



# MEDA MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

## Minutes

September 22, 2016

9:00am

Dial in: 712.432.0175 pin 217279

On the Call: Beth Epley, Alyssa Townsend, Eric Seidensticker, Chris Cerquone, and Gloria O'Rourke

### 1. Welcome

Chris welcomed everyone to the call and noted the entire committee is: Chris Cerquone (Chair), Alyssa Townsend, Beth Epley, Eric Seidensticker, Marie Mahugh, Roger Hopkins, Russ Fletcher, and Gloria O'Rourke.

### 2. Questions from Russ

The group reviewed and discussed several questions submitted by Russ Fletcher:

- a) Why do we want to increase membership?  
If we focus on value and quality of membership benefits, it was felt growth would come on its own.
- b) What do current and future members see as the value of MEDA?  
Eric – allows us to work with peers and partners; provides an avenue for sharing our problems and exploring solutions.  
Alyssa – appreciates FYI emails so that program staff can be looped in to what economic developers are doing. Alyssa recently enjoyed Ellensburg training and finds conferences as unique opportunities to learn of what is happening on the local level. Alyssa benefits from training opportunities that MEDA may offer.  
Chris – appreciates the opportunity to get his services in front of people who may need them; the fun factor is important in that the day-to-day work can be challenging but being with MEDA members is fun, engaging, and worthwhile. Members strive to improve their profession and community.
- c) What is the perception of the organization? What can we develop to make this more attractive? What's the value?  
Those on the call felt that increasing MEDA's visibility and quality of membership benefits, growth will naturally follow.

### 3. Recommendations for the MEDA Board on strengthening our membership

The following ideas will be word-smithed prior to the MEDA Board Meeting on October 13<sup>th</sup>. Eric noted our committee is diversified and training needs to be diversified involving banks, consultants, program providers, etc. MEDA can be the umbrella that ties together all of the disciplines that involve economic development for Montana

- a) Explore possibilities of MEDA providing training within the state. For example, establish an Ellensburg type training here using Montana trainers.
- b) Recertification of IEDC and NDC
- c) Engage the education sector in MEDA; working with youth who are pursuing degrees that interact with economic development and engage them in the MEDA network. Potential partners: Blackstone Launchpad, MWTC network, etc. Suggest a conference scholarship, internships, and waived conference fees, to enticed engagement. This could encourage youth to stay in state by starting their network before even finishing school.
- d) Recognize and engage with new members and/or first time members at MEDA conferences.

### 4. Next Steps

- a) Chris will wordsmith the above ideas and share with the committee for edits prior to the MEDA Board Meeting.
- b) Gloria will prepare nametags for new MEDA members to be recognized and possibly pair them up with an experienced member.