

Agriculture Development Council

Meeting Minutes

December 17, 2020 via ZOOM

I. Call to order

Amy Kellogg called to order the regular meeting of the Agriculture Development Council at 2:03pm on Thursday December 17, 2020.

II. Roll call

Dani Jones conducted a roll call. The following persons were present:

Council Members: Chair Amy Kellogg, Vice Chair John Wicks, Tara Mastel, Patricia Quisno, and Tom Kaiserski (proxy for the Department of Commerce, Tara Rice). Lars Hanson was absent and gave his proxy to Chair Amy Kellogg.

Department Employees: Jim Auer, Tina Bateman, Andy Fjeseth, Christy Clark, Cort Jensen (in place for Zach Coccoli), Grace Aklestad, Marty Earnheart, and Dani Jones

Chairwoman Amy Kellogg asked for public comment, no comment at this time.

III. Approval of minutes from last meeting

The Council Members reviewed the meeting minutes from the July 21, 2020 meeting. John Wicks moved to accept the minutes as presented. Tara Mastel seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

IV. Application and Screening

- a) Jim Auer gave a review of the applications that have been submitted. \$2.9 million in request, for a total of 57 applications. The most that have been received. 32 Applicants were reviewed by the council in 2018 and 2019. All the applications have been screened for compliance by Department staff. There were a few incomplete applications.
- b) Tina Bateman discussed the possible options that were explored for the upcoming meeting. Setting up applicants to present through a web-based program will not be the best workable option. Tina presented the idea of hosting the applicant videos on a Department webpage to be viewed by the

council members at their convenience, prior to the meeting. Chair Kellogg asked how many applications had been reviewed at last year's meeting. Staff advised that council reviewed 32 applications at last year's meeting.

- c) Chair Kellogg suggested the council consider reviewing 32 applications based on previous year numbers. Tina and Jim outlined the option of reviewing the 32 applicants with the council; 4 Blocks of 8 applications over 3 days and one final day for awarding/scoring. All applicant videos will be viewed by the council members prior to the meeting. The Department will request a 5-minute presentation from the applicant by the end of December 2020.
- d) The council also asked to see a completed list of applications, the ones that were moving on to the funding meeting and the applications that will not be invited to submit a video.
- e) Tom Kaiserski moved to have Department staff screen the 57 applications to no less than 32 for the February review meeting, follow staff's recommendation of video presentations and provide the Council with a list of any applications that were screened out. Applications will be screened based on the quality of the application, keeping in mind the goals of the Agriculture Development Council and geographic area served. John Wicks seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

V. Council Budget Update

- a) Andy Fjeseth gave an update to the council on the amount of money they will be able to grant at the February 2021 meeting, \$800,000. The funds are a little less than the 2020 funding meeting because of the amount that was awarded through the Student Loan Assistance Program earlier in the fiscal year. The Department will not request council authority for mini grants in 2021. Andy noted that mini grants were popular when ran last year, and that the Department would consider running them every other year in the future.

VI. Loan Rates for GTA Grants

- a) Jim Auer asked the council to set the loan rates now, rather than the at the February 2021 meeting. The current rates are 4.5% for a 5-year term and 0% for over 5 years. Jim Auer has discussed the rates with the Department's loan manager, who has given his ok.

- i) Patricia Quisno made the motion to keep the same rates. John Wicks seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passes.

VII. Student Loan Program Updates

- a) Tina updated the council that 1099 forms needs to be provided to the department. Accounting was not previously set up for this task. Because of the change, payments have been delayed until January 2021.
- b) Cort Jensen reminded the council that there would be little impact on borrowers due to student loan payment suspensions through the CARES Act.

VIII. Department of Commerce Report

- a) A detailed report is in the meeting packet. Tina Bateman reviewed the report that is in the packet. The money that was granted has been spent on trade show support with the direction shifting from in-person to virtual.

IX. Bureau Marketing Update

- a) Marty Earnheart gave an update that the Food and Beverage Show has been shut down do due Covid-19. So funding was focused other ways.
 - i) Marty was a part of the Virtual Canadian Beverage Trade show.
 - ii) Weston Merrill participated in a Virtual trade show for Pulses. A successful outcome with sales.
 - iii) “Get Out and Grow” was an online campaign to encourage folks at home to get outside and grow a garden. There are plans to continue this campaign into 2021
- b) Marty and her team are moving forward with a plan for 2021. With the 2021 in-person Made in Montana Show already canceled, there may be a possibility for the Made in Montana Show and the Food Show to come together.
- c) Andy Fjeseth gave an update that the bureau has been reorganized and Marty Earnheart is now the Marketing Section Supervisor.
- d) Christy Clark gave a Department update. During the 2021 Legislative Session the wording for the student loan program will be addressed to include consolidated

and private loans. Christy is seeing a lot of bills for this session but reminded the council that the department is in a good place.

- i) Amy Kellogg asked to have a business meeting within the February 2021 meeting for a Department update, budget update, and to include an org chart for clarity.

X. Preview of the 2021 Calendar

- a) Jim Auer gave the council the tentative dates/months for upcoming meetings
 - i) February 2021 -Growth Through Agriculture Grant Application review
 - ii) March 2021 -Food & Ag Development Centers Request for Proposals
 - iii) April – May 2021 -Council Review
 - (1) Virtual meeting, preference of the council for videos or online interviews, will be smaller volume.
 - iv) Summer 2021- Student Loan Program
 - v) Fall – Winter 2021- Starting all over again with applications and review process

XI. Next Meeting

- a) February 2020
 - i) John Wicks and Tom Kaiserski- no preference, no conflicts. Tara Mastel has a conflict on the 24th of February. Patricia Quisno has a possible conflict the third Thursday of the month.
 - ii) Amy Kellogg offered the staff to pick the dates and notify the council.

Chairwoman Amy Kellogg asked for public comment, no comment at this time

XII. Adjournment

- a) John Wicks made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Tara Mastel seconded. All in favor, motion passed

Amy Kellogg adjourned the meeting at 3:20pm.

Minutes submitted by: Dani Jones

Minutes approved by: Andy Fjeseth