

ATTENDEES:

Present:

Joe Durglo, Vice Chairman
Jennifer Perez Cole, Governor's Coordinator of Indian Affairs
Joe Fox Jr., Northern Cheyenne delegate
Ronald 'Smiley' Kittson, Blackfeet delegate
Andy Poole, Deputy Director, Department of Commerce
Richard Sangrey, Chippewa Cree delegate

Public:

Pete Conway III, DPHHS Tribal Liaison
Emmie Davis-Bird, Blackfeet alternate member
Lesa Evers, ICED Program Manager
Anna Whiting-Sorrell, Policy Advisor on Children and Families
Senator Carol Juneau, SD 8
Heather Sobrepeña-George, STEDC Administrative Assistant

Absent:

Shawn Real Bird, excused
Caroline Brown, excused
Russell Boham, excused
Rodney Miller, excused

9:00 WELCOME/ PURPOSE OF GATHERING – Joe Durglo

9:05 OPENING– Joe Fox Jr.

9:10 PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Summary: Senator Juneau dropped of a few copies of the [2008 Montana American Indian Policy Roundtable](#), (click on link for an electronic copy) held in March 2008 hosted by Representative Shannon Augare and Senator Juneau. Issues covered were Agriculture, Fish Wildlife and Parks, Natural Resources, Federal Relations, Energy, Telecommunications, Local Government, Transportation, Education, Human Services, Law and Justice, Taxation, and Business and Labor. Senator Juneau encouraged the commission to start looking at any potential legislation now. Uncontested house districts Margie Campbell (HD31), Shannon Augare (HD 16), Frosty Calf Boss Ribs (HD15), and uncontested senate districts Sharon Peregoy (SD21), Carol Juneau (SD8) and Jonathan Windy Boy (SD16) can introduce legislation on behalf of the commission.

9:45 Smiley Kittson and Emmie Davis-Bird arrive- Officially have a quorum. Carol Juneau and Anna Whiting-Sorrell leave.

APPROVAL OF 04.22.08 MINUTES- Joe Durglo

Summary: Group discussed the letters to the tribes offering up to \$10,000- the budget came in at \$8,000 grant contracts per tribe. All tribes have applied.

Andy Poole made a motion to approve the 04.22.08 meeting minutes. Second by Smiley Kittson. Motion carries unanimously.

FISCAL REPORT- *Heather Sobrepeña-George*

Summary: The group clarified the difference between State-Tribal Economic Development Commission (STEDC) and Indian Country Economic Development (ICED) funds. STEDC has its own budget (\$85,000 per year) and is housed in the Department of Commerce as a result of HB2 (2007 Legislature). At the beginning of the Schweitzer administration, STEDC was housed in the Governor's office. The ICED and STEDC programs were appropriated to Commerce at the same time. However, ICED is a *one-time-only* program that received biennium funding through FY2009. Commerce relies on the STEDC to make recommendations on how ICED funds should be spent. All the recommendations have been followed by Director Priete. All formal monetary motions should be made as a recommendation to the Department of Commerce. It is unlikely that the STEDC budget will be increased significantly. Currently the Governor's office is in the budgeting process and it is unknown if the ICED will be funded for the next biennium or at what amount. The ICED and STEDC programs are prerogatives of the Dept. of Commerce. There are also other state funded programs that are underutilized by the tribes and STEDC is working on making the tribes aware of those funds and how to apply (*Catalog of State Domestic Assistance for Tribes- currently in formation process*).

ONGOING BUSINESS- *STEDC Members*

1. FY 09 515005 BUDGET- SET ASIDE FOR TRIBAL PROJECTS

Summary: The fiscal year 2009 starts July 1 through June 30, 2010. The money that has been appropriated to the ICED program for FY09 is \$800,000. In prior years of \$500,000- STEDC recommended \$400,000 (\$50,000 for each tribe) for ICED projects. The remainder (\$100,000) was made available for Statewide Indian Country Economic Development (SWICED) projects. In the biennium FY 08-09 biennium, the funding has been increased to \$800,000/year. For FY08 \$560,000 was set aside for tribal government projects. \$160,000 remained for FY 08 SWICED projects. In FY 08 \$80,000 was set aside for administration and travel out of the ICED budget. The current Program Manager, Lesa Evers is very active and has been attempting to visit each tribe's project(s), provide technical assistance, and visit with other tribal entities and tribal councils.

Andy Poole made a motion to recommend to the Department of Commerce that of the \$800,000 ICED funds available for FY09, \$88,000 be set aside for administering the ICED Fund and the activities that the Program Manager needs to provide. Second by Richard Sangrey.

Discussion: There's no objection as long as this motion does not affect the tribal set aside amount. Commission members commend Lesa Evers for the job that she's done since February 2008. The information and assistance has been very helpful and she's acclimated very quickly to the economic development needs of Indian country. It will be important to be able to report to the Legislature the REAL impact of these funds- they are critical.

Andy Poole modified the motion to make a recommendation to the Department of Commerce that the additional funds for the administration of the ICED be

taken from the statewide project budget, not the tribal projects. Seconded by Richard Sangrey. Call for question. None. Motion carries unanimously. (See following motion)

Further Discussion: The commission discussed two other programs that have run through the Statewide Indian Country Economic Development (SWICED) funds for the last two fiscal years: the Indian Equity Fund (\$70,000 FY08) and the Indianpreneurship[®] program (\$24,000 FY08) both run by Philip Belangie of Commerce. The funds for these programs go almost entirely to private sector businesses on reservations, other than a small amount of administration. For FY 09, \$712,000 remains; if the ICED tribal projects are funded at \$75,000 each, the Indian Equity Fund (IEF) at \$70,000 and the Indianpreneurship[®] program at \$24,000, only \$18,000 remains for SWICED projects. Philip Belangie is trying to leverage the Indian Equity Fund with outside funding; however it is a challenge and remains the only money going directly to Indian tribal business owners. The impact is significant (ex. Three businesses with three to five employees each on the Blackfeet reservation are thriving due to the Indian Equity Fund). The other programs at Commerce cannot be used to fund the IEF. The commission should ask for an increase ICED budget to adequately fund programs like the Indian Equity Fund and other statewide programs that have the potential to impact the individual tribal business sector. The Indian Equity Fund application and eligibility processes need to have guidance from the commission. Different pieces of legislation are being discussed such as tribal economic development corporations. Tribes can't directly access funds through the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) because of access to the Tribal Community Development Block Grants (ICDBG). Supplemental funds for the Bresnan Feasibility Study funded in FY 07 were and are funded through the Big Sky Trust Fund accessed through the Regional Development Corporation mechanism. Micro-business Development Corporations are located in Helena, Missoula, Great Falls, Havre, Wolf Point and Butte. Some of these have allowed the Indian Equity Fund to be used as leverage for the individual Indian business owner.

Andy Poole amends his previous motion to recommend to the Dept. of Commerce that of the \$712,000 remaining to be allocated- \$560,000 of that amount be set aside for tribal government projects on an equal basis and that the remainder be set aside for statewide projects which should be decided at a later date. Second Smiley. Call to question. None. Motion carries unanimously.

Joe Fox Jr. makes a recommendation to draft a letter to the Department of Commerce supporting an increase in funding for the ICED program funding to \$1 million. Second by Smiley. Call to question.

Further Discussion: Commerce already supports an increase in the funding; it would be more effective to address the letter to the Governor.

Joe Fox makes a motion that the STEDC recommend to the Governor to

increase the funding for the Indian Country Economic Development Program to \$1 million year. Call to question. None. Motion carries unanimously.

**2. EVALUATION OF KEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FACTORS
(STEDC GOALS & OBJECTIVES REVIEW & UPDATE)**

Summary: The commission went through the *Working List* of the *Goals and Objectives* to determine what has been accomplished or no longer important. Heather will update the list, modify the format and have it available for the next meeting.

**3. DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARD STATEWIDE STEDC GRANT SPECIFICATIONS,
APPLICATION AND EVALUATION PROCESS**

Andy moves that for the next meeting Heather and Jennifer and Andy draft a one-page review device that would be used to screen potential SWICED applicants that will be submitted to the commission members for review and approval. Second Smiley Kittson. Call to question.

Discussion: The commission will still need to decide if on the minimum and maximum amounts available. If the Indian Equity Fund and the Indianpreneurship[®] programs are increased in funding, there will be a smaller pot of SWICED funds available for other statewide projects. Other projects that need to be considered for funding are printing costs for the State Resource Handbook and Reservation Economic Demographic Fliers, a phase two economic impact study (Monetary Contributions Report evaluating private sector Indian businesses) and potentially hosting a Nations Rebuilding Conference. The commission can establish a mechanism by which entities can be invited by the STED commission to present their proposals. The commission agrees that they won't be inviting proposals at the next meeting until the application mechanism is established by the commission.

Motion on the table. Call to question. None. Motion carries unanimously.

4. NEXT MEETING- AUGUST 27, 2008

Invite the Rural Development Officers, the Trade & International Relations Bureau and the MT World Trade Center- Heather Sobrepena-George

2:51 ADJOURN

Motion made by Smiley Kittson to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Joe Fox Jr. Meeting adjourned at 2:51pm.