



State Tribal Economic Development Commission (STEDC)
Best Western Plus Havre Inn & Suites
1425 Hwy 2 NW
Havre, Montana
9:15 a.m. to 2:36 p.m.
Wednesday, May 17, 2023
(The official meeting minutes can be accessed on the recording)

Commissioners Present: Gerald Gray (Chairman), Richard Sangrey (Vice-Chair), Cheryl Reevis, Shawn Backbone, Bryce Kirk, Delina Cuts The Rope, and Scott Osterman.

Department of Commerce Staff Present: Liane Taylor, Rachelle Brown, Marilyn Willson, Luke Robinson, Susan Brurud – Community MT.

Department of Commerce Staff Virtual: Vena Dagnall, Galen Steffens, Dave Ritts, and Benjamin Gill.

Guests Present: Martin DeWitt – Small Business Association; Travis Wilmore and Brandon Fish – International Traditional Games Society; Shane Patacsil – Chippewa Cree Tribe; Lawrence Hamilton – Fort Peck Tribe; and DyAnna Three Irons – Crow Tribe.

Guests Virtual: Dan Meehan and Robert Kain – Houseal Lavigne; Alicia Harvey, Chair for the Tourism Advisory Council; Deanna Brady-Leader – International Traditional Games Society.

Introduction of Staff and Guests

01:27

Call Meeting to Order

0:09 Chair Gray called the meeting to order.

0:44 Ms. Willson called the roll for Commission members.

Opening Prayer

1:30 Commissioner Backbone

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

2:38 Susan Brurud from the Department of Commerce (Community MT) - Discussion about the Lead Service Line Inventory Technical Assistance program.

9:35 Vice-Chair Sangrey – Discussion and concerns about broadband.

11:09 Director Osterman – Discussion about broadband. It is being overseen by Mark Blasedel from the Governor’s Office of Economic Development.

13:25 Commissioner Cuts The Rope – Discussion regarding equal access to economic development for broadband.

15:39 Director Osterman – Discussion regarding Robert’s Rules of Order training and recommended the commissioner’s complete the training.

Approval of Minutes

17:34 Presenter: Chair Gray

Motion: Commissioner Kirk

Second: Commissioner Backbone

24:09 Chair Gray called for a vote: All yes. Motion Passed.

18:45 Vice-Chair Sangrey and Commissioner Reevis had questions and concerns about the Tribal Business Development Grant including changing the funding for Tribes with the grant. Vice-Chair Sangrey was concerned which Tribe would be the last to receive the TBDG. He also expressed concern they will be competing against each other for funding. Discussion also included the matching requirements being a problem for Tribes. The Commission agreed they would discuss it later in the meeting.

21:10 Commissioner Cuts The Rope had questions about inventory, assessment and implementation for the lead pipe replacements.

Small Business Association Programs

24:33 Presenter: Martin DeWitt

Mr. Dewitt discussed the different programs offered.

Tribal Tourism Update

01:10:16 Presenter: Ms. Brown

Ms. Brown discussed her program has the ability to offer approximately 7-8 scholarships per Tribe for each person to attend the Accelerate MT Training program. Ms. Brown provided the Commission with a draft Indian Country Passport to promote tourism in Indian Country.

OICED Program Update

01:31:11 Presenters: Marilyn Willson and Liane Taylor

Ms. Willson discussed her attendance at the Res 2023 Conference. She reminded the Commission to contact Herb Kulow from the Department of Commerce with any questions regarding SSBCI. She also reminded the Commission the TA Grant Program applications deadline is July 28, 2023.

Ms. Willson reminded the Commission of the next STEDC meeting in August.

Change of August 2023 STEDC Meeting Date to August 2, 2023:

1:36:50 Motion: Commissioner Kirk

Second: Commissioner Backbone

Chair Gray called for a vote: All yes. Motion Passed.

1:37:28 Ms. Willson reminded the Commission there is a Robert's Rules of Order training offered by the Governor's Office that they are encouraged to complete. The website is located at www.boards.mt.gov for board members and commission members.

1:40:13 Ms. Taylor provided an update to the Tribal Business Development Grant (TBDG). The Commission further discussed the TBDG and some of the positives and concerns. Discussion included how funds were distributed in the past and how they were managed and issues regarding the work and money that goes into planning and creating shovel ready projects.

Ms. Taylor announced there were four applications for the TBDG. Blackfeet was awarded \$140,000 and Little Shell was awarded \$100,000 for their projects.

Director Osterman explained that this is an overall department programs review and possible change to ensure effectiveness. The Department's goal is to look at all the programs that can be used to support and grow business on and off the reservations for native owned businesses to create economic development and benefit.

The Commission provided suggestions to advertise the TBDG. Commissioner Kirk expressed concern that not all Commissioners were involved in the discussion regarding the TBDG and how the grant would be administered. He suggested there be better communication from the State. Commissioner Kirk questioned, as he stated was also asked by some of the Commissioners in a previous STEDC Meeting, why pit Tribe against Tribe?

Director Osterman stated that there are certain things the Commission has purview over and things they do not. He stated that it would be important to provide the statutory information and guidance to the Commission in an upcoming meeting to explain where there are instances where the Commission has a voice but not a vote.

Commissioner Kirk questioned why ask for feedback if they have no say.

Director Osterman stated there is a statutory requirement delineating the duties of the STED Commission. There are decisions that are up to the Department and some up to the STEDC based on statute and we want to make decisions the most productive way possible, even if we have a difference of opinion. Director Osterman explained it was important to get feedback.

The Commission further discussed the TBDG.

Legislative Update

2:24:10 Presenter: Liane Taylor
Ms. Taylor provided the legislative update.

Center for Indian Country Development

02:32:50 Presenters: Heather Sobrepena and Andy Huff
Ms. Sobrepena and Mr. Huff discussed the launching of a major data initiative to build economic data sets about Indian Country. They stated this will empower native individuals and communities to shape their economic future by identifying possible needed investments or opportunities.

IEF and NABA Programs Report

03:27:23 Presenter: Mr. Robinson
Mr. Robinson provided an update on the Indian Equity Fund (IEF) and Native American Business Advisor (NABA) programs.

Community Planning Platform

03:35:29 Presenter: Cody Ferguson

Mr. Ferguson from the Department of Commerce presented on the community planning platform.

International Traditional Games Society

03:51:31 Presenters: Travis Wilmore and Brandon Fish

Mr. Wilmore and Mr. Fish provided updates regarding the Indigenous People's Days to be held on October 8 – 14, 2023 in locations around Great Falls.

Other Business

04:18:41 Introduction of Alicia Harvey, Chair of the TAC

04:19:56 Deanna Brady Leader Introduction and discussion of the International Traditional Games Society.

Adjournment

04:21:49 Presenter: Chair Gray

Motion: Commissioner Kirk

Second: Vice Chair Sangray

Chair Gray called for a vote: All yes. Motion Passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:36 p.m.