MEDA BUSINESS MEETING – President Jason Rittal

1. Previous Minutes July 10 – 11, 2014 Board Retreat
   President Jason Rittal welcomed everyone to the meeting and requested approval of the July 10 – 11 minutes. Stuart moved to approve; Chris Shove seconded the motion. Motion carried.

   Martin moved to approve the financials; Stuart seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. Sponsorship Policy
   A disclaimer will be added to the form that states the board will review the request. Martin moved to approve with the addition that the final discretion is with the MEDA board. Leslie seconded the motion. Motion carried.

4. Annual BACON Awards – Roger Hopkins
   Roger suggested the BACON award become an annual or consistent event. Additional programs need to be added. Perhaps a quiz format could be enacted or some other format; the event should especially be held when the conference is held in Helena.

5. Listserv and Social Media Policy
   Anne Boothe, Tracy McIntyre and Gloria O’Rourke will develop a draft policy.

Note: Dan Villa briefly visited the board and thanked everyone for their work.

MEDA COMMITTEE UPDATES

6. Scholarship – Anne Boothe
   Anne reported that one scholarship was received. Some ideas to increase participation: Focus on a statewide training such as NDC or out of state Northwest Area Games, NBIA, have an open cycle, accept webinars, and encourage new people to participate. The Scholarship Committee will consider these options and hold another round.

7. Fall Conference Review - Agenda Committee – Chris Shove
   Chris was thanked for a job well done.

8. Nominating Committee – Paul Tuss
   Paul reported the consensus of the committee was to wait to fill Brian Gion’s seat until the spring as that is when his seat expires. The Nominating Committee will send out a request for letters of interest in early spring of 2015. Gloria will send an email thanking Brian and informing the membership that letters will be requested in the spring.

9. Membership Committee – Jim Smitham
   Jim Smitham thanked his committee for great work and noted the membership numbers and budget are increasing. Jim suggested that some areas of the website remain private to members only; the committee will revisit this and report at the next meeting.


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Luke reported on the Web Portal Committee activities. Luke reminded everyone the project was put on hold in July to see how the MEDA site rolls out and request new pricing from Golden Shovel. The committee also met with GOED to learn how the new MEDA site could share crossover information with GOED.

Golden Shovel has revised its proposal to request $25,000 to create the Montana Economic Gateway portal and $7,500 to maintain it per year. Luke said there is still much to be discussed; the committee will continue to work with Golden Shovel and also continue to work with GOED. Luke also pointed out the portal (should it be created) would need to remain in place in spite of any administrative change because MEDA owns the project. Luke requested permission to continue the work of the committee.

Conclusions:
- Committee to identify the gaps between GOED and MEDA and consider if MEDA accomplished the original vision of the committee.
- The Web Portal Committee will cease. The committee will now be the Web Presence Committee with the same members serving. The committee will continue to mesh the GOED and MEDA websites to enhance each other’s focus. Luke agreed to serve as Chair.

11. Legislative Committee
   a. White Papers
      The White Paper topics assigned in July that were completed were reviewed. Jason asked if the MEDA Board has consensus on the ideas outlined in the White Papers. The White Papers are for MEDA’s membership use throughout the session as policy information pieces. Jason also mentioned that MACo and the Montana League of Cities and Towns will be engaged to fund the 2019 programs if the programs are not funded this session.
   b. Benefit Corps – Stuart Leidner shared information on a draft bill that would allow benefit corporations to form in Montana. See more information below.
   c. Rotunda Day January 14 – consider including GOED, MT Dept of Ag, MT Dept. of Commerce, MT Dept. of Labor.
   d. Legislative Agenda – meetings start at 7:00am, Wednesday, November 5th.

Conclusions and/or Motions:
- Stuart moved for the board to compile a letter to send to Governor Bullock requesting increased economic development program funding to be included in the Governor’s budget as well as funding for an extension of the 2019 sunset and funding for infrastructure, brownfields, etc. Chris Shove seconded the motion; motion carried.
- Rick will take the points in the letter, the issues of the white paper topics, and form a one page agenda list. Once the Governor’s budget is publicized new action items may be listed.
- MEDA needs to start now to address issues in the 2017 session.
- Consider hiring a staff person that addresses legislative issues.

Proposals:
- Water Compact – Information was shared regarding a water compact that will be brought before legislators. As it will be an incredibly complex and political issue, Kathie Bailey moved that MEDA not take a stand on the issue. Martin seconded the motion; motion carried.

Benefit Corp – Stuart shared information on this business model that has been allowed in 27 states which contains an elective process for a company to change its status to a benefit corporation. It does not impact taxes; it impacts the corporation’s willingness to do social good without concern to the shareholders of the corporation. The shareholders have to elect to become a benefit corporation. The corporation does not become a nonprofit. This request was referred to the Legislative Committee who will make a recommendation to the board.

12. Spring Conference Agenda Committee Discussion
   - The 7:00am time slot for the MEDA board was discouraged as an hour and half is not enough time.
   - Funds need to be raised prior to bringing experts from out of state in to speak or securing an expensive conference location.
   - Length of the conference is a concern.
   - The draft agenda contains too much of an urban voice.
   - Kathie will serve on the committee as will Paul Tuss and Jim Smitham.
Next agenda:
- Instead of holding the fall conference every year in Helena, consider holding it in Helena only when a legislative session is scheduled for the following January.
- Membership Committee Update
- Social Media and Listserv Policy
- Web Presence Committee Update