

MONTANA

AMBASSADORS

MT AMBASSADOR BOARD MEETING

July 11, 2017

Skyview Room; 20th Floor

Doubletree – Billings, MT

Dial in: 712.432.0175 pin 217279

10:00am – 1:00pm

Present: Andy Gordon, Tyler Delaney, Lynda Colucci, Melanie Schwarz, Dale Mahugh, Brent Campbell, Greg Kohn, Ken Fichtler, Heather Bellamy, Brigitta Miranda-Freer, John Rogers, Mike O'Rourke and Gloria O'Rourke. Guests: Russ Fletcher and John Rogers.

Via phone: Bill Johnston, Rick Edwards

1. Welcome and Introductions
President Melanie Schwarz welcomed everyone to the meeting and requested introductions.
2. Approval of February 22, 2017 Minutes
Dale Mahugh moved to approve the minutes; Tyler Delaney seconded the motion. Motion carried.
3. Financial Reports – Rick Edwards, Treasurer
Rick reviewed the Financial Reports. Brent Campbell requested the budget reflect the Innovate Montana Symposium income and expenses. The item will be added to next year's budget. It was also noted that MTA needs more dues paying members. Lynda Colucci moved to approve the financials; Andy Gordon seconded the motion. Motion carried with Brent Campbell voting "no" until the budget reflects the symposium income.
4. MOU with GOED
Ken Fichtler reviewed the MOU with GOED. Ken explained a contractual document was not agreed upon due to a perceived conflict of interest with the Budget Office.
5. New Member Update and Pending Members
Gloria shared a list of new members, individuals who were approved by Governor Bullock but did not respond, and a list of pending Montana Ambassadors. Brent brought up the challenges of the application process. As the process changed several times in the past year, Gloria suggested using the webpage form as the only process. Lynda noted people want the MTA badge, but do not want to pay dues. Melanie suggested new members become accountable and designated to a committee.
6. Committee Set Up – as per MOU
The following committees were established with two board members as Co-Chairs. Each committee will be built by those in leadership tapping shoulders from existing Montana Ambassadors, new Montana Ambassadors, and potential Montana Ambassadors. Gloria offered to maintain the committee lists and to organize meetings and take minutes. Committee leadership thus far includes:

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Committee	Co-Chairs	Members
Mentoring for MT Businesses	Melanie Schwarz Brigitta Miranda-Freer	Ken Fichtler Andy Gordon
Networking Events	Heather Bellamy Tyler Delaney	Dale Mahugh
Advocacy, i.e., Policy Issues	Greg Kohn Rick Edwards	Bill Johnston Brett Doney (Federal)
Outreach and Marketing Outreach: Minneapolis, Denver, SLC as per Governor's direction	Lynda Colucci Brent Campbell	Invite Cindy Williams, UofM Alumni

Action Item: Melanie and Gloria will either ask board members to join a committee or select them.

7. MOU Costs and Budget

Regarding the budget for outreach, stock funds could be used for large amounts such as a marketing/rebranding project with smaller amounts being absorbed by the current budget. Ken said GOED may be able to assist.

Action Item: Each committee is to submit a budget for their plans.

8. MTA Events and Activities

- a. Awards Dinner – over 150 people have registered for the MT Ambassador Awards Dinner which will take place the night before the kickoff of the Innovate Montana Symposium.
- b. Innovate Montana Symposium – MTA is serving as the Fiscal Sponsor for the event. A post meeting was suggested to determine how to continue and grow the symposium.
- c. Solution Lounges – Gloria worked with partners to organize over 50 mentors and 22 topics for mentoring sessions during the symposium. Brigitta suggested obtaining some success stories and posting them on our website. Also, a survey is needed for feedback on those participating in Solution Lounges.
- d. 2017 MTA Business Open – Dale reported there will be an evening social at Old Works prior to the tournament on August 18th. Each Chapter is being challenged to bring a team. Dale mentioned a list of businesses from the Governor or GOED who could benefit from the networking would be more than welcome. NorthWestern Energy will again provide a bagged lunch on the course.

Action Item: Hold a meeting with key partners to assess, sustain, and grow the Symposium. Consider a survey for Solution Lounge outcomes and post success stories on our website.

9. Chapter Updates

- a. Pacific Northwest Chapter (PNW) – Governor Bullock is visiting Seattle for a PNW event this fall.
- b. Bozeman – New Chapter V.P. Tyler Delaney reported on a recent Bozeman meeting. The group is very engaged and goal oriented. One action item was to visit with Ken Fichtler and Pam Haxby-Cote to prioritize direction for serving as Bozeman Ambassadors. A second action item is to see if a video JP Gabriel put together could be used in the Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport.
- c. Butte – Dale reported on a recent Butte Chapter meeting; the chapter will meet again soon to assist with the Business Open.
- d. Missoula – Brigitta and Cate are planning a gathering for Missoula soon.
- e. California – Lynda shared details on the event held this spring with the Montana Film Commission and looks forward to planning another event this fall.

10. GOED Update

Ken shared an overview of GOED activities and then focused on two main topics for Montana Ambassadors:

- a. StartUp Weekends - Ken shared that StartUp Weekend events last from Friday evening to Sunday evening (54 hours) with the intent for attendees get their hands dirty creating a real company and building business plans. The event involves a pitch session with some ideas being discontinued and some going on to create sales after only 48 hours.

The last Montana StartUp Weekend was held several years ago; Ken would like to bring them back to Montana with the first one held this fall. Montana Ambassadors would serve as on-site mentors and judges for attendees. Brent coached for a Startup Weekend when it was held in the Flathead and said it was energetic, intense, and fun. Brent suggested this could be a recruitment opportunity for Montana Ambassadors. Melanie shared that the Billings StartUp Weekend was excellent; a lot happens in a condensed time and many volunteers are needed. StartUp Weekend could be a Chapter project across the state.

- b. Mentoring Program – Ken said the Montana Ambassador Mentoring Program would have a simple goal: Montana businesses obtain better outcomes. Montana is great at creating new businesses but the ideal is to create longevity and have those businesses reach the five-year mark. Ken would like to begin with a beta group to test the process and have some success stories to share in promoting the project. Ken asked everyone to ponder what businesses in their area may be a good fit to benefit from mentoring.
11. Misc. and Next Meeting
- a. The Last Best Conference will be held August 3rd and 4th.
 - b. Facebook and Twitter – thanks to the efforts of Chris Burke, Montana Ambassadors Facebook and Twitter engagement have skyrocketed.
 - c. Symposium on Engineers without Borders Chapter – Brent shared about a special event involving Africa engineers who are MSU Alumni that will be held in Montana in October. The idea is to create an opportunity for international relations and business opportunities for engineers and U.S. citizens in Africa.
 - d. MTA Logo – it was agreed that the current Montana Ambassador logo does not reflect innovation. Brent moved to issue an RFP for the board's consideration in finding a new brand for Montana Ambassadors, using proceeds from stock sales if necessary. Andy seconded the motion; motion carried. A Branding Committee was formed: Heather Bellamy, Chair; Brent Campbell, Melanie Schwarz, and Andy Gordon. Russ Fletcher suggested obtaining in-kind donations for the project and/or partnering with MEDA on the RFP.
- Action Item: Gloria will organize the first meeting of this committee.
- e. Next meeting: October 26th, possibly in Bozeman, at 10am.