

# State Tribal Economic Development Commission

*Conference Call*

October 25, 2016

Draft Meeting Minutes

## **Commissioners Present:**

Gerald Gray (Acting Chairperson), Harry Barnes, Lonnie Headdress, Jim Kennedy, Delina Cuts the Rope, Joe Fox Jr., Shelly Fyant, Liz Ching

## **Staff/Guests Present:**

Casey Winn Lozar, Margaret Cook, Heather Sobrepena-George, Hope Stockwell, MayLinn Smith, Monte Mills (and Indian Law Clinic students)

## **Welcome/Purpose of Gathering:**

Meeting started at 3:08 PM with roll call. A/Chairperson Gray introduced the “Tribal Nations in Montana: A Handbook for Legislators” for review.

**Introduction and Overview of the Handbook:** Casey Lozar thanked everyone for participating in conference call for the important conversation regarding the “Tribal Nations in Montana: A Handbook for Legislators.” Casey reported that a number of conversations have taken place over the past several years regarding the Handbook and during the February 2016 meeting the Commission brought up the concern to have the Handbook revised since it has not been updated for 21 years when it was first created. Casey pointed out that this was a huge project for Monti Mills and Hope Stockwell to undertake, and the staff of the Indian Country Programs in the Department of Commerce assisted by taking on the two sections, one a new section referred to as Culture and Language and the second section was the discussion on Economic Development. It is now being forwarded for a fresh perspective from the STED Commissioners to see if there are any changes that the Commissioners would like to bring forward before approving the document for use in the Legislature.

**Review of the Document:** Hope Stockwell added a few comments regarding the concerns brought forward from Senator Lea Whitford regarding an update to the Handbook. Hope also noted that this Handbook will be used during the Legislature orientation. It will also be used in January in the Law School for Legislatures training.

Monti Mills continued on by walking through the Table of Contents to point out those areas that were addressed in the Handbook. Maylinn Smith noted that references to Montana tribes were changed to Tribes in Montana and she would be interested in any feedback on anything specific that would increase the understanding for the legislators.

Commissioner Kennedy noted that possibly a separate section or reference to the Water Compact discussions should be included in order to draw attention for the readership. Further discussion

suggested that rather than a subsection that possibly a glossary with page references could be undertaken. Hope Stockwell expressed the need for the Handbook to be a living document to make changes as necessary. Hope also pointed out that the Indian Law Clinic will host a website that will include this Handbook and other resources that may be of interest.

Liz Ching noted that more emphasis be placed on “doing business in Indian Country” that could be helpful to business people and legislators in being acquainted to the business community in Indian Country. Heather noted that this information would be hard to put into one document and made reference to the demographic flyers that have been prepared for each of the tribes to be put on the website. Hope suggested that we change the “Economic Development” section to include “doing business in Indian Country.”

A/Chairman Gray pointed out that the Handbook is an excellent snapshot with a ton of information and would like it to be attractive to the reader. Further discussion was held on population figures for each of the tribes. Commissioner Fox Jr. pointed out that the 2010 Census figures are outdated. Commissioner Cuts the Rope suggested a second chart that would include enrollment figures which would be more accurate may be helpful. There was discussion on several different methods of getting more accurate population figures and Monte suggested that they could link other resources to the document. Commissioner Barnes pointed out that this is a snapshot and there are many descendants that are not enrolled that live on the reservation and tax agreements while not always accurate are one source.

Commissioner Fyant suggested that both the STED Commissioners and Senior Indian staff be included. Hope recommended that they can add agency contacts as well as tribal contacts.

**ACTION:** Motion made by Jim Kennedy/seconded by Joe Fox Jr to approve the “Tribal Nations in Montana: A Handbook for Legislators.” Motion carried.

It was noted that the Handbook will be completed on Friday and be ready for the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of November. Extra printings will be available for courtesy copies to Tribal Councils

Motion to Adjourn.