



*Leadership Dedicated to Building Montana's Economy*

**Lewistown, MT  
September 13, 2019**

### **Minutes of the MEDA Board Meeting**

**Present: Brian Obert, Paul Tuss, Tori Matejovsky, Adam Vauthier, Jim Atchison, Kathie Bailey, Beth Epley, Toni Schneider, Leslie Messer, Sarah Converse, Marie Hirsch, Tracy McIntyre, and Craig Erickson via phone. Ex officio: Gloria O'Rourke, Charles Robison, Terry Brockie, Kirk Keysor, and Jason Rittal. Special guests: Austin Trunkle, Jason Seyler, Greg Davis, and Mike O'Rourke.**

1. Welcome and Previous Minutes – Brian Obert  
Vice President Brian Obert welcomed everyone to the meeting and requested a motion to approve the July 15 – 16, August 5 and August 20 minutes. Sarah moved to approve; Leslie seconded the motion. Motion carried.
2. Financials – Mike O'Rourke
  - a. New signer – a new signer is needed with the retirement of Jim Davison. Sarah moved to bring Adam Vauthier on as a signer. Kathie Bailey seconded the motion. Motion carried.
  - b. Financial reports  
Mike reviewed the financial reports and noted the savings account has not had to be accessed yet to pay for MIC. Kathie moved to approve the financials; Sarah seconded the motion. Motion carried.
  - c. Draft 2020 budget – objectives for 2020 budget, MIC costs, etc.  
Mike reviewed the draft 2020 Budget. After some discussion, Kathie moved to approve the draft budget with the understanding it will be adapted based on membership committee, RFP, etc., activities. Sarah seconded the motion. Motion carried.
3. MNA Award Oct 3, 6:30pm, Billings  
Paul Tuss reported MEDA is being awarded the Common Good Award for MEDA's successful legislative efforts to renew key economic development programs. MEDA will receive \$1,000; Paul was thanked for submitting MEDA. Steve Arveschoug and Paul Tuss will accept the award. Paul moved to place this \$1,000 in MEDA's Next Generation fund with MEDA now contributing a remaining \$29,000. Sarah seconded the motion. Motion carried.
4. Montana Healthy Communities Request – Gloria  
An email was shared with the board from Montana Healthy Communities asking what topics economic developers would like to see on its conference agenda and offered free meeting space if MEDA would like to gather at the same time. The conference is April 28 – 30, in Helena. Gloria will receive more information and share with the board.

5. MEDA 2020 Spring Conference Proposal – Gloria for Kim Morisaki  
Kim prepared information for the board’s consideration for holding the MEDA Spring 2020 conference in Kalispell. USDA offered to pay for and organize the Professional Development segment; it could include TIF Districts as Kim proposed. This would go from 10am to 4pm and focus on digging deep into Federal and State programs so that more applications come in. The dates Kim proposed in May do conflict with University System events the week of Memorial Day. Kim will be asked to consider the week before and check graduation conflicts. A committee was formed to work with Kim and Charles including Gloria, Tracy and Marie.
6. MEDA Membership Committee - Marie
  - a. Proposal from MATR  
Russ Fletcher proposed sharing sponsorship income in partnership with MATR. The board discussed this option and had several questions such as who would solicit sponsors, is there a conflict of interest, etc. More discussion will be held on this issue in the future, including the Membership Committee. It is understood that income needs to be diversified. The Executive Committee plus the chairs of each committee were asked to form the Finance Committee. It was noted an MDOC/ GOED luncheon should be held, and invite other state Departments to build relationships with MEDA.
  - b. Committee Report – membership plan and dues structure – Marie  
Marie reviewed the Membership Committee update submitted by Chris Cerquone. The MEDA Board will be asked to make decisions on several proposals in the near future.
7. RFP MT Next Generation Economic and Community Development Tools - Brian
  - a. Update and Timeline  
Brian reported there were at least a dozen on the RFP conference call in which questions were answered regarding the RFP. Proposals are due September 24<sup>th</sup>.
  - b. Funding  
The board was emailed a letter from Steve that would assist in contacting sponsors for the Next Generation Study. A google docs spreadsheet link was also shared so that the board could see who was being asked to sponsor.  
Discussion:
    1. Expectations for raising funds to pay for the RFP should be based on population as that is how disbursements are made.
    2. Concerns regarding competing against members for funds.
    3. Ask appropriately by starting with “thank you”
    4. Concerns that in spite of the google document cross-over asks will occur.
    5. Of utmost importance: talking points that answer the question “what is in it for me?”
    6. Steve’s letter needs to include both paying for the study and implementing the results.

It was suggested MEDA hold off on big asks until the proposals come in. A future board meeting will need to be held to move forward. An RFP Working Group is needed which will include Cities, Counties, Programs, EDOs, etc.

It was shared that on the Federal level, our Senators could put on a rider to fund this project.

Conclusion: Continue to contact potential funders who are MEDA partners and wait for the out-of-the-box asks until the consultant is hired.

8. Solicitation for Opportunity Zone Subcontract Update - Gloria  
Gloria reported receiving several calls of interest for the Opportunity Zone solicitation. The deadline is September 30<sup>th</sup>. The OZ Ranking Committee: Jason, Brian, Marie, Sara Hudson, Martin DeWitt, and Toni.
9. Brownfields RLF – Jason Seyler  
Jason requested MEDA consider once again signing an MOU with MDOC and DEQ to apply for a statewide Brownfields RLF. Leslie moved to approve signing the MOU; Sarah seconded the motion. Motion carried.
10. Awards – Kathie  
Kathie noted strategies will be explored in the future to receive more award submittals. Suggestions: submit awards year-round so they are on file; consider a private partner award or other options such as a five year award for an EDO.
11. Legislative, Interim Committees – Jason Rittal  
Jason provided an update and will continue to share with MEDA moving forward regarding SJ35, HB715, etc. Jason noted levy amounts are being watched for accuracy and there is a strong effort to protect local funds.
12. Misc. and Next Meeting
  - a. Wyoming, North Dakota and South Dakota are interested in partnering with MEDA for IEDC training. This will be discussed in a future meeting.
  - b. Tracy McIntyre questioned if her position remains on the board now that she is the Director of MCDC. This will be discussed in a future meeting.