

MONTANA

AMBASSADORS

**Board Meeting Minutes
118 E. Seventh Street, Third Floor
Anaconda, Montana**

August 19, 2009 11:00am – 4:00pm

Present: Bill Johnston, Bob Nystuen, Lynda Colucci, Steve Holland, Dale Mahugh, Tagen Vine, Ken Richardson, Channing Hartelius, Rick Edwards, Carl Kochman, Jeff Laverdiere, Shannon Hughes, Nancy Lien Griffin, Carol Donaldson, Jon Marchi, Evan Barrett and Gloria O'Rourke.

On the phone: Steve Anderson, Heather Bellamy

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

President Bill Johnston welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for a motion to approve the Minutes from May 8th and the Executive Committee Minutes. Carl Kochman moved to approve; Channing Hartelius seconded the motion. All voted in favor to approve.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT AND APPROVAL OF NEW MEMBERS

The Board reviewed the Accounts Receivable Aging Summary to examine the list of members that have no yet paid dues. Those that are more than two years past due will be dropped from membership. Chapter Vice Presidents will be asked to once again contact members on the list to learn if the individual wishes to remain a member.

Brent Campbell, WGM Group, Inc., was recommended for membership from Faye Warren and Joe Whittinghill. Bob Nystuen moved to approve Brent as a member; Rick Edwards seconded the motion. All voted in favor of Brent Campbell's membership.

OCTOBER BOARD MEETING, SOCIAL AND GAME

Carl Kochman shared plans for the October Board Meeting in Helena. The meeting will take place on October 16th, 11:00am – 4:00pm, at the Great Northern Hotel. A social will be held the evening of the 16th on the Carroll College campus. Sponsors will hopefully be found to reduce costs. Bruce Parker, Athletic Director, has been invited as well as Coach Van Diez. Game tickets will be made available at a reduced cost for Saturday's game between the Fighting Saints and Montana Tech Diggers. A tail gate party will be held prior to the game; the game begins at noon. Carl Kochman will provide an agenda for participants.

OCTOBER BOARD AGENDA

The Board reviewed the draft agenda for October's meeting. It was noted that annual award winners will be voted on at this meeting. Carl Kochman will review the current awards form and work with Gloria to ask for nominations from the Montana Ambassador membership. The cut off for nominations will be October 1st.

BETTER BRICKS AWARDS

Rick Edwards asked if Montana Ambassadors plan to again host the BetterBricks Awards at the February Annual Conference. After discussing the matter, it was decided the BetterBricks Awards would be a part of the Annual Conference but will not take place at the same time as the Montana Ambassador Annual Awards.

990 NEW DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Gloria will continue to gather information needed to meet the documentation requirements for the new 990 Forms.

STRATEGIC PLAN QUESTION AND UPDATE

It was noted that Montana Ambassadors is listed on an RFP regarding a marketing plan for the Governor's Office of Economic Development. As the plan involves Montana Ambassadors, Carl Kochman will be included on the scoring of the RFP applicants.

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND DISCUSSION

Business Open Update – Dale Mahugh, Heather Bellamy

Dale Mahugh reported that as of two weeks ago, only 46 golfers were registered for the 5th Annual Montana Ambassador Business Open. The total for golf tomorrow is at 81, with a few more expected. Dale estimates a profit of about \$10,000. There are 23 teams signed up, 17 sponsors and at least two prize providers.

Suggestions for next year's tournament:

- Push harder to sign up state department representatives
- When sponsors purchase a team they could invite a legislator to join them
- Push harder to sign up higher education representatives
- Hold a networking event the night before the tournament
- Start earlier to recruit potential business representatives
- Do a better job of acknowledging sponsors and prize providers
- Each board member should be responsible for contacting certain businesses to form teams

Outreach Update – Bill Johnson, Ken Richardson, Shannon Hughes

- ❖ Governor's Marketing Plan Update - As mentioned above, the RFP has gone out to work with the Governor's marketing plan. The committee working on the project hopes to receive more funding through an EDA grant.
- ❖ Minneapolis Chapter – Planning a meeting in Minneapolis is still dependent on the Governor's schedule. Names are being collected for a short list of people to serve as the core group to initiate a chapter.
- ❖ San Francisco Chapter – Lynda Colucci reported on the San Francisco/Bay Area event held the end of June. Over 15 people attended that have Montana connections and/or are involved in high end businesses. Joe Whittinghill, PNW Chapter and Bill Johnston also attended. The group discussed forming a Montana Chapter and business options in the Bay Area that could connect to Montana. Lynda offered to contact other representatives from several large companies that the Governor may be interested in meeting and vice versa. Lynda will email Shannon a list.
- ❖ PNW Chapter – Kurt Van Alstyne is the Chapter V.P. for PNW. Another Speaker Series meeting is pending.
- ❖ Denver – Jeff Laverdiere asked about the Denver Chapter. As no Champion has been identified in Denver there has been no activity. Bill Johnston, Ken Richardson and Dale Mahugh will find the original list of attendees and see if there may be someone on the list to contact.

Energy Committee Discussion- After much discussion the Montana Ambassador Board decided to not create an Energy Committee. The Board would like to maintain its broad spectrum of interest and perhaps involve guest speakers on a variety of topics at future board meetings.

Workman's Comp Update - Carl Kochman provided an update on this issue. Legislators voted 2 to 1 to study Montana's challenges with worker compensation programs and funding. Carl asked if Montana Ambassadors want to play a role in the reform process. This item will be placed on future agendas for the board to receive continuous updates.

ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE

Annual Meeting Committee Chair Channing Hartelius provided an update on the committee's progress. The suggested theme is: Montana's Economic Recover: Where do we go from here? Nancy Lien Griffin moved to approve the theme; Carl Kochman seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The idea is to have a keynote speaker plus panelists that will provide information on a variety of topics so that Montana

business owners can make informed business decisions in the near future. Suggested keynote speaker: Jim Messina. Shannon Hughes will discuss keynote ideas with the Governor.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Treasurer Jon Marchi reviewed the financial reports with the board. The Budget vs Actual Report indicated we are \$2,200 behind on dues. The Annual Meeting showed a profit; thanks were given to the Governor's Office of Economic Development for the Outreach Contract that made this possible. Total income year-to-date is \$53,000 with a projected income of \$54,000. Expenses categories are below budget.

Regarding investments, Jon Marchi said our purchases with MDU, Glacier Bank and Chesapeake Energy continue to hold their own. Profits are down about 17% as compared to the average of 33% for most investors. Jon Marchi, Bob Nystuen and other board members recommended holding off on additional purchases at this time; the board agreed.

Dale Mahugh moved to transfer \$20,000 from Glacier Bank checking to the Glacier Bank money market account. The motion was seconded by Jeff Laverdiere. All voted in favor.

STATWIDE BUSINESS NEWS AND UPDATES

President Bill Johnston invited board members to share business news items in their area, region and/or around the world.

- Steve Holland reported he is the President Elect of the University Economic Development Association. This nationwide organization looks at how economic development is accomplished through universities.
- Channing Hartelius will be teaching constitutional law this fall on the university level.
- Nancy Lien Griffin shared a bit about her "15 minutes of fame" as a result of being called on by President Obama during his recent visit to Montana. Nancy provided good news regarding an inventor she has been working with. Nancy requested help from Montana Ambassadors and expressed thanks for everyone's input. Nancy also shared information with the board on road and access issues developing in the Moonlight Basin area.
- Carl Kochman reported a drop is expected in the Montana State Fund revenues.
- Bob Nystuen said he is on the Board of Flathead Valley Community College. An issue to watch is increasing the stature of two year education in Montana.
- Lynda Colucci, of AIG, reported new businesses are on the rise; entrepreneurs are AIG's best new customer.
- Ken Richardson said stimulus money coming in to the state is making a positive impact. Ken said school districts are benefiting from energy assistance dollars and RFP's are flowing out.

LEGISLATIVE PROCESS DISCUSSION

Montana Ambassadors want to be more involved in legislative issues of interest to Ambassadors. Currently, a joint process with MEDA involves Jon Marchi participating in a weekly conference call during the session. Result of the discussion:

- As Montana Ambassadors represent the Governor, Ambassadors need to be made aware of his key issues.
- A list of legislative items could be made available at the Annual Meeting and the membership could decide which issues they are comfortable bringing forward.
- Jon Marchi, Rick Edwards and Gloria could modify MEDA's list for Montana Ambassadors to assist with the flow of information and indicate the Ambassador's stance.
- May seek a retired Montana Ambassador to keep watch on Montana Ambassador issues during a session.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Governor's Office of Economic Development Report - Evan Barrett

Evan Barrett reported Montana is part of the national downturn, but Montana is in better shape than most. Montana's previous hot spots, i.e., Missoula, Hamilton, Bozeman, are the areas hurt the worst. Evan said the state is striving to be prudent with its resources, yet assist the most struggling industries in the state. On the topic of energy, Evan reported Governor Schweitzer is President of the Western Governor's Association and has made the issue of transmission its top priority. Evan said the administration continues to believe in clean coal and that you have to invest in the science and engineering to get it to work. Regarding broadband, Evan said Montana is a primary target for funding in rural areas; as much as \$100 million could be coming to Montana to especially assist Indian Country. Evan said all in all, there is a lot going on.

CHAPTER REPORTS

- **Billings** – Gloria mentioned that Joe Michels is not feeling well and expressed his regrets for missing the meeting.
- **Helena** – Carl Kochman said the Helena group met and discussed the beetle kill issue and the ramifications of a fire. The members learned of software called Flammap that demonstrates where fire would travel and how fast.
- **Kalispell** – Jeannie Luckey has set a chapter meeting for September 23rd.
- **Butte** – Chapter V.P. Dale Mahugh reported the Butte Chapter met a few weeks ago to discuss business news in the Butte area. The area has not been insulated from the recession but doing fairly well. SeaCast, a fabricator metals firm will be coming soon; the Supercomputer is picking up steam. The Butte Chapter would like to hold a meeting with the Governor soon.
- **Missoula** – it was reported Missoula will hold a meeting soon to meet new members.
- **Great Falls** – Channing Hartelius thanked everyone for their attendance at the May board meeting. The Great Falls Chapter would also like to hold a meeting with the Governor soon.