

BITTER ROOT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
MEETING MINUTES OF February 26, 2008
Iron Horse Brew Pub
Missoula, Montana

Board Present: Jean Curtiss, Ed Childers, Robert Struckman, Kevin Chamberlain, Jim DeBree

Others: Paul DeWolf, Wolf Ametsbiechler, Tony Rudbach, Marcy Allen

CALL TO ORDER: Jean Curtiss called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Robert Struckman moved to accept the minutes of the November 27, 2007, meeting Jim DeBree seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Marcy Allen reviewed the Budget and Expenses end of year Q2 FFY08. There was a delay in funding from EDA, which can be seen in the expenditure that money is now in. Ed Childers mentioned that there was a discrepancy in the remaining expenditure and remaining revenue. The board asked that Marcy review the budget and the Q2 FFY08 be approved at a later date. Marcy requested budget changes to allow her to attend the IEDC course in Billing this may, this would come from the brochure printing. A motion to transfer of 500 dollars from printing brochure to conference class line item was made by Ed Childers and seconded by Jim DeBree. Motion carried unanimously. Marcy requested approval to attend Economic Gardening conference in Steamboat springs, requested that BREDD pay for the conference fee and meals. A motion was made to transfer money from web to conference/class and meals to accommodate those expenses by Jim DeBree and Seconded by Robert Struckman. Motion was carried unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

- There currently was no report from the Nominating Committee, they continue to work on developing new board members. The committee is as follows: Greg Chilcott, Jean Curtiss, Jim DeBree
- Jean is going to send a letter to the Mineral County Commissioner to see who would they like to appoint to the board.
- The CEDS was approved by EDA, and discussion followed regarding distribution of the document.
- President Curtiss brought up the development of policy for project approval. Marcy will work on developing a policy manual and this will include, project approval will happen through board emails. This will ensure that the board is aware of BREDD's work throughout the region and provide the Executive Director with a sounding board. A draft of the manual will be presented at the next meeting and action will be taken to approve this.

ED REPORT:

OLD BUSINESS:

- ED Marcy Allen discussed the need to distribute the CEDS to make people aware of the resource and to ensure the strategy is a working document
- A list of people to send these hard copies to and a list of people to email this too was developed, and Marcy will work on collecting address, collecting emails, writing email, printing, and mailing the CEDS. Included in this will be a press release to area News agencies.
- Marcy let the board know that through a mutual decision with Missoula County, Stimson Lumber Company, and Missoula Area Economic Development Corporation (MAEDC) they decided that pursuing EDA funding for a strategy and analysis of the former Stimson's plywood mill site would not be the best use of public resources. This is based primarily on the conflict between the county's timeline to secure funding and implement the project and the private sector needs to react to potential buyers.
- A pre Application for the EDA Planning Funds for the Mineral County Challenge has been completed in Partnership with MCEDC, Extension, and County. She thanked Jim and Kevin for their hard work.
- Marcy continues to work with NewWest.net to develop a land use series in partnership with land managers throughout the three counties, a March 19th meeting has been set up to develop an technical advisory council.
- Contribution from counties was discussed. Kevin believes that 1000 would be a reasonable request from Mineral County. Marcy will develop a policy and benefits to present to each county. 20,000 Missoula, Ravalli 9,000, and Mineral 1,000 to make it an even number were thrown around. Marcy will develop a overview and benefits letter, due by March 30, 2008. This will be sent out to the board.

NEW BUSINESS:

- BREDD is assisting a nonprofit organization and the MRA in town with a pre application for EDA Public Works funding. The proposed project, Missoula Better Building Center (proposed name), will be a new retail, office and community education / services facility, housing Home Resource as the Anchor Tenant as well as other businesses and non-profits operating in the field of "sustainable living." The project hopes to capitalize on the theories behind cluster development.
- Discussion around an administrative fee. Marcy will develop several different policies and present them to the board at the next meeting. Suggestion were made to have a set preapplication fee assistance, and develop a percentage for administration of grant.

Politics and Policies:

- Marcy brought up the resurrection of the Treasure Communities, and asked Tony Rudbach to look into it more since he sits on the EDAC that is charged with developing ways to implement them. Marcy is to send Tony link and email regarding Treasure Communities from MEDA.

- Marcy presented the following current budget numbers for the programs the would impact BREDDs work (update came from Matt Jones of Senator Baucus's Office)

EDA:

Will not be reauthorized this FFY, a likely extension will be granted. Funding for this year has been GREATLY reduced.

FFY07 EDA 249 million

FFY08 EDA 100 million

Hardest hit will be the Public Works program that funds any sort of infrastructure project that is not related to Economic Adjustments. It will reduced from 147 million to 7 million dollars. The average public works grant in FFY 05 was 1.3 million. The Global Warming Initiative will be reduced from 9 million to 2 million.

USDA Rural Development:

33 programs in the USDA RD program face 2.3 billion dollars worth of cuts resulting in reductions or termination.

Rural Coop: 4.4 million to 2.8 million

Value Added Ag: No Funding

Outside Presentation:

- Paul Dewolfe from Access Consulting presented information on the benefits to performing Communication Engineering Study for the region. Pauls organization had worked in other communities similar to our area performing similar studies and he has the expertise to answer questions regarding benefits to the region. If BREDD identifies the need they will issue an RFP to hire a consultant in which Access Consulting will have to respond to.

ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned at 2:53 p.m. Jim Debree made a motion and Bob Stuckman seconded. Unanimously adopted