



State Tribal Economic Development Commission (STEDC)
Montana State Capitol Building
Office of Budget & Program Planning Conference Room 250
1301 E. 6th Ave., Helena Montana 59601
9:08 a.m. to 2:21 p.m.
Wednesday, November 16, 2022

Commissioners Present: Gerald Gray (Chairman), Richard Sangrey (Vice-Chair)
Jennifer Finley, Shawn Backbone, Delina Cuts the Rope, and Scott Osterman

Commissioners Virtual: Cheryl Reevis

Staff Present: Liane Taylor, Jason Small, Rachelle Brown, and Luke Robinson

Staff Virtual: Marilyn Willson

Guests Present: Troy Downing, Sam Loveridge, Dyanna Three Irons, Matthew Pettigrew, Melissa Weddell, Brandon Fish, DeeAnna Brady-Leader, Dugan Coburn, Amber Lamb, and Lynn-Wood Fields

Guests Virtual: Jan Stoddard, Carmen Levick, and Michele Cushman

Welcome/Purpose of Gathering: Roll call and quorum established. Meeting was called to order at 9:08 a.m.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items:

Montana State Auditor, Troy Downing presented information regarding the Office of the Montana State Auditor resources. Mr. Downing expressed interest in providing more services with the tribal communities to help promote and lift the communities. He explained there have been issues regarding insurance in Indian Country where some insurance companies were refusing to renew insurance policies due to redlining and Mr. Downing encouraged reporting this to his office.

Mr. Downing explained on the securities side, his office provides outreach and education on financial information. They help provide financial empowerment to understanding finances. He discussed capital formation including understanding what a person needs to do to build a business in Montana, when to take money from investors, and obtaining money from investors.

Mr. Downing also provided information that his office deals with certain cases dealing with financial elder abuse, as well as, working with other state agencies.

He explained his office provides tools to help understand the above discussed issues, as well as, how they are regulated. The website for the State Auditor's office is www.csimt.gov and the phone number is 406-444-2040.

August 24, 2022 Minutes: Gerald Gray moved to table approving the minutes from the August 24, 2022 meeting until the next Commission meeting when they are written. Scott Osterman seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Rachelle Brown explained to the Commission that there are no minutes either written or the Zoom recording for November 17, 2021, February 16, 2023, and May 18, 2022. Ms. Brown stated she had diligently worked and discussed this issue with several people within the Department to determine if they could find the archived recordings or written minutes and was unable to do so. Chairman Grey requested the Tribal Economic Development Specialist provide recorded minutes and written minutes of future meetings.

Reports:

IEF (Indian Equity Fund) and NABA (Native American Business Advisor) Programs

Luke Robinson worked with Liane Taylor and Jason Small for the process this year. The state reviewed the primary round. The second step went through NABA to get their input. Selections were made and now will get the award announcement to the Director's Office, and then to Governor's Office. The next step is to get the announcement to the Director's office. Next month Mr. Robinson intends to start the contracts.

Mr. Robinson stated he has six of the eight contracts being reviewed by legal. There are two NABAs we are going to discuss to possibly strengthen it. They are suggesting adding a curriculum to high school students for the NABAs to train them on financial literacy.

Commissioner Osterman asked Mr. Robinson when the NABA people were going to get paid. Mr. Robinson stated there was a delay in the process because Liane and Jason would like to see more outcomes, quality control and data points for the NABAs in their contracts. The contracts are now in legal, so then they can get their first disbursement as soon as next month and go from there. Commissioner Osterman stated we have spent a lot of time measuring activity but not results.

Discussion continued with the question if local review had been eliminated. Mr. Robinson explained there was a local review at the second part of the process. It was asked what does Mr. Robinson define as a local review and what are his expectations.

Liane Taylor explained they reviewed these at the state level first. There have been some time issues with local tribes as sometimes, it took months before everyone could get together to complete the internal ranking. Liane noted that there were items missing from the grant applications such as, not having a business plan, no cash flow projections, etc. By them reviewing these applications, they were able to see some of the limitations and things that are working well. For the next round, we will meet with everyone. They've met with some of the NABAs. Going forward, they will take everyone's thoughts and considerations. Reviewing the grant applications gave them the ability to assess how things were working and if the process was efficient. Commissioner Osterman stated that the purpose is to make the things simpler. How are we engaging in a digital standpoint, what hoops we are making people jump through that may not be necessary, how to make the process easier and doesn't put an undue burden to complete a grant. Osterman stated he wants to make it easier, not harder to complete the applications. He also stated, he wants it transparent, predictable and effective.

Ms. Taylor also stated she observed that there are a lot of good ideas, but the applicants may not be prepared. She stated what can we do to assist those Indian entrepreneurs make it to the next level.

Liane suggested offering in conjunction with NABA to offer a different level of assistance so these Indian entrepreneurs can succeed.

Commissioner Cheryl Reevis stated the Indian Equity Grant she agrees it's important to have local review. It wasn't just the tribal government that was reviewing them. It also included people in the community. Commissioner Reevis expressed concern that we were using time efficiency to avoid tribal consultation. She stated if time efficiency is a problem that it should be addressed locally at each tribal meeting.

Commissioner Osterman would like a published defined process with a timeline for the grant. He expressed interest in creating a workflow that would be completely digital perhaps assisting it to move timely.

Tribal Tourism Update

Rachelle Brown explained for the fiscal year 2023, there is an Eastern Montana Initiative Grant (EMI). There is a one-million-dollar budget for anyone in Eastern Montana, which includes reservations located in the area. The grant cycle will close on November 27, 2022. The event grant cycle will begin again on January 4, 2023. This is offered by the Brand MT Division.

The cycle through the Office of Indian Country Economic Development closes November 30, 2022. The budget is \$122,000.

The Tourism Event Grant opens January 4, 2023, offering up to \$25,000.

Rachelle Brown provided information on electronic data provided by Zartico. The information she obtained shows credit cards used, spend data, and mobile device counts. It shows resident and visitor card holder counts. This data does not include cash spent. Ms. Brown stated this information could be used in grant proposals to measure success. This information was further discussed.

Presentations:

Institute for Tourism & Recreation (ITRR)

Melissa Weddell and Matthew Pettigrew. They introduced themselves and discussed that ITRR was established in 1987 to conduct objective research in tourism and recreation. They are funded through the bed tax. They also are funded by grants. ITRR works with a variety of businesses, including government, private organizations, non-profit organizations, etc. ITRR discussed their research and data they provide. They can be contacted at itrr@montana.edu.

International Traditional Games Society

Brandon Fish, DeeAnna Brady-Leader, Dugan Coburn introduced themselves from the International Traditional Games Society. They presented information on gathering in 2023. This gathering will be held the second week of October. It's a collaboration. It's a week-long event. Mr. Fish explained that they have set the dates, to align with Indigenous People's Days in 2023, to be held on October 8-14, 2023, in locations around Great Falls and the First People's Buffalo Jump State Park. Their website is <https://www.traditionalnativegames.org/>. Various activities will take place including, but not limited to, a parade, and a Pow Wow. Brandon explained they would like all the tribes to be represented. They would like a uniting of a ceremonial fire.

Director Osterman was in Kyrgyzstan in September 2022, meeting with the Minister of Tourism for the Country of Kyrgyzstan. Director Osterman was asked if we could host the World Nomad Games. There have been four world Nomad Games hosted. The fourth was just held in Turkey, the first held outside of Kyrgyzstan. There are 102 countries and over 2000 athletes that attended the games in Turkey. Director Osterman's experience overseas and the dream of Montana hosting the 2026 World Nomad Games could be possible if built upon the foundation of a successful, annual Traditional Games Olympics (2023, 2024, 2025) currently being organized by the International Traditional Games Society. Director Osterman stated that from a cultural preservation standpoint, there's nothing more important. Part of that, is the fun of the life and what these games meant in the family. Director Osterman stated that perhaps this is the spark of the culminating event to create an international stage for Montana Native culture to be represented appropriately.

Department of Labor & Industry Audio & Media Apprenticeship program (under development)

Lynn-Wood Fields who is a producer, business owner, educator & film outreach coordinator; and Amber Lamb, the Equity and Diversity Coordinator for the State of Montana Department of Labor & Industry Registered Apprenticeship Program presented on "Economic Impact by Incentivizing Indigenous, Veterans and Montana Crew in the Film Industry". They want feedback to see if there is any interest in this idea. They want assistance with their idea of providing an apprenticeship in this emerging occupation with training from Accelerate Montana. They discussed wanting to increase apprenticeship in Indian Country. They are working on a bill for incentives for indigenous people and veterans. They wanted feedback from the Commissioners and to return with a more developed program to share at the next STEDC Meeting in February 2023.

Other Business:

Chairman Gray wants ideas for the Tribal Business Planning Grant on the next agenda.

Set 2023 Meeting Schedule:

The proposed STED Commission meeting dates and locations are as follows:

- February 15, 2023 – Little Shell
- May 17, 2023 – Fort Belknap
- August 16, 2023 - Blackfeet
- November 15, 2023 – CSKT

Adjourn:

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 2:21 p.m.