



MONTANA OFFICE OF TOURISM AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

State Tribal Economic Development Commission

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

February 12, 2021

CONFERENCE CALL MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Shawn Real Bird (Chairperson), Richard Sangrey (Vice-Chair), Shelly Fyant, Ray King, Lane Spotted Elk, Cheryl Reeves and Scott Osterman

Staff Present: Maria Valandra, Wayne Johnston, Billie LeDeau, Dan Iverson

Guest Speakers: Kristan Lamoureux, Martin Charlo and Robert Sonora

WELCOME/PURPOSE OF GATHERING

Roll call and quorum established. Meeting started at 10:13 AM.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS COMMENTS

Commissioner Fyant questioned why the Montana Indian Language Program was not on the agenda. She heard that it was cut from the Governor's budget. Maria will address it in the Legislative Update.

APPROVAL OF 10/28/2020 CONFERENCE CALL MINUTES ACTIONS THEREON:

Motion: Commissioner Lane Spotted Elk motioned to accept the minutes as presented. Seconded by: Commissioner Shelly Fyant. Motion carries.

INTRODUCTIONS

New Commissioner Ray King of the Fort Belknap Aaniiih Credit Agency (CDFI) introduced himself. They support economic development efforts on the Fort Belknap reservation.

OICED PROGRAM REPORTS

Maria provided an update on FY 2021 Tribal Business Planning Grant and shared Commerce's press release.

Tribal Business Planning Grants of \$30,000 each will be awarded to:

- Blackfeet Tribe: To conduct a feasibility study for a bottled water company
- Chippewa Cree Tribe: To conduct a feasibility study and market analysis for a small-scale meat processing facility
- Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes: To conduct a feasibility study and market analysis for the purchase of the former Big Arm General Store
- Little Big Horn College on the Crow Reservation: To complete a preliminary engineering report to expand the trades building and programs at the Little Big Horn College
- Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes: To develop a contemporary zoning and development ordinance
- Little Shell Chippewa Tribe: To assist with business and operation plans for three businesses under Little Shell Tribal Enterprises, LLC.
- Northern Cheyenne Tribe: To assist with a business plan, preliminary engineering report and preliminary architectural report to develop a workforce training center

Maria provided an update on FY 2021 Indian Equity Fund. The program received 128 applications this year in which 34 businesses were funded. Each business will receive between \$3,750 and \$14,000 and must provide matching funds. An additional \$30,000 was added into the IEF program. The following 34 entrepreneurs and small businesses owners will share \$350,000 in Indian Equity Fund Small Business Grants:

Blackfeet Tribe

- Border Package Pick-up (Babb)
- Glacier Drip Mobile Coffee Shop (Babb)
- Paula's All Occasion Gifts (Browning)
- Skunkcap Painting (Cut Bank)
- Sunshine Woman Creations (East Glacier)

Fort Belknap Assiniboine and Gros Ventre Tribes

- Against All Odds (Billings)
- KillEagle Construction (Dodson)
- Fetters Garage (Fort Belknap Reservation area)
- EH Excavation (Hays)

Chippewa Cree Tribe

- E and E Tire Repair (Box Elder)
- Nate's Gona Fix It (Havre)
- Rebekah Jarvey (Havre)
- Binary Computer Repair (Pablo)

Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes

- Redgrave Education Services (Billings)
- Redbyrd Designs (Glasgow)
- Turcotte Food Bus (Wolf Point)
- Whatever Construction (Wolf Point)

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

- Cahoon Construction & Fire (Charlo)
- Crash & Burn Auto (Moiese)
- Blue Bay Trading Post (Polson)
- Flathead Raft Company (Polson)
- Total Screen Design Inc. (Polson)

Little Shell Chippewa Tribe

- Fry Bread Fusion (Billings)
- McGillis Alignment Repair (Black Eagle)
- TS Cattle Processing Company (East Glacier)
- MJL Properties (Havre)

Crow Tribe

- Metal Solutions (Billings)
- Bomb-Cha'achik (Pryor)
- Diamond Hanging 7 Guest Ranch (Pryor)
- River Bend Lodge (St. Xavier)

Northern Cheyenne Tribe

- Roxy's Rockin Coffee Shop (Ashland)
- Rosebud Tipi Campground (Busby)
- Josh Sioux Welding (Lame Deer)
- Mike's Tool Box (Lame Deer)

Maria shared a Historical Demand (ppt slide) of the Indian Equity Fund progress since 2009-2021. It shows a substantial increase in businesses that applied.

Maria presented the Indian Equity Fund Grant Recipient Follow-up Survey 2016-2020. The survey was conducted in December 2020. Past IEF recipients were surveyed with the assistance of the NASAs. The office received 73 responses on various aspects of their business (i.e. Are you still in business; Did your business impact your local community; How were the funds used; etc.)

Commissioner Real Bird questioned whether or not the applicants need additional resources aside from the NABA technical assistance in general Accounting. He suggested possibly funding a 1-2 credit course at the tribal colleges.

Commissioner Fyant informed the Commission that their NABA partners with the Lake County Community Development Corporation to offer a series of classes in Quickbooks, Social Media Marketing, etc. to all of their entrepreneurs.

Commerce Director Scott Osterman joined the meeting. He emphasized the need to really listen to all businesses needs, how do we promote the greatest amount of success and we need to be open to new ideas. We need to

analyze what's working and what's not working and how do we make Commerce programs more effective. His commitment is to make every dollar count.

TRIBAL TOURISM UPDATE

In respect of time, Dan Iverson will provide the Tribal Tourism update at a later date. Dan introduced Dr. Kristin Lamoureux from Virginia Tech University who is working on behalf of the Bureau of Indian Affairs on a tribal tourism project in Montana.

The project is to support tribal tourism in Montana in assessing the capacity in tribal communities. They seek to create a inter-tribal tourism alliance with the tribes in Montana/Wyoming and local, state and federal partners. Meetings occur monthly and anyone is invited to participate.

Commissioner Real Bird encourages the Commission to support their efforts.

OLD BUSINESS:

HB 632 Update (decennial report on economic impact of Indian reservations.) Robert Sonora provided a brief presentation on the data collection for decennial report to date. There continues to be challenges in the data collection. Ongoing conversations will take place on how to move forward with the report. Billie will provide Tino the contact information for Misty Kuhl, Indian Affairs for the Governor. Commissioner Spotted Elk offered to get Tino Northern Cheyenne's data.

Commissioner Real Bird introduced Representative Sharon Stewart Peregoy. Sharon sits on the Sub-Committee A, Local Government. ICED funding remains at OTO. The Montana Indian Language Program funding was cut by a 1 million dollars and remains at OTO. Section E is being reviewed. The tourism dollars/bed tax remains in the base of the budget.

Director Osterman and the Governor supports cultural preservation and will support the full funding of MILP in the amount of \$1.5 million over the biennium.

Billie is in the planning stages of the STEDC strategic planning session. The original date of the strategic planning session was scheduled for March 2020 in Browning but was cancelled due to the pandemic. Billie and Maria met with Commissioners Real Bird and Sangrey to discuss the 3 proposals received and recommend Eric Ryan of Mission Met to facilitate the session.

Motion: Commissioner Lane Spotted Elk motioned to accept the Mission Met proposal to facilitate the STEDC strategic planning session. Seconded by: Commissioner Ray King. Motion carries.

Wayne Johnston reported that the Workforce Training grant could see a \$450,000 reduction in the budget. Focus remains on the retaining the \$1.5 million appropriation for the Montana Indian Language program.

Maria reported that the position for the Entrepreneur Development Specialist has been narrowed down to 3 candidates. Second interviews have taken place and the position will be filled within the next two weeks. The position will be responsible for the Indian Equity Fund and Native American Business Advisor programs.

Maria formed the Montana Tribal Planners group to collaborate and share information. The group meets every 6 weeks. Director Osterman informed the Commission that there is a college-level online Entrepreneurial class and will be made available to the Commission at no cost.

Motion: Commissioner Cheryl Reevis motion to adjourn Seconded by: Commissioner Ray King. Motion carries.