



# BIG SKY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

EDA • EDC CREATING MONTANA BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

## Big Sky EDA/EDC Joint Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 4, 2017 – Rosebud Room – Granite Tower

**BIG SKY ED Mission Statement:** - Focused on sustaining and growing our region's vibrant economy and outstanding quality of life, Big Sky Economic Development provides leadership and resources for business creation, expansion, retention, new business recruitment and community development.

**Committee Members Present:** EDA – Sheri Nicholson, Jennifer Smith, Cory Moore,  
EDC – Duncan Peete, David Trost, Eric Simonsen, Steve Loveless, Mike Nelson

**Staff and others Present:** Steve Arveschoug, Jim Tevlin, Brandon Berger, Melanie Schwarz, Dianne Lehm,  
Evelyn Pyburn, Mary Lou McMillan (recording secretary)

Sheri Nicholson, EDA Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

**Public Comments:** None

**Changes to the Agenda:** None

➤ **Approval of EDA/EDC Executive Committee Minutes**

Motion: Duncan Peete - to approve and forward to the Board of Directors, the December 2016 Executive Committee Minutes as presented to the Executive Committee.

Second: Cory Moore

Discussion: None

Motion Carried

➤ **Approval of EDA/EDC Financials – Jim Tevlin**

a. Jim reported there was an error in the EDA Financial Statements and handed out a replacement. The error was the amount of mill levy revenue he had originally reported, the amount is much higher than what was initially reported. There is a great deal of activity regarding the financial reports of the organization. There is focus on the financial statements on hand especially with the EDA's balance sheet, particularly the receivables. All others are current.

Motion: Jennifer Smith, to approve and forward to the full Board, the November 2016 Financials, as presented to the Executive Committee.

Second: Eric Simonsen

Discussion: None

Motion Carried

➤ **Executive Director's Report – Steve**

a. **Update: GE Taskforce Meeting with GE (Incentive Payment)**

Steve passed out the email communications he had with GE about our transition work with them. GE is agreeing to leave the furnishings in place. We'll do a walkthrough and inventory all things of value. One issue that has come up is what to do with our incentive payment under our current agreement with GE. We make a \$50,000 per year incentive payment to GE, \$25,000 from EDA, \$25,000 from EDC. That payment is due in January of every year. Steve made the executive decision to not make that payment. It was communicated with GE and they understood. Steve put together a proposal he wants the Board to look over and give their thoughts on. The proposal is to not make the 2016 or 2017 payment to GE. We would instead deposit those funds into a separate account to be managed and used for costs related to the transition. The Ex. Committee was in agreement with this approach.

- b. **Update: Billings Now Status/Legislative Priorities**  
The Montana Infrastructure Coalition (MCI) and the Billings ACT group are now working together on a draft local option authority legislation. That draft legislation should be ready for our review in the next 10 days. As soon as it is ready Steve will ask the Ad Hoc Legislative Committee to review it and then ask the County Commissioners to offer their input during a discussion session. After that input the BSED Board will take action. Steve said that is the game plan at this point.
- c. **Confirm Staffing Plan for BSED Administration**  
Steve spoke of the job description for the Big Sky Economic Development Operations Director position and his expectations for that position. The Executive Committee understands the need for the positions, but asked Steve to develop a funding plan for the added staff.
- d. **Update: MSU-Billings-New Leadership/Science Building**  
Steve thanked the Board Members that attended the December 9<sup>th</sup> lunch with President Cruzado. This was an opportunity for her to introduce the Intern Chancellor, Dr. Ron Larson. Steve mentioned that we must stay engaged with what is happening at our University.

➤ **Program Directors Updates**

- a. **Final Loan Program Bus. Plan/Resolution – Brandon/Steve**  
Brandon met with a few of the Board Members regarding the merge between Big Sky Economic Corporation and Montana Community Finance Corporation. He provided the Executive Committee with a draft of the Resolution, an addition to the Business Plan that was provided at last month's meeting. Big Sky Economic Development is requesting the ability to go to the Full Board if the Executive Committee approves the Resolution of Intent to merge. They would then make an application to SBA with the intent to merge.  
Motion: David Trost, to approve and forward to the full Board for final approval of the intent to merge.  
Second: Duncan Peete  
Discussion: None  
Motion Carried
- b. **BillingsWorks Update: 2017 Employer Survey and Director Next Steps – Melanie**  
Melanie mentioned this is a busy time of year for BillingsWorks as this is the time of year during which the State of the Workforce Report is being compiled. January 10<sup>th</sup> is when the Employers Survey will go live. Melanie will be asking the Board of Directors next Thursday to help her get the word out on taking the survey that will be on our website.

Melanie also discussed the January 2017 through June 30, 2018 Big Sky Finance Marketing Plan. The Goal for this plan is to brand Big Sky Finance as a new statewide entity focusing on providing capital to clients building or expanding their business.

**c. TEDD Next Steps and Master Plan Proposal – Dianne/Katy**

Dianne gave information on the next steps and Master Plan Proposal. On December 27, the County Commissioners signed the final paperwork to make the TEDD official in Lockwood. The next step is getting the structure of the district set up and getting the Advisory Committee in place. There is an immediate need to develop an infrastructure master plan for the TEDD. That plan would normally be an expense that is covered by TEDD dollars. Until those funds are available, it is proposed that BSED would fund the master plan work and then receive reimbursement from the TEDD, with the Commissioners approval. The Board was ok with that approach pending input from the Commissioners. Dianne will ask the Commissioners to put the proposal on a discussion session within the next two weeks. Assuming the Commissioners are in agreement regarding the reimbursement, Dianne will then bring the matter of the Opportunity Fund request back to the Board. The Opportunity Fund Committee has agreed in principle to this approach. We'll be ready to move forward with starting on the infrastructure masterplan right away, if everyone agrees.

➤ **Executive Session as Needed**

**Public Comment: None**

**Meeting Adjourned at 9:00 am**

**Motion: Duncan Peete, to adjourn EDA/EDC Joint Executive Committee Meeting**

**Second: Cory Moore**

**Discussion: None**

**Motion carried**

**Next Meeting – February 1, 2016 – Rosebud Room, Granite Tower**

**Respectfully submitted,  
Sheri Nicholson, EDA Chair**

**When approved, minutes will be filed electronically in the Big Sky EDA office.**