

Our vision is to be the best resource for business assistance, through collaborations and partnerships, for all communities within and surrounding Glacier County.

Glacier County Economic Development
August Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 21st, 2025, 2:00 p.m.
Glacier County Satellite Office, Browning, MT, and via Google Meets

I. Roll Call:

Present: Rod Cline, Tom McKay, Skye Gilham, Mary Jo Bremner, Ken Hoyt, Mike Schultz, Tony Sitzmann, Arkaidy Wisniowska

Late Arrival:

Absent Excused:

Absent Unexcused:

Public Present: Cassie Powell, George Heavy Runner, Jade Heather Ackerman, Rachel Kipp, Carrie Taylor, Wayne Wippert.

II. Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Rod Cline at 2:08 p.m.

III. Grant Request Cassie Powell with BABBtized Barista

Cassie presented her grant request to the board of \$5,000 to purchase a storage trailer to keep her extra product and stock in. Has expressed difficulty with keeping all the extra stock in her house, and going to Kalispell 2 hours away to restock. She opened in summer of this year (2025), has had a good run and been busy. She has financed a \$30k mobile coffee trailer and along with that, she has also purchased an ATM machine that she says brings in good money as well (and is attached to the trailer). Cassie has a business plan, as well as long-term and short-term goals and projections.

IV. Reports:

A. Rod motioned, seconded by Tom, to approve the August agenda. Motion carried.

B. Approval of July minutes. They stand as written.

C. Tony motioned, seconded by Mike, to approve the July financials. Motion carried.

D. Tony motioned, seconded by Mary Jo, to accept the August expense budget. Motion carried.

Discussion: Still waiting on return check from Yesco for \$2,400 so that's why the EDF category is \$22,400 not \$20,000.

V. Old Business:

- A. Shop Local Winners:** Our last 2 businesses and winners were Mark Krapf for Curiously Artistic, and Lily Fitzpatrick for Latte Da. Thank you again to Bryan for making us an awesome custom wooden box for our tickets!
- B. Welcome Prospective Board Members:** We are grateful to have received many applicants for our 2 open board seats. Applicants include George Heavy Runner, Jade Heather Ackerman, Rachel Kipp, Carrie Taylor, John Overcast, and Wayne Wippert. Those present were introduced and invited to share a little bit about themselves.
- C. Voting on By-Laws:** Full voting board present (yay!). Mike renewed his motion from the last meeting to accept the changes to the by-laws. Tony seconded. Motion carried.
- D. Voting on the Proposed 2026 Budget:** We received confirmation that our mill contribution for the 2026 fiscal year will be \$73,154. We have a final draft everyone is happy with, and today proposed an “alternative” third option which also has a category for donations and sponsorships. Tony motioned, seconded by Mike, to approve the Alternate FY 2026 Budget. Motion carried.
- E. Voting on Grant Request – Kacie Fey of Latte Da:** Board discussion included questions about giving a grant to a business that has been in operation for so many years. Some felt a business should be established enough at this point not to need a grant. It was suggested to grant a portion of the request for the turbo oven instead of the full request which also included reimbursement for exterior signage and renovations. The board was divided. Some were in favor, some were not. Tony made a motion to deny the grant request, seconded by Tom. Motion carried.
- F. Voting on Grant Request – Pikunii Auto:** The board expressed concern over a variety of things, such as the business not having a licensed mechanic, the Brownfields studies relating to the property they are renting, the month-to-month lease is risky and if they choose to buy, there is DEQ concern on that property, as well as structural problems that will be costly. Mike motioned to deny the grant request, seconded by Tony. Motion carried.
- G. Continue Grant and Loan Policies Discussion:** Continued from previous meetings. Rod and Arkaidy have been working with Rich Gannon to develop a new grant strategy and process. Gave handout for suggested grant option. Grant/Loan hybrid with 6% interest, after 2 years of successful payments the principle loan amount is forgiven. The board was in favor of proceeding with this. Will revisit at next meeting.

VI. New Business:

- A. Discuss Taking Over the Discover Cut Bank Website:** Arkaidy provided information from the Cut Bank Chamber who has asked us to take over the Discover Cut Bank website. It will probably take about 10-20 hours to get the website updated, but after that it will only require minimal maintenance, maybe 1 hour per week. Discussion on making it Discover Glacier instead of Discover Cut Bank. We are, after all, a county wide organization. Arkaidy to discuss this with the chamber and we will revisit next meeting.
- B. Next 2 Shop Local Businesses:** Coyote Queen and Fist Full of Dollars Pawn.
- C. Executive Director Report:** Handed out results of Strategic Planning Survey. Board members to highlight the top 5 points they feel are important and should be of focus. Arkaidy asked board to approve her attendance to the Fall MEDA Conference in Polson in October. Tony motioned to approve the trip, Rod seconded. Motion carried. Arkaidy gave an update on a line item in the

financials titled equity. Discussion on where to set our sights for the next grant we will apply for. Sky had some good points we will form a committee to look into further grant opportunities.

D. New Board Member Elections: All applicants we heard from seem EXCELLENT, making it a very difficult choice. It was discussed that applicants not selected this time around, should be invited to attend meetings when they can, and contribute ideas, and possibly be voted in if there is a future need. The board decided to elect George Heavy Runner as a Browning representative, and John Overcast as the Cut Bank representative. Rod motioned, seconded by Mike, to select the 2 new members. Motion carried.

VII. Activity Reports:

- A. Browning:** FAST Blackfeet held a cultural based learning workshop about nutrition from the land August 15th. Famous musician Tyler Childers was recently in Browning and donated \$250k to various groups and organizations. This matched the \$250k he already donated. Business development event is taking place September 18th at the bingo area of the hotel. There will be lots of speakers and workshop type events.
- B. East Glacier Park:** Fire in the Mountains music festival took place July 25-26th.
- C. Babb/St. Mary:** Babb youth day took place July 23rd.
- D. Cut Bank:** Lewis and Clark Festival (and Cut Bank Trails Fun Run) at end of July went smoothly and lots of fun. Cut Bank Chamber Appreciation BBQ on August 13th as well as Shakespeare in the Park. Main Street Music and Food Fest to take place August 23rd 11-3 at Cut Bank Central Park. Growth Policy meeting held Aug 14th, there will be another down the line.

VIII. Correspondence: None.

IX. Public Comment: None.

- X. Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m. by Rod. The next meeting will be on September 18th, at 2 p.m., at the GCED Office in Cut Bank, MT and via Google meets.

The mission of the Glacier County Economic Development is to promote, stimulate, and advance the general welfare, commerce, economic development, and prosperity of its region.