



**MINUTES**

Beartooth RC&D Area, Inc. Board of Director's Meeting  
 Thursday, September 20th, 2012 – Billings, MT

<p><b>Board Members Present</b>          Chuck Egan, Chairman, Town of Columbus          Gerald Dell, Stillwater County          Bill Wallace, Sweet Grass County          Dan Lowe, Big Horn Conservation District          Ed Ulledalen, City of Billings          Bob Van Oosten, Stillwater Conservation District          Marvin Carter, Vice Chairman, City of Laurel          John Pulasky, Yellowstone Conservation District          Clinton Giesick, Town of Bridger          Steve Arveschoug, Big Sky EDA          Royce Njos, City of Red Lodge          Yolanda GoodVoice, Crow Nation          Page Dringman, City of Big Timber          Jim Reno, Yellowstone County          Kathryn Callahan, Town of Joliet</p> <p><b>Members at Large Present</b>          Ken Gomer, Stillwater Mine Corp.          Lisa Skriner, MSU-Billings, College of Technology          John Klamann, SBA</p>	<p><b>Sponsors Not Represented</b>          Sidney (Chip)Fitzpatrick, Big Horn County Commissioners          Penny Landon, Treasurer, Carbon Conservation District          Jeffrey McDowell, City of Hardin</p> <p><b>Members at Large Not Present</b>          Kendall Hartmann, Billings Job Service</p>
<p><b>Guests</b></p> <p><b>Congressional Staff</b>          Liz Cheng (Baucus)          Rachel Court (Tester)</p>	<p><b>Staff</b>          Chris Mehus (not present)          Joel Bertolino (present)          Jilann Knutson (present)          Dick Rath (not present)          Valentine Smith (present)          Earl Atwood (present)</p>

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Meeting Called to Order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Egan in Billings, MT at the College of Technology Health Science Building. Pledge of Allegiance was given.

Prior to the meeting, two presentations were given to Board members. The first was a demonstration of new classroom technologies at MSUB-COT by Mr. Pierce. Next was an overview and history of Elation, Inc. services, which provides specialized training and corporate employee development services to companies wishing to change the culture of their business from within. The programs offered by Elation are based on curriculum developed in part at Master Lube, Inc. Both presentations were highly informative and thought provoking.

**Minutes** from the July 19, 2012 (1), meeting were reviewed. **Bob VanOosten** moved for approval of the minutes as written, seconded by **Bill Wallace**. APPROVED.

**Current Beartooth RC&D Financial reports (2), RLF Financial Statements (3)** and a verbal report on the status of our annual audit were presented to the Board by Jillann Knutson. **Jerry Dell** moved and **Page Dringman** seconded to accept the reports and authorize Knutson to file them for audit purposes. APPROVED.

**Old Business:** The staff progress report, incorporated in the meeting packet, was presented in brief. Staff also reported that the draft Business Plan document was still under development, and would be deferred to the November meeting for presentation to allow some very recent strategic opportunities to be incorporated in the plan.

A report was given to the Board concerning progress on the Rural BEAR project approved in the July, 2012 meeting, as well as the Economic Gardening Project.

## **SERVICES**

**Request for Assistance:** EXPO Gateway Project was presented to the Board for formal approval. This project partners Beartooth with Big Sky EDA to administer a Big Sky Trust Fund grant to complete a development plan for the area near Metrapark. Director Arveschoug elaborated on the details of the project and current status for the Board, as Chris Mehus was not able to attend the meeting. **Kathryn Callahan** moved approval to incorporate the project in Beartooth's work plan, seconded by **Dan Lowe**. APPROVED

**Resource Selection Policy (6)** - A draft policy for the Wildfire Mitigation Program was presented to the Board for consideration. It describes the program, outlines the process for fuels reduction projects, and creates a policy statement relating to the selection of contracted resources by landowners. The policy was presented by staff, and discussed by Board members. **Bob VanOosten** moved approval of the policy, seconded by **Dan Lowe**. APPROVED.

### ***Regional Round Table—Board Member discussion***

A round table discussion was conducted, providing each Board member an opportunity to describe projects or events of importance in their home area. Key items from the table included:

Jim Reno – reported on issues to be considered at the upcoming County Association meeting, including possible action on a permanent ballot registration procedure. The 2012 Fair was a great success.

Ken Gomer – indicated that by next meeting they will have current employment counts for their mine locations. SMC has really been pushing on improvements to their Nye mine.

Liz Cheng – reported on Congress' efforts to pass a Continuing Resolution and the Farm Bill.

Steve Arveschoug – elaborated further on the Rural BEAR project. BEAR has its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary coming up. BSEDA has finalized its budget, and has determined that the anticipated reduction in funding to Beartooth will not have to be as great as first expected. Their annual meeting is October 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am, preceded by “Building Success”, and outreach event with featured speaker Mathew Rose, CEO of BNSF Railroad.

John Pulasky – described Yellowstone Conservation Districts preparations for the upcoming NILE in November.

Dan Lowe – reported the 2012 beet harvest in underway in earnest. He passed on information regarding the Crow Clearwater Initiative, an \$8 million project on the reservation, and reported that the new Hardin Airport project is underway.

John Klaman – reported that SBA loan activity was up for August 2012 over last year by a significant amount, mainly due to activity in the western counties of Montana.

Kathryn Callahan – described the water problem in Joliet (the community is down to 3 wells), and that lots of houses are for sale there, many have not had repairs done since the 2011 flood. They are working on a pre-Disaster Mitigation and Recovery Plan and are soliciting ideas from other communities.

Jerry Dell – reported that Melissa Kramer had left the County ED office, accepting a position with the new hospital in Columbus. On the up side... they have a new Hospital in Columbus! The old hospital facility is owned by the County, and will be converted to administrative office space.

Bill Wallace – reminded the members of their planned Economic Development workshop in Big Timber on November 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, and reported on progress with the Cowboy Hall of Fame Master Plan.

***NEXT MEETING – 1:30 pm - November 8th, 2012 - Big Timber, Mt.***

***Adjournment:*** 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

***Earl Atwood***, Special Projects Coordinator