

Mineral County Economic Development Corp.  
Meeting Minutes  
March 23, 2022

Meeting was called to order at 1:20 p.m. by Board President Kathleen Brown. Roll call was taken, and the following Board members were present:

Board

Jackie Callason

Jim DeBree

Kathleen Brown

Carol Young

Monte Turner, absent

Judy Stang, via Zoom

Emily Park Director

Sharon Patterson

Dan Fultz, absent

Visitor

Diane Magone

The minutes were present for the February 23, 2022, meeting. Carol Young made the motion to accept the minutes as present and Jim DeBree seconded. Approved.

The Treasurer's report was accepted as presented. Treasurer, Sharon Patterson, requested the Board to approved having a yearly procedural audit of the books. This should be done as soon after the year end as possible. Carol Young made a motion to contact two people not affiliated with MCEDC to preform this audit. Kathleen Brown second. Approved. Emily Park will contact Andrew Hanson to see if he would be interested in performing the audit.

## Old Business

### Director's wage

This was tabled from the February meeting. After reviewing the work plan that Emily Park submitted, the Board requested that the IFG task force be reinstated. The original committee's communication with IFG did not materialize due to the possibility of initial letter not being passed to the appropriate people.

Carol Young made a motion to raise the directors hourly wage to \$25.00/per hour starting April 1. The total number of hours worked is 20 hours per week or 80 hours for a month. The Director is to submit a work plan in February to be reviewed at their annual evaluation. Jim DeBree seconded. Approved.

### MCEDC Strategic Plan

**Buddy Borden, of GB Consulting** presented the draft Strategic Plan for MCEDC. Mineral County has a lot to offer the tourist, relocation of businesses, and the local population. MCEDC needs to "sell" Mineral County. MCEDC needs to adopt the thinking that "one business development supports all of Mineral County." Mineral County needs to move past the "Me" attitude. Because Mineral County has such a high percentage of public lands (Forest Service) one of our goals is to work with the Forest Service to enhance the opportunities that are available on the Forest for all to enjoy (Locals and tourist). What can Mineral County offer the "work from home" client? Mineral County is at a junction with Economic Development and there is a need for a fulltime Economic Development Department. Working with Mineral County Commissioners is establishing this department will help move the economic development time piece in Mineral County. Right at this point the MSU Economic Development staff is stretched so thin that no one project is being promoted to its fullest capabilities. The development of an Economic Development Department should be the number one priority at this time to move the economic needle in Mineral County. The business development and retention area of this strategic plan has the biggest challenges. Those challenges being trained work force, housing, broadband, and private land. On the positive side Mineral County is located on the I90 corridor, railroad, connecting routes to Glacier Park, hiking, biking, walking, snowmobile/ATV trails to offer any business who wants to move to this county. Encouraging entrepreneurship to address the needs that tourism brings to the county, i.e., ATV/Snowmobile rentals/repair, bike rental/repair, diversity in

restaurant offerings, etc. One way to address these needs is to collaborate with the schools to see if they can supply the education needed to encourage young people to look at being an entrepreneur.

### Big Sky Authority

Diane Magone reported on the Big Sky Authority in place of Monte Turner. She stated that the railroad authority is gaining to new members currently there are eighteen counties that have signed on. Also, the Fundraising Committee will have items for sale and will be attending many community functions to get public support for this project.

### ARPA Update

Emily Park reported that the Committee is seeking information from the applicants. The committee has decided to wait until after the awarding of the ARPA competitive grants, as two the applicants have submitted projects to this funding source. The ARPA Competitive Grants should be announced mid-April.

### Regional Meeting Update

The meeting was well attended by members from across the three counties. Carol Young, Monte Turner, Jim DeBree, Sharon Patterson, Emily Park represented MCEDC. Topic tables were attended, and ideas were listed on flip charts which later all attendees prioritized each topic. The top three were housing, broadband and MT Rail Authority project. A very good meeting.

## New Business

### Business directory

The MCEDC Board will be helping the Mineral County Chamber to get this directory completed. Gaylene Borden has offered her help with this project. A stipend will be determined at the April meeting. Carol Young made a motion to charge the following: \$25/business card, \$50/half page ad and \$100/full page ad. Jim DeBree second. Approved.

### Reports

#### MCRC – Carol Young reported

- Will be having a conversation with EcoStrat at their next meeting on Tues. April 5, at 10:00 a.m. in the Commissioner's meeting room. This company is a biodegradable business and since Mineral County has so much dead and down timber, they would like to set up a business here to harvest this product. There meetings are open to the public so if anyone is interested in learning more about this business please attend.

With no other business to come before this Board the meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m. the next meeting will be April 27, 2022, at 1 p.m. at the Commissioner's Meeting Room.

Respectfully submitted  
Sharon Patterson

Minutes Approved April 27, 2022