



**MEDA Board Minutes May 5, 2015**

**Time: 7:00pm- 9:30pm**

**Location:** Meadowlark Country Club, 300 Country Club Boulevard, Great Falls, MT 59404

**Participants:** Linda Kindrick, Paul Tuss, Tracy McIntyre, Tim Guardipee, Ken Richardson, Leslie Messer, Jim Atchison, Jason Rittal, James Grunke, Jim Smitham, Brett Doney, Mike O'Rourke, Kathie Bailey, Chris Cerquone, Roger Hopkins, Sarah Converse, and Gloria O'Rourke.

**MEDA BUSINESS MEETING – President Jason Rittal**

1. Welcome and Introductions

President Jason Rittal welcomed everyone to the meeting and requested introductions.

2. Previous Minutes October 27, 2014

Leslie moved to approve the minutes; Kathie seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. Financial Reports and Budget – Mike O'Rourke

In the absence of Treasurer Rick Edwards, Mike reviewed the 2014 Year End Financials as well as the draft 2015 Budget. Tracy moved to amend the budget to reflect sending Gloria to the IEDC Fall Conference in the amount not to exceed \$2,500. Brett moved to approve the 2015 budget; Kellie seconded the motion. Motion carried. Linda Kindrick moved to approve the current financials, Kathie Bailey seconded the motion; motion carried.

4. MT Department of Commerce Transitions

A meeting is planned on May 18<sup>th</sup> with Director O'Leary and the MEDA Executive Board to discuss the move of CDBG/ED funds from Business Resource Division to the Community Development Division. By July 1<sup>st</sup>, the Business Resource Division will be moved under the Tourism Division. The MEDA Board wants to open communication to make the transition as smooth and seamless as possible now and in the future. While funding might be available to connect tourism to business development, it will be important to retain existing key economic development tools for economic development organizations to do their work. In addition, perhaps funding can be used to help small businesses learn to market their businesses in the now global market.

Of utmost importance, MEDA members want to build relationships within MT Dept. of Commerce leadership as well as staff to be effective partners in building business for Montana.

5. Next Meeting

Fairmont was suggested as the meeting location. Gloria will investigate availability and send a doodle to the board for the best dates. Tracy suggested asking a facilitator to join us; Brett suggested Maria Valandra from First Interstate Bank. Topics suggested for the agenda include:

- Legislative strategy and policies
- Strategic plan review
- Working with Tourism and MDOC/CDD; MEDA contract
- Improve Partnering: Joint meeting with MT Ambassadors, or WEDA, Pacific Northwest Economic Region – PNWER, will be hosted in Montana at Big Sky.
- Discuss name change to expand the organization (Development rather than Developers) and be more inclusive

JOIN US AT <http://www.medamembers.org>

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: JASON RITTAL, PRESIDENT, TERRY \* PAUL TUSS, VICE PRESIDENT, MISSOULA \*  
 \* RICK EDWARDS, TREASURER, BUTTE \* TRACY MCINTYRE, PAST PRESIDENT, EUREKA \* GLORIA O'ROURKE, SECRETARY \*  
 \* JIM ATCHISON, COLSTRIP \* JIM SMITHAM, BUTTE \* JAMES GRUNKE, MISSOULA \* BRETT DONEY, GREAT FALLS \*  
 \* LESLIE MESSER, SIDNEY \* ANNE BOOTHE, MALTA \* SARAH CONVERSE, GREAT FALLS \* CHRIS CERQUONE, MISSOULA \*  
 \* PROSPERA REP BOZEMAN \* BRIAN OBERT, HELENA \* STEVE ARVESCHOUG, BILLINGS \* LUKE WALAWANDER, JOLIET \* LINDA KINDRICK, HELENA \*  
 \* KELLIE DANIELSON, KALISPELL \* KATHIE BAILEY, LEWISTOWN \* KEN RICHARDSON, MISSOULA \* TIM GUARDIPEE, GREAT FALLS \*

- Examine the removal of the nine permanent seats; hear the history of why it was formed with the permanent seats.
- Reconsider location of Helena for every-other-year fall conference (prior to the Legislative Session)
- Scholarship process

#### **MEDA COMMITTEE UPDATES**

- Scholarship Committee – Anne Boothe/Gloria O’Rourke  
Kellie suggested that the scholarship amount be raised per applicant as the typical award of \$500 - \$900 does not begin to cover costs. It was also suggested that Gloria apply for a scholarship to pay for the IEDC conference.
- Spring Conference Agenda Committee/Review - Brett Doney  
Brett reported the combination of professional development with the conference was too much and the conference should have been made shorter. Brett said the hope was to combine other conference groups/attendees with this conference, i.e., realtors, bankers, planners, MACo, MT League of Cities and Towns, etc., so that everyone is hearing and learning the same information and applying it.
- Nominating Committee – Paul Tuss  
Paul shared the recommendations from the Nominating Committee including the slate of new board members for the two year rotating seats:
  - Tim Guardipee – Fill one year remaining in Martin DeWitt’s seat; serve as Native American Representative. Term ends in 2016.
  - Sean Becker– Fill Andy Poole’s seat which ends in 2017
  - Sarah Converse– Fills Brian Gion’s seat which ends in 2017
 The slate of officers recommended:
  - Past President Tracy McIntyre
  - President Jason Rittal
  - Vice President Paul Tuss (Ken Richardson will be retiring in 2016)
  - Treasurer Rick Edwards
  - Secretary (ex officio) Gloria O’Rourke
 Leslie Messer moved to approve the recommendation made by the Nominating Committee regarding the two year rotating seats. Kathie Bailey seconded the motion. Motion carried. Brett moved to accept the Nominating Committee recommendations for officers. Kathie Bailey seconded the motion. Motion carried. Tracy as Past President will facilitate the election portion of the MEDA Annual Meeting tomorrow morning for the membership’s vote.
- Membership Committee – Jim Smitham  
Jim reported this committee accomplished its previous goals of increasing MEDA memberships and reaching out to those who dropped his/her membership. The committee also reached out to newly hired Economic Development Directors and extended an invitation to join MEDA.
- Web Presence Committee - Assign New Chair  
Tracy suggested Julie Foster for this position; Gloria encouraged someone from MEDA to attend the fourth Thursday lunch meeting with GOED and MT Ambassadors to keep in the loop of GOED web activities.
- Legislative Committee – Jason Rittal  
Jason shared a report compiled by Rick with the board that highlighted key outcomes of interest to MEDA. Jason wants to formalize the MEDA Legislative Committee, i.e., clearly list who is on the committee, take and approve minutes, hold formal votes, etc. The board was in agreement that work must begin now to prepare for the next session as funding for economic development tools will be at risk. Local and regional collaboration and outreach will be essential. Kellie and the board thanked those that traveled to Helena so many times during the session.
- Social Media and Listserv Policy Committee  
A draft listserv policy was shared; a full Social Media Policy is still being drafted by the committee.
- Fall Conference: Assign Agenda Committee Chair – Identify possible committee  
At one time the MEDA Board decided to have every fall conference in Helena for the sake of convenience.

However, this was re-visited as it was felt it is only necessary to be in Helena the fall prior to a Legislative Session. Big Sky Economic Development submitted a request to host the fall conference October 13<sup>th</sup> beginning at noon and ending October 15<sup>th</sup> at noon, in Billings. Kathie moved to approve the proposal, Jim Smitham seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Lake County Community Development Corporation is interested in hosting a conference in either the spring or fall (preferred) of 2016.

**Action Item:** Regarding the spring conference, the MEDA membership will be asked to submit letters of interest for the board to review during the summer board meeting.

**MISC.**

a. Recognition

- Tony Preite will be ending his work in June with USDA and moving his family to Spokane. Tony could be invited to the fall conference and recognized for his work as a stalwart of economic development in Montana for years.
- Jim Smitham has served 22 years on the MEDA Board and was one of the “Dirty Dozen” that founded MEDA.

**Action Item:** Kellie volunteered to plan the retirement recognition details.

b. Other board or public comment/discussion

**Action Item:** Gloria is to place Kirk Keysor, EDA, on the MEDA Directory and Listserv.