

***Agriculture Development Council
Meeting Minutes
Lewistown, MT***

June 9, 2023

I. Call to order

Chair John Wicks called to order the meeting of the Agriculture Development Council at 8:38 am on Friday June 9, 2023.

II. Roll call

Dani Jones conducted roll call and introductions were made by council members and department staff.

Council Members: Chair John Wicks, Megan Hedges, Lars Hanson, Sara Hollenbeck, Director Christy Clark, Liane Taylor proxy for Director Scott Osterman.

Department Employees: Andy Fjeseth, Bailey Kaskie, Aly Townsend, and Dani Jones. Cort Jensen was present via Zoom.

Members of the public list available.

III. Public Comment

Chair John Wicks called for public comment. There were no comments from the public.

IV. Review of Meeting Minutes

The committee reviewed the past meeting minutes from February 7, 2023, and March 13, 2023. Lars Hanson made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Megan Hedges 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

V. Department Update

Andy Fjeseth shared with the council that there are federal grant dollars through the regional food business centers, working with six other states; Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, and Montana were awarded \$30 million dollars. Funding will be done through a grant and reimbursement program through the department. Funding will be geared towards technical assistance in a 5-year program.

Resilient food supply infrastructure is another program with flexible awards for supply chain coordination. Staffing will also be opening. The minimum award will be one hundred thousand with the maximum award being three million. The department will

fill the positions needed for the grant work and then develop a state plan which is due by August 23, 2023. Hoping for a September or October turn around and then opening the grants.

Current trade missions that have been happening. Beef trade from Argentina was in Montana the first week of May followed by a trade team from Chile in the middle of May. Full 10-day trip across the state visiting various Angus and Hereford ranches. There is an outbound mission to Panama and Columbia coming up. The Food and Beverage show is planned for October in Missoula at the Hilton Garden Inn with a Canadian trade team coming down. The Wheat and Barley team have been hosting trade teams about every other week, mostly the SE Asia region. The Governor's office has a trade mission in planning to Taiwan with Department of Agriculture and the Department of Commerce along with delegates from the Montana ag industry. Bailey Kaskie has been promoted to the program manager for the Growth Through Agriculture Program.

As a budget prospective for the bureau, funds need to be committed before the fiscal year end. The bureau will then have the actual figures at the next meeting as well as how the funding will be spent. Lars Hanson made the motion to approve up to \$100,000 in funding to the Department of Agriculture, Finance, Trade & Development Bureau which will be reviewed at the next meeting. John Wicks 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

VI. Proposed GTA Project Amendments

Bailey Kaskie presented to the group the request from Aspen Grove Farms to reallocate some funds in a new direction. The request is for a tractor that is needed for the new harvester that has been purchased. \$24,500 in funds would be reallocated for the purchase of a tractor. Sara Hollenbeck made the motion to approve the request to reallocate funds. Megan Hedges 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

VII. GTA FY2024

Bailey Kaskie presented to the council the FY2024 GTA timeline, which will open on October 2 and close on October 23. Other changes that were discussed would be to add vehicles and buildings. All will be discussed and determined on a case-by-case basis. Bailey will come up with the details for the August/September meeting. Loan target and priority areas were discussed by the council. Bailey will come up with wording. Megan Hedges made the motion to accept the changes as discussed. Sara Hollenbeck 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

Lars Hanson made the motion to stay with the current loan rates. Megan Hedges 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

VIII. FADC Application Review

1. Bear Paw Development Corp.
2. Beartooth RC&D
3. Great Falls Development Authority
4. Great Northern Development Corp.
5. Headwaters RC&D
6. Mission Mountain Food Enterprise Center
7. Montana Business Assistance Connection

Lunch

8. Montana West, Kalispell MT
9. Prospera Business Center
10. Ravalli County EDA
11. Snowy Mountain Development

IX. Deliberation & Awards

Department of Agriculture Attorney Cort Jensen reminded the council about conflict of interest and when to remove themselves from deliberation or awards.

The council selected the following organizations to serve as Food and Ag Development Centers for the next two years:

1. Bear Paw Development, \$75,000
2. Beartooth RC&D, \$120,000
3. Great Falls Development Authority, \$105,000
4. Great Northern, \$150,000
5. Headwaters RD&D, \$105,000
6. Mission Mountain, \$210,000

7. Montana Business AC, \$30,000
8. Montana West, \$30,000
9. Prospera Business Center, \$85,000
10. Ravalli County EDA, \$50,000
11. Snowy Mountain Development Corp, \$140,000

Megan Hedges made the motion to fund the FADC as listed. Lars Hanson 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

X. Next Meeting Dates

The next council meeting will be August or September 2023. The Department will reach out to the council for dates.

XI. Public Comment

Chair John Wicks called for public comment.

Jan Tusick shared with the council that she appreciates the department and the work that the council is doing with minimum duplicates. Thank you!

XII. Adjournment

Megan Hedges made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:47pm. The meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by: Dani Jones

Minutes approved by: Andy Fjeseth