organization. It was also determined that the by-laws could remain as is with the nine permanent seat representation. Linda and Gloria will, however, address basic language edits to the by-laws and bring the changes to the board.

Regarding the need to boost MEDA's presence at meetings and gatherings held around the state, a matrix will be made of different conferences and events to ensure our membership is represented and contributing to MEDA outreach efforts. The MEDA Board will have badges made for board members to wear for outreach purposes.

## **10. Committee Updates**

### **10.1 Legislative**

Rick summarized the discussion from yesterday. Names have been gathered for the Legislative Committee and work will begin soon to begin forming the MEDA Legislative Agenda. The key is to get the agenda in place as soon as possible.

### **10.2 Scholarship Committee and Professional Development Committee**

The Scholarship Committee and Professional Development Committee will combine to improve strategies as well as scholarship opportunities for MEDA's membership. Anne Boothe and Kellie Danielson will work together.

### **10.3 MEDA Annual Awards**

Kathie Bailey, Chair, said three award categories are being considered by the committee: Innovation, Partnership, and Champion Award. Tony Preite will provide some definition for the Anthony J. Preite

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Award which is to go to an economic development practitioner who has been successful in bringing to fruition a difficult project and/or served as an outstanding leader in accomplishing a project. Applications will be due early in September with the criteria out August 1<sup>st</sup>. The draft will be sent out to the MEDA Board before it is finalized. If anyone would like to assist Kathie, Brett, and Kellie it would be welcome. The criteria process will include an Award Selection Committee whether with the Executive Committee, membership, or the full board.

#### **10.4 Social Media and Listserv Policy Committee; Web Presence Committee**

These committees will come together under the marketing efforts with the Improve Membership Relations and Services focus group. Tracy will organize a meeting soon; Luke said he would join in this work.

#### **10.5 Membership Committee**

Roger Hopkins will be the new Chair for this committee. Chris Cerquone and Luke Walawander will also serve. This committee may have special tasks while working with the Improve Membership Relations and Services focus group.

#### **11. Misc.**

- MEDA's leadership was encouraged to support the Cross Border Tournament – July 23<sup>rd</sup>, Wilderness Club.
- Last but by no means least; Jim Smitham was thanked for his years of service and leadership to the MEDA Board and for all of his contributions to economic development across Montana.

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