



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

**Wednesday, March 7, 2018 – 7:30 AM – 9:00 AM**

**Rosebud Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor – 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** – Cory Moore, Jennifer Smith, Paul Neutgens, Robin Rude, Sheri Nicholson  
**EDC** – David Trost, Eric Simonsen, Mike Nelson

**Staff and others Present:**      Becky Rogers, Austin Trunkle, Dena Johnson, Melanie Schwarz, Deanna Langman, Jim Tevlin, Steve Arveschoug, Evelyn Pyburn (Big Sky Business Journal)

**Call to Order:**

Eric Simonsen, EDC Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:30 am

**Agenda Changes for Today's Meeting:**

Changes in the agenda include a discussion about a funding concept for One Big Sky Center and a discussion about Recruitment.

**Public Comments:**

Melanie mentioned that Alison had her baby boy yesterday morning at 4:11 am.

Steve was welcomed back from his sabbatical leave by the Committee.

**Agenda:**

Approval of EDA/EDC Executive Committee Minutes of February 2018

Motion: Sheri Nicholson, to approve and forward to the Board of Directors, the February 2018 Executive Committee Minutes as presented to the Executive Committee.

Second: Jennifer Smith

Discussion: None

Motion carried

Approval of January 2018 EDA/EDC Financials – Jim

Jim updated the Committee on the EDA and EDC Financials. Jim notified the Committee that a majority of the funds selected at the end of 2017 to be put into CD's have been deposited. We deposited with nine member investor banks. We have officially deposited with seven and are in the final steps of depositing with the final two. As Jim is working to project year end results, he mentioned two areas that have his attention. For the EDA, he is watching the protested taxes. We had anticipated a figure close to \$45,000. Halfway through the fiscal year, we have already approached \$41,000. For the EDC, as mentioned in previous meetings, he reiterated that we have lower origination fees than anticipated, but there are other funds that may help cover the shortage. A Committee member asked what the CD rates were for our funds and it ranged from about .9 - 1.9%.

Motion: Sheri Nicholson, to approve and forward to the Board of Directors, the January 2018 EDA and EDC Financials as presented to the Executive Committee.  
Second: Steve Loveless  
Discussion: None  
Motion carried

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

Steve led off by thanking the Committee for encouraging and allowing his sabbatical. Steve spent time at the Center for Creative Learning in Greensboro, NC. He also managed to spend some time fly fishing, visiting friends, and enjoying his family. The five-day course at the Center for Creative Learning was intense but fruitful. Steve was tasked with completing a list of goals when he left. The first goal is to establish a narrowed strategic focus which will include handing off responsibilities to staff to allow him to stay focused on strategic priorities. The second goal is to create balance for himself and for the organization. Steve also reviewed feedback that came out of an individual coaching session and a 360 review with input from Board members, Staff, and peers.

Dena shared some insight from her time as Acting Executive Director in February. She spoke highly of the support received from the team and then shared some ideas of different ways to structure things to better define roles and to work more effectively and efficiently. The Committee commended Dena's work as the Acting Executive Director.

In regard to Sara's departure, we have requested for the SBA to approve Brian as the Acting VBOC Director until a new director is hired. Dena has been informed that the SBA intends to award us the VBOC grant but that decision will not be made official until April 1<sup>st</sup>. The term is five years and our region has shrunk to Montana, Wyoming and Utah.

Steve notified the committee that the May meeting will be moved to April 30<sup>th</sup> from 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm.

#### **Program/Org. Director's Updates**

##### Nominating Committee Recommendation – Mike Nelson

Mike gave a Nominating Committee update for the Committee. Mike Philips was recommended by the Nominating Committee to fill the open seat from Kathy Boelter's resignation.

Motion: Sheri Nicholson, moved to approve and forward to the Board of Directors, the Nominating Committee's recommendation as presented to the Executive Committee.  
Second: Paul Neutgens  
Discussion: None  
Motion carried

##### Operations: Future Facilities Taskforce - Becky

Becky provided both the Staff and Committee with a criteria matrix that was made up from the input of Staff, Board Members, and Community Stakeholders. She shared a few themes from the feedback and updated the committee on the steps taken towards determining the size of office space needed. Becky will meet with Jim and Steve to discuss a preliminary budget for the new facility and bring the recommendation to the next meeting.

##### Community Development: Coal Board/MSUB Environmental Review Resolution - Dianne

Dianne was next and spoke about the final steps we need to take with the Coal Board to be awarded the funds that are available. This final step is a resolution to approve the results of an environmental assessment. The assessment determines the impact to the local ecosystem by the construction at MSUB and concluded no further action was needed to be taken. One change made was to make Jennifer the signer of the resolution. It had Eric as the signer by mistake. Dianne asked the Committee to recommend the resolution be taken to the full Board.

Motion: David Trost, to approve and forward to the Board to recommend the resolution as presented to the Executive Committee.  
Second: Mike Nelson  
Discussion: None  
Motion carried

PTAC: Option Year Contract - Deanna

Deanna informed the Committee that PTAC is renewing their bid for funding of another program year. Deanna will submit a preliminary budget on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. It was determined a vote was unnecessary for this item.

Matchmaking Event Update:

Deanna mentioned that the PTAC Matchmaking Event was a great Success. The event continues to grow and new agencies were in attendance.

One Big Sky Center Update: OBSC Strategy Partner draft MOU – Steve acting for Allison

After speaking with City Council last Monday, Steve thinks that the project is heading in the right direction. As it stands, approximately \$530,000 of the \$675,000 funds the community needs to raise locally for the Phase II assessment have been raised. Included in this is \$400,000 pledged by the Downtown Billings Partnership from the future disposition of the Yesteryear Antique building. The challenge the DBP is facing is that although it has considerable value in the building, cash is needed for the Phase II work under the OBSC project. To bridge the gap, Steve discussed a few different concepts for lending the money to the DBP with the intention to be repaid. The DBP has a 5-year financial projection that shows TIF dollars will be available in the future and would be able to meet a debt obligation. Discussion was held surrounding the risk of repayment and which concept would be best to consider. It was determined Steve would sit down with the City and the DBP to flesh out a few ideas and come back to the Committee with a recommendation. No discussion or action was taken on the OBSC Strategy Partner draft MOU.

Next on the docket was a discussion concerning the recruitment of a company looking to expand into Montana. The company is looking at two communities, Missoula and Billings. Steve would like to send a letter including a preliminary proposal that would be subject to final Board approval. This letter is due to the Governor's Office of Economic Development today, March 7, 2018. The company is involved in the tech industry and would bring 20-30 jobs and anticipates up to 100 jobs in the next three years. In the proposal, Steve will provide a list of possible lease options in Billings that qualify as "Class A" office space. Some of which include the FIB Tower, The Stillwater Building, and the Transwestern Plaza. Additionally, our proposal would include providing \$100,000 towards infrastructure enhancements or lease buy down as well as matching the State's workforce training dollars for up to 30 employees, a value of \$400,000. The total out of pocket cost would be \$500,000-- \$100,000 toward office space and up to \$400,000 in job creation incentives. Steve asked the Committee to approve him sending the preliminary offer letter subject to mutual consideration and Board approval.

Motion: Cory Moore, to approve sending the preliminary offer letter as presented to the Executive Committee.  
Second: Jennifer Smith  
Discussion: None  
Motion carried

**Meeting adjourned at 9:00 am**

**Next Executive Committee Meeting – April 4, 2018**

*Big Sky Economic Development Board of Directors will make reasonable accommodations for known disabilities that may interfere with an individual's ability to participate. Persons requiring such accommodations should make their requests to Big Sky Economic Development as soon as possible before the meeting day. Please call Big Sky Economic Development at 256-6871.*