

Sweetgrass Development Annual Meeting
March 28, 2018
Dunkirk, MT

The Annual Meeting of Sweetgrass Development was called to order at 4:15 p.m. by Chairman Tony Sitzmann.

Introductions were made.

Attending: Lorette Carter, Jim Hodgskiss, Jim Larson, , Bill McCauley, Lila Evans, Llew Jones, Holly Hovland, , Shane Etwiler, Dale Seifert, Deb Brandon, Cyndi Johnson, Tony Sitzmann

Staff: Sarah Converse

Guests: Cheryl Ulmer, Carole Jones, Brenda Schilling, Jolene Schalper, Christin Hileman

Agenda: Cyndi moved and Dale seconded to approve the proposed agenda. Motion carried.

Approval of Quarterly Meeting Minutes:

Jim Hodgskiss moved, Dale Seifert seconded to approve the minutes of the January meeting. Motion carried.

Financials:

Cyndi moved and Dale seconded to approve the January and February financials, motion carried.

RLF Loans are a work in process.

Budget:

Sarah is awaiting the outcome on Brownfields application.

Lorette moved to table the budget until June. Cyndi seconded and motion carried.

Administrative:

Correspondence – Brownfields – Sweetgrass has done many site assessments and are on target to complete the process. Deb expressed appreciation for Sarah’s attention to detail in regard to the projects. Sarah – fill in here as much as you need to.

Recertification – CRDC and EDA have both been approved for the next year.

Schedule updates: Sarah will be taking some personal time during the next couple of months.

Business Items:

Scope of Work: Cyndi moved to officially accept the Scope of Work as distributed. Lorette seconded and motion carried.

Opportunity Zone Application: Sarah presented her rough draft as she awaits another couple of letters of support. Opportunity Zone designation was created through the latest tax relief program. These zones are low to moderate income/lower opportunity areas (census tracts). The zones qualify for low or zero tax opportunities for investors in regard to Capital Gains taxes. Sweetgrass represents 5 such zones and will make application for all 5. Sarah is confident Sweetgrass Development will be successful in this effort. Cyndi moved and Lorette seconded to approve moving forward with Opportunity Zone Applications. Motion Carried.

Board Membership/Elections: Deb Brandon, chairman of the nominating committee reported the current slate of officers agreed to serve another term. She put forth the following slate of officers:

Tony Sitzmann - President

Jim Hodgskiss 1st vice-president

Jim Larson 2nd vice-president

Cyndi Johnson - Treasurer

Lila Evans - Secretary

Lorette Carter - Exec committee member at-Large

Deb Brandon Bill McCauley moved to cast a unanimous ballot for the proposed slate of officers. Dale seconded and motion carried.

2017 Annual Report:

Sarah provided the overview and annual report:

Not so many smaller grants

Great Falls projects

Pulse crop impact

Not so much need for technical assistance

Ag economy has had and continues to have a big impact on projects

Browning trainings for ICE grant preparedness – more trainings in the future

Brownfields hugely successful this year – many trainings required

MEDA Board -

Sarah attends MT League of Cities and Towns and MACO meetings

CEDS approved.

Many inquiries into the Sweetgrass Development office

We are in great shape financially

And Sarah is very much appreciated!

Brownfields update: Christin Hileman, from Newfields in Havre, gave a Brownfields presentation regarding Sweetgrass' current project's status. Christin Kristin expressed great appreciation for Sarah in her work with Brownfields assessments – completing assessments beyond expectations and stretching Brownfields dollars by incorporating Petro-fund dollars.

Board members gave brief reports on activities in their respective areas not previously discussed.

There being no further business to come before the Board, meeting adjourned at 5:42 p.m.