



State Tribal Economic Development (STED) Commission  
Billings Hotel & Convention Center  
1223 Mallowney Lane  
Billings, Montana  
9:08 a.m. to 2:34 p.m.  
Wednesday, August 2, 2023  
(The official meeting minutes can be accessed on the recording)

**Commissioners Present:** Gerald Gray (Chairman), Richard Sangrey (Vice-Chair), Shawn Backbone, Jennifer Finley, and Delina Cuts The Rope.

**Commissioners Virtual:** Scott Osterman and Cheryl Reevis.

**Department of Commerce Staff Present:** Rachelle Brown, Marilyn Willson, Luke Robinson, Herb Kulow, Susan Brurud – Community MT.

**Department of Commerce Staff Virtual:** Susan Brurud, Vena Dagnall, Liane Taylor, and Todd Jackson.

**Guests Present:** Gerlinda Morrison and Lynn Wood-Fields – Accelerate Montana; Amber Lamb – Montana Department of Labor & Industry; Alicia Harvey, Chair for the Tourism Advisory Council; Danny Morrison - Museum of the Rockies; DyAnna Three Irons – Crow Tribe; Ivan McDonald, and Liz Unger.

**Guests Virtual:** Haley Ship – Missouri River Country in northeast Montana; Greg Montgomery and Sandy Conig – DEQ, Emily Gillespie from Region 8 EPA.

**Call Meeting to Order**

0:09 Chair Gray called the meeting to order.

0:50 Ms. Willson called the roll for Commission members.

**Opening Prayer**

1:51 Commissioner Finley

**Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items**

2:49 Herb Kulow from the Department of Commerce - Discussion about the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) program. Commissioner Reevis explained that the Blackfeet Tribe also applied for the SSBCI treasury funds solely on their own.

9:36 Round robin discussion from Commissioners about Tribal community updates.

33:15 Ms. Taylor discussed the currently vacant Program Manager position for the Office of Indian Country. They will be interviewing candidates this week and will probably reach out to Chairman Gray or others on the Commission to be a part of the interview process. The idea for the role of the program manager will be to meet with Tribal leaders and entities to look at projects where federal money may be available.

### **Approval of Minutes**

34:35 Presenter: Chair Gray

Motion to approve: Vice Chair Sangrey

Second: Commissioner Backbone

35:09 Chair Gray called for a vote: All yes. Motion Passed.

### **Lead Service Line Technical Assistance**

35:28 Presenters: Susan Brurud and Greg Montgomery

Susan Brurud discussed Lead Service Line Technical Assistance Program. The purpose is to provide technical assistance to all public water systems that are required. They are required to complete their lead service line inventories by October 16, 2024.

Greg Montgomery from DEQ discussed where sources of lead in drinking water come from and the inventory.

### **Election of Officers**

1:42:20 Motion: Vice Chair Sangrey nominated Commissioner Finley for Vice Chair.

Second: Commissioner Backbone.

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

1:46:57 Motion: Commissioner Backbone nominated Chair Gray for Chairman.

Second: Commissioner Sangrey.

Gray called for a vote: All yes. Motion passed.

### **OICED Program Update**

01:48:08 Presenters: Marilyn Willson and Liane Taylor

Ms. Willson discussed that the Office of Indian Economic Development (OICED) started a monthly newsletter composed by Vena Dagnall. Ms. Willson explained that Jason Small no longer works for the OICED program. Commissioner Sangrey requested the Commission be apprised of changes within the OICED program staff. Ms. Taylor explained that Jason Small is now the Executive Director for the Montana AFLI-CIO.

Ms. Willson reminded the Commission that at the next meeting, an agenda item will include determining dates and locations of next year's Commission meetings.

The Commission discussed agenda items that would meet the Commission's goal regarding economic development. The Commissioners discussed possible upcoming agenda items. The Commission suggested at each meeting each Commissioner share what is going on in their Tribe. The Commission suggested inviting an Indian Equity Fund recipient to speak at each meeting. Commissioner Finley discussed possibly inviting someone from S & K Technologies for the next meeting and asking an intern

from the Salish Kootenai College to present. Commissioner Backbone suggested having someone speak from the meat packing plant for the next meeting. Commissioner Cuts The Rope suggested having a report showing goals, objectives, how Tribes are meeting them, and the contribution to the State of Montana and to their own economy.

Ms. Taylor explained there are several internship programs going on right now with different entities and possibly get a panel together for the next meeting.

Vice Chair Sangrey requested clarification from Ms. Taylor regarding appointments and alternates for State Tribal Economic Development Commission positions. Ms. Taylor stated the Governor's Office would like applicants from the Tribes that terms have ended. If Commission wants input from Tribal leadership on who should submit an application, perhaps do that before any applications are submitted and submit application on [www.boards.mt.gov](http://www.boards.mt.gov). Ms. Taylor stated the Lieutenant Governor's Office oversees the boards and commissions and would go through the process for new appointments. As far as not having alternates, Ms. Taylor would need more information on that from the Lieutenant Governor's Office.

Vice Chair Sangrey was concerned that applications would be accepted from anyone, the Tribe may not agree with the appointment. Ms. Taylor said that would vary from Tribe to Tribe. She stated perhaps commission members could recruit members. Ms. Taylor stated that she could recommend that if there's an applicant, that the Governor's Office reach out to either Tribal leadership or the Tribal business community. The Commission discussed having Tribal Council recommendation and asked when the application processes had changed. Ms. Taylor stated that she is not aware that there has been a change. Discussion regarding STED Commissioner appointments continued. Ms. Taylor stated the OICED program could send out communication to the Tribes to nominate someone.

### **Accelerate Montana**

02:20:11 Presenters: Lynn Wood-Fields and Gerlinda Morrison from Accelerate Montana and Amber Lamb from the Department of Labor & Industry.

Presenters provided updates and information on the production assistant opportunities, grant and training with Montana Tribal communities. The Production Assistant Training will start sooner than initially thought as a production company has reached out to them. They are filming a television series and committed to hire at least one of their graduates and up to six. The first Production Assistant Training will occur on August 26 – 27, 2023 in Polson.

2:32:45 Rachelle Brown also discussed that there are 80 production assistance scholarships, and there are 18 months to provide them. They will be starting with half the scholarships (45) to see how it goes in terms of criteria. The requirement now is the applicant must be an enrolled Tribal member, of working age, with a Tribal identification. Ms. Brown asked the Commissioners how the Commission would like to proceed. If they'd like to change the requirements in the future. The Commission discussed that requirements may be different for each Tribe.

### **TAC MOU**

02:46:54 Presenter: Ms. Brown, Ms. Harvey, and Ms. Morrison

Ms. Harvey introduced herself as the Chair for the Tourism Advisory Council (TAC) and Ms. Morrison with the Museum of the Rockies. Ms. Harvey discussed one of the statutory obligations of the TAC to ensure that the six tourism regions and 17 convention and visitors bureau promote tribal tourism in the area they are represented. Ms. Harvey stated that years ago a memorandum of understanding (MOU)

was created between the TAC and the State Tribal Economic Development (STED) Commission. The MOU expired last year so she was at the meeting to discuss that. Ms. Harvey also discussed the TAC and the positions on the TAC. There was further discussion with the Commission regarding the TAC, MOU, and strengthening the relationships between the TAC and STED Commission.

Ms. Brown discussed the MOU between the STED Commission and TAC. Ms. Brown discussed the Visitor's Bureaus and the regions incorporating Indian Country into their marketing plans and getting feedback from the STED Commission.

Ms. Brown explained that based on the MOU she may need to be showing the STED Commission a marketing plan for Indian Country. Ms. Brown discussed her budget and what she is hoping to use it for.

### **IEF and NABA Programs Report**

03:18:51      Presenter: Mr. Robinson

Mr. Robinson provided an update on the Indian Equity Fund (IEF) and Native American Business Advisor (NABA) programs. The next IEF grant opens up for fiscal year 2024 on September 1, 2023, through October 31, 2023. Mr. Robinson explained the Department is changing the format for the application process.

Mr. Robinson explained he has been working with Accelerate Montana on an intensive study for Indian Country and capital flows, banking loans, etc. Mr. Robinson discussed his recent attendance at a meeting for Southeast Tourism for the region for Crow and Northern Cheyenne and was able to learn about some of their initiatives.

Vice Chair Sangrey asked Mr. Robinson if the NABAs got paid. Mr. Robinson stated they did get paid.

03:25:07      Ms. Morrison stated there's a lot of work to be done with the Tribes in honoring how people are represented and there is a lot of networking to be done. Ms. Morrison stated the Museum of the Rockies could offer support to different communities. Ms. Morrison explained she is open to any feedback and to partner by doing cross-promotions.

### **Tribal Tourism Update**

03:32:52      Presenter Ms. Brown

Ms. Brown discussed the upcoming grant cycle. She explained we are transferring away from Submittable for grant applications to a new program called Service Now. Ms. Brown reminded the Commission the IEF grant cycle is September 1, 2023 – October 31, 2023. The Tribal Business Development Grant cycle is September 15, 2023 – October 25, 2023. The Tribal Tourism grant cycle is October 1, 2023 – November 30, 2023.

Ms. Brown stated she hopes to have more information regarding the new laws from the last legislative session and the effect on Tribal Tourism. Ms. Brown presented her wish list for different programs.

### **Adjournment**

03:52:50      Presenter: Chair Gray

Motion: Vice Chair Sangrey

Second: Commissioner Backbone

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

Meeting was adjourned at 2:34 p.m.