

Sweetgrass Development 2nd^t Quarter Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, June 19, 2018

Call to Order at 3:16 p.m. by Chairman Tony Sitzmann

Attending: Tony Sitzzman, Jim Hodgekiss, Mike Henning, Dale Seifert , Lorette Carter, Lila Evans, Jim Larson, Deb Brandon, Brenda Schilling, Del Darko, Cyndi Johnson, Sarah Converse

Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Deb and seconded by Lorette to approve the agenda, motion passed.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Minutes were reviewed and corrected. Lila moved and Dale seconded to approve the corrected minutes of the Annual meeting on March 28, 2018, motion passed.

Financials:

Dale moved and Mike seconded to approve March through May financials. The budget was presented. Jim L. moved and Mike seconded to approve the Budget.

Sarah discussed the current status of the Revolving Loan funds. Jim requested a written report about the number of active and retired RLF loans in Teton County. Sarah will do the same for all counties.

Administrative Report:

Project/Grant/Activity Updates

Toole Co. has some tentative Brownfields projects. Lorette requested a list of potential assistance the CRDC could offer businesses in Toole Co.

Teton – Just completed the MEDA Community Assessment for Choteau. Sarah is working with Power to find a new potable water source for 73 users, conducting a community survey. Midwest Assistance Program is compiling the returned surveys.

Pondera - Sarah did work with the Commissioners on a possible DNRC grant – not possible because of time constraints. Reached out to Valier who is requesting a grant writer.

Glacier – Working with some businesses and Indian country development for business plan training, etc. Tribal CEDS was completed and submitted. Browning and Heart Butte are both having water issues.

Cascade – Sarah is facilitating zoning in Belt, Neihart has a continuing Brownfields project, and communicating with the community of Cascade for potential projects. She is also assisting some non-profits for funding, some community water/sewer projects.

Grant Updates:

Big Sky Trust Fund – MT DoC is out of money for planning, has a job creation project funding. SGD has two active planning grants – Cascade County and Pondera County

Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development – Glacier County – Attended the check presentation with Glacier County for Blackfeet Community College at the BCC graduation.

Infrastructure Assistance updates – Power, Belt, Heart Butte, and Valier were discussed previously . Sarah has written 7 letters of support for local governments for TSEP projects. Infrastructure Coalition will be meeting next week but Sarah has a prior obligation and won't attend.

Schedule updates

Sarah updated on schedule, Brownfields – Lewistown, MEDA Board, CRDC, Innovate through the end of summer and then conferences start in September.

Business Items:

Glacier County board position – Bill McCaughley recommends Brenda Schilling of the Glacier County Port Authority to take his place on the Board. Cyndi moved and Dale seconded to accept Bill's resignation and his recommendation for Brenda as his replacement. Motion carried.

Hiring – Sarah is working on filling a couple of positions - Grant Adm and Research/Website maintenance that she will share with the hiring committee soon. Sarah's evaluation is due.

Brownfields Grant - Sweetgrass Development was not a successful applicant this year for the Brownfields Grant. Sarah reviewed the adjudication process and highlighted the weaknesses in the application. Corrections and adjustments will be made and we will re-apply for the next round of funding. This round will only include Assessment funding. RLF funding for Brownfields project only occurs every two years. It was moved by Lorette and seconded by Deb to apply for the assessment grant when it opens again, motion carried.

Opportunity Zone – Zones were approved on the Federal level. Rule writing is in process and the timeline for completion is unknown. Training is anticipated for those communities included in the Opportunity Zone – Shelby, Browning and reservation in Glacier County.

Area Reports:

Lorette reported on Shelby – 2 phases of sewer project, a quiet zone project, and several businesses locating in the Port of Northern MT. Deb reported Toole County has recently worked with FEMA on many infrastructure sites which need repairs due to flooding and built a new hangar facility at their airport.

Teton and Pondera County haven't made a request for disaster designation yet...current flooding could change that. Choteau is looking forward to the completion of the Assisted Living project in their community.

Cascade County has finished the roof on the courthouse and are considering undertaking a rehab of the old bleachers at the fairgrounds after this year's fair. The Food Park is amending their permit application and plans are up in the air. The property for the project has been purchased.

Jim shared the Airport Board is attempting to secure a viable Aircraft related business plan in order to obtain a structure adjacent to the airport. He also talked about the Choteau Library and the push for accessibility updates. This could potentially be a CDBG Facilities Grant project.

Next meeting: Tentatively September or later in the fall.