

State Tribal Economic Development Commission  
MEETING MINUTES  
August 14, 2012

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Shawn Real Bird- Chairman (Crow Tribe), Richard Sangrey- Vice Chairman (Chippewa Cree Tribe), Terry Pitts (Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes), Loren Stiffarm (Fort Belknap Indian Community), Rodney Miller (Ft. Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes), Tracy Robinson (Northern Cheyenne Tribe), Gerald Gray (Little Shell Tribe of the Chippewa Indians), Pat Wise (Governor's Office of Economic Development), Lesa Evers (Governor's Office of Indian Affairs), Andy Poole (Montana Department of Commerce)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jason Smith, STEDC Program Manager; Heather Sobrepena-George, ICED Program Manager

**PUBLIC:** Councilman Ed Moore (Ft. Belknap Indian Community) Scott Davis (North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission, Billi Ann Running Bird-Monteau (Chippewa Cree Tribe Plain Green LLC), Jennifer Raining Bird (Chippewa Cree Plain Green LLC), Neil Rossette, Jr. Chippewa Cree Plain Green LLC), Allison Hupp (American Red Cross), Jennifer Perfater (American Red Cross), Jackie Yellow Tail (Tourism Advisory Committee), Philip Belangie (MT Indian Equity Fund), Barb Stiffarm (Opportunity Link)

**WELCOME/ PURPOSE OF GATHERING-** Commence 9:00 am. Shawn Real Bird; Prayer Councilman Ed "Buster" Moore.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES-** *Motion made by Commissioner Loren Stiffarm to accept the meeting minutes from April 11, 2012. Seconded by Terry Pitts. Approval by 9-0 vote .*

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS-**

STEDC Strategic Planning Agenda Item: Vice Chair Sangrey noted the strategic planning item is not on the agenda and would like to add it to the agenda to follow protocol to address and plan for the planning session. Commissioner Poole agreed with Vice Chair Sangrey.

***Motion made by Commissioner Poole to add STEDC Strategic Planning to agenda. Seconded by Loren Stiffarm. Approval by majority of commission.***

**Comment:** Jason Smith—we don't have formal recommendations from the Ft. Belknap Indian Community or the Crow Tribe. Do we want to table the commission election until the next meeting? I don't want to commit any commissioners as officers if we don't have the recommendations.

**Comment:** Commissioner Poole—we can continue to operate with the current elected officers until we receive the recommendations from the respective Tribes.

**Comment:** Commissioner Evers—that is correct.

***Motion made by Commissioner Rodney Miller to accept the current elected officers by general consent. Seconded by Vice Chair Richard Sangrey. Approval by 9-0 vote.***

**REPORTS/ONGOING BUSINESS**

1. **Plain Green L.L.C.:** Chief Executive Officer Billiane Morsette presented to the commission on the operations, compliance, regulations, job creation, and profitability of the tribal corporation. The company has developed regulatory manuals of the laws and practices in place. There is a trade association established with various online lending services. The corporation's profit has allowed the tribe to hire 1400 employees for the summer.

**Question:** Commissioner Rodney Miller—what sets Plain Green apart from traditional lending services?

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**Response:** *CEO Billianne Morsette—people on the reservation can't get lending with other services because of various reasons.*

**Question:** *Commissioner Gerald Gray—what was the start up cost?*

**Response:** *CEO Billianne Morsette—there were two positions that were the start up cost.*

**Question:** *Executive Director Scott Davis—who sets the interest rates?*

**Response:** *CEO Billianne Morsette—the underwriting is approved by the office. There is no lending in the State of Montana.*

**Comment:** *Commissioner Loren Stiffarm—we need to stand behind the Chippewa Cree Tribal lending services because it has employed 1400 tribal people, which increased the self-esteem of the workers and families.*

**2. Governor's Office of Economic Development:** *Commissioner Pat Wise—the State of Montana budget has a surplus. The pension recommendations, state employee wage increase, and cost of education have been issues needed to be addressed. The Community Development Corporations met in Missoula last week to discuss Social and Economic Development Strategies (SEDS) formatting process and its effectiveness, efficiency, and readability. Tony Preite of Rural Development spoke about the resources available for tribes in planning for economic development for Eastern Montana. The Community Development Block Grant-Economic Development funding has been reallocated to Eastern Montana issues.*

**Question:** *Councilman Ed Moore—how does the cities and townships get compensated for this damage?*

**Response:** *Commissioner Pat Wise—it is because our current tax structure for better or worse attract money for cities and townships. Cities and tribal communities receive less due to the tax structure.*

**Question:** *Commissioner Terry Pitts—is there any legislation to help tribes receive more funding?*

**Response:** *Commissioner Pat Wise—I think that is a good conversation to have with the local legislators.*

**Comment:** *Commissioner Andy Poole—I think other entities are having this conversation now. I think tribal governments should join the discussion by contacting the local legislators.*

**Comment:** *Commissioner Pat Wise—I wanted to make a point of clarification. The governor's next budget may be changed by the newly elected governor. The legislature will have to approve the budget and may make changes to the governor's budget.*

**3. Governor's Office of Indian Affairs:** *Commissioner Lesa Evers—commissioners may work with their local elected legislators to influence legislation.*

- a. Indian Education for All Conference update
- b. The Crow Water Compact Signing in Washington D.C. update
- c. The Clemency Hearing update
- d. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes Revenue Sharing Agreement update (Motor Fuels)

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- i. Revenue and Transportation Committee
- ii. Confederated Salish and Kootenai Public Meeting last month
- iii. Signing Ceremony
- e. Blackfeet Oil & Gas Agreement Signing Ceremony update
  - i. Public Meeting
- f. Little Shell Meeting in Helena update
- g. Northern Cheyenne Coal Development Meeting update
- h. Dept. of Health and Human Services Master Contract update
- i. Fire Disaster update
- j. Northern Cheyenne Fire update
- k. Tribal Relations Report update
- l. MT Dept. of Labor Tribal Labor Report update

**Comment:** *Commissioner Loren Stiffarm—we need to meet with the committees.*

**Question:** *Commissioner Loren Stiffarm—where can we donate to the Northern Cheyenne Tribe for the fire damage?*

**4. Montana Department of Commerce: Commissioner Andy Poole Update:**

- a. Commerce Director's Office Projects Handout—a compilation of all economic development projects from the Montana Dept. of Commerce.
- b. 2017 Indian Equity Fund
  - i. \$1:1 Match
  - ii. \$255,000 allocation
  - iii. 31,500 annual match per Tribe

**Question:** *Commissioner Richard Sangrey—will we see a budget in the upcoming meeting?*

**Response:** *Commissioner Andy Poole—we will have a budget for the next meeting for the commissioners to view.*

**Comment:** *Chairman Shawn Real Bird—we should support matching for 2017 Indian Equity Fund. We may need to discuss Non-profit Organizations and Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI's) eligibility.*

**5. Indian Country Economic Development Program Update:** Program Manager Heather Sobrepena-George—the State Tribal Relations Interim Committee (STRIC) is close to supporting the ICED Program. The 2013 application deadline is December 7, 2012. I will be planning to visit the Northern Cheyenne Tribe and Crow Tribe in September. I will also be visiting with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and the Blackfeet Tribe later this month. I need to schedule Ft. Peck Tribe.

**Comment:** *Commissioner Richard Sangrey—is there a list of facilitators for the strategic planning session? Where do we go from here? Did we have the last year budget?*

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**Response:** *Commissioner Andy Poole—we passed the date of utilizing last year’s budget. The contract amount should be more than \$5,000.*

**Comment:** *Commissioner Richard Sangrey—I have feel there is a red flag about not using all the funding allocated for STEDC.*

**Response:** *Commissioner Andy Poole—next meeting we will present a draft STEDC budget. Last year we had \$10,000 to \$12,000 in discretionary funding to use so we should have the same amount. I don’t know how much we had left over.*

**Comment:** *Commissioner Lesa Evers—when should we meet to discuss this funding?*

**Response:** *Commissioner Andy Poole—the amount of funding was discussed last meeting, but no discussion took place.*

**Comment:** *Commissioner Loren Stiffarm—the state dropped the ball. We shouldn’t be turning back any money.*

**Response:** *Commissioner Andy Poole—there was no recommendations from STEDC for facilitators and we wanted a native facilitator to considered.*

6. Montana Indian Equity Fund: Program Manager Philip Belangie
- a. Program update
  - b. Survey will be completed by next meeting.

**Comment:** *Executive Director Scott Davis—what is the process of the Montana Indian Equity Fund?*

**Response:** *Commissioner Andy Poole explained the process of the program.*

## **WORKING LUNCH**

**4. Office of Indian Energy & Economic Development:** Executive Director Karen Atkinson—the Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development (IEED) is designed to assist Indian communities gain economic self-sufficiency through the development of their energy and mineral resources, application of established business practices, and co-sponsorship of innovative training programs. The office is made of up five divisions:

1. Division of Energy and Mineral Development—Assist Tribes with the exploration, development, and management of their energy and mineral resources with the ultimate goal of creating jobs and sustainable tribal economies.
2. Division of Economic Development—Assists Tribes in creating an environment for economic progress through training, business planning, and expert consultation.
3. Division of Capital Investment—Managers the Indian Loan Guaranty Program to facilitate access to capital and loan financing for Indians.

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4. Division of Workforce Development—manages a wide variety of job placement and training programs to promote Indian employment opportunities.

5. Division of Indian Energy Policy Development—Oversees the development and implementation of regulations governing energy and mineral development throughout Indian country.

There will be training at Dartmouth College CEO's of tribal enterprises. The second training will be in North Dakota Business School. We have partnered with the Federal Reserve of Minneapolis to establish Tribal Uniform Commercial Code training. We provide technical assistance to Tribes with oil companies. The Montana delegation may contact the coordinator office and see how it works in North Dakota at Ft. Berthold. The oil development at Ft. Berthold increased since the oil boom. The oil development has doubled from 2009 to 2011.

**Comment:** *Commissioner Richard Sangrey—does IEED deal with the Labor Force Report?*

**Response:** *Director Karen Atkinson—yes and no. Director Atkinson gives the explanation. The survey has been sent out for comment.*

**Comment:** *Executive Director Scott Davis—speaks about the IEED office in North Dakota. My concern is flipping leases. Is there any technical assistance provided by your office?*

**Response:** *Director Karen Atkinson—there is a Class Action lawsuit in the process.*

**Comment:** *Director Karen Atkinson—can I get a copy of the oil and gas assessment?*

**Comment:** *Chairman Shawn Real Bird—is it possible to have a Uniform Commercial Code training in Montana?*

**Response:** *Director Karen Atkinson—let me run it by the Federal Reserve of Minneapolis.*

**Comment:** *Executive Director Scott Davis—there will be a Uniform Commercial Code training at the native Nations Summit in North Dakota.*

**Small Business Administration:** *Assistant Administrator Chris James—I will be updating you on our programs, training, lending, and answer any questions you may have. Here are the topics of update:*

- E200 Program Update
- Uniform Commercial Code Training Update
- SBA Lending Update
- SBA Office of Advocacy Update

**Native American Bank:** *Sr. Vice President Chief Lending Officer Clay Colombe—spoke about their programs and operations. We want to do business in Indian Country. The Native American Bank is interested in developing a partnership with the Montana Indian Equity Fund.*

**Comment:** *Commissioner Loren Stiffarm—do you have any problems with Trust Land as collateral?*

**Response:** *Sr. VP Chief Lending Officer Colombe—we can take trust land as collateral.*

**Tourism Advisory Council:** *Councilwoman Jackie Yellowtail—economic development is tourism and tourism and economic development. I would like to thank Governor Schweitzer for supporting Indian Country. The Crow Nation won the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association 14<sup>th</sup> Annual*

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American Indian Tourism Conference in Billings, Montana, September 23, 2012 at the Holiday Inn Grand. We invite you to attend.

American Red Cross: Chief Information Officer Allison Hupp and Tribal Liaison Jennifer Perfater—we are a non-profit organization to assist communities needs. We have four programs and they are:

1. Blood Services
2. Health and Safety Classes
3. Military Program
4. Disaster Service Programs

**Comment:** *Commissioner Loren Stiffarm—I would like to thank American Red Cross for assisting the Ft. Belknap Tribe with the flooding.*

**Comment:** *Commissioner Tracy Robinson—Thank you Red Cross! I would like to commend you and your organization for the work you do.*

**Comment:** *Commissioner Richard Sangrey—I would like to thank the Red Cross for being at Rocky Boy Reservation during the floods.*

**5:00 ADJOURN** *Motion to adjourn made by Loren Stiffarm. Seconded by Andy Poole. Motion approved 9-0 vote.*