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 20th, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.
GCED Office, Cut Bank, MT, and via Google Meets

I. Roll Call:

Present: Tony Sitzmann, John Overcast, Tom McKay, Ken Hoyt, Mike Schultz, George Heavy Runner, Mary Jo Bremner, Skye Gilham, Arkaidy Wisniowska

Late Arrival:

Absent Excused: Rod Cline

Absent Unexcused:

Public Present:

II. Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Tony Sitzmann at 2:03 p.m.

Tony Sitzmann acting as Chairman in Rod Cline's absence.

III. Reports:

A. Mike motioned, seconded by George, to amend the August agenda to include under old business, section B, Officer Elections. Motion carried.

B. Approval of June minutes. Minutes stand as written.

C. Approval of July minutes. Minutes stand as written.

D. Mike motioned, seconded by George, to approve the July financials. Motion carried.
Discussion: Arkaidy has made a second spreadsheet to keep track of grant spending and income, as well as our Grant-Back loans. It will take a bit to get used to but this way we will not be consistently looking at negative numbers in the red.

E. Mike motioned, seconded by Tom, to accept the July expense budget with a future amendment to the overall annual budget number. Motion carried.
Discussion: This month's budget starts our new fiscal year. The total annual budget will be updated next meeting, as we didn't have mill numbers at the time the budget was made. Our FY 2027 budget should be $80,920.50.

IV. Old Business:

A. Board Member Elections: Rod, Mike, and Skye are up for re-election. Discussion took place on weather board and officer positions need to be advertised or we can just re-elect. It was decided that we would vote on board members, but table officer elections until next meeting to ensure we are following proper protocol. Mike motioned, seconded by John, to keep board members in their same positions. Motion carries.

B. Officer Elections: Mike motioned, seconded by John, to table officer elections until the next meeting.

C. Continued 2027 Budget Review: We have our mill numbers, but with ED wage increase in discussion, it was decided to keep budget review open until next month. Mike motioned, seconded by Skye, to keep the budget open until next month. Motion carries.

D. Last 2 Shop Local Winners: The last winners were Kyle Swenson for Northern Ford, and Mariah Day and her daughter Nora for Char Char Asian Store.

V. New Business:

A. Next 2 Shop Local Drawings: The next 2 BOW participants were drawn as Rising Wolf Outfitters and Trailhead Saloon, both in East Glacier Park.

B. Scholarship Essay Questions: Continued from last meeting. Changes include submitting a resume, asking some questions like "what is your need and "what are your career goals". Problems to solve include: Suicide rates, homelessness and housing, the mental health crisis, lack of youth recreational activities, need for a new nursing home in Browning, and Glacier county crime and poverty rates. Arkaidy to put together a program scope and will present at the next meeting.

C. Grant-Back Eligibility Discussion: We have been approached by a couple different entities asking for clarification on who is eligible to apply for our Grant-Back Program. Are non-profits and other entities eligible? Only small businesses? The board agreed anyone in Glacier County can apply and considerations are made on a case-by-case basis. Only exception would be a publicly funded entity such as a public school.

D. ED Wage Increase: Arkaidy will have been ED for 2 years in December and has not yet received a raise. She did receive an increase in hours from 20 to 30 hours last year. Discussion took place on the COLA increase for the county which is 4.5%. Mike suggested creating a review committee to do an employee evaluation and decide on a wage increase number. The wage increase will be retroactive to July 1st, 2026. Mike, Rod, and Tony will be on that committee. Mike motioned, seconded by John, to have a 3-member employee review and re-discuss at the next meeting. Motion carries.

E. **Business of the Week Program Review:** As we start to run out of businesses to promote, Rod suggested we look ahead to how this program will look in the future. Arkaidy read some notes left by Rod. It was decided to promote BOW online a little more, asking businesses to participate. Arkaidy to make a public FB post. We will revisit this at a later time.

VI. Executive Director Report:

A. **DoPT/Cultivate Cut Bank Updates:** Cultivate Cut Bank made a debut at FAM fest. Monthly meetings with DoPT are going well and everything seems on track to receive the second $25,000. We received $520 from the Chamber MAD grant to purchase a projector and screen. Currently trying to hire a programmer. There are a few different ways this can look. As we are the fiscal agent do we put this employee under our EIN? The Marketplace has offered to also use their EIN. Thirdly, this person could be hired as a 1099 employee. GCED does not want to hire this employee on our payroll. As decisions are made we will re-discuss before any action is taken.

B. **Grant-Back Recipient Updates:** Cycle 1 payments are being made on-time and Paula's is working on their paint project. Cycle 2 has been fully funded and Burn's already received their kitchen equipment.

C. **LivePlan Subscription:** Arkaidy would like to purchase an annual LivePlan subscription. We currently use the program under GFDA but their "seats" are limited and we have to ask for access regularly. Arkaidy met with an agent from LivePlan who is able to get us a rate under GFDA at $150 annually per seat. Arkaidy would like 2 seats. George motioned, seconded by Mike, to purchase 2 seats of LivePlan at $300 annually. Motion carries.

VII. Activity Reports:

A. **Browning:** North American Indian Days took place July 9th – 12th offering many events, games, dancing, food, and more. Fire in the Mountains taking place on July 23rd – 26th. IEF Training August 25th at BFCC.
B. **East Glacier Park:** Everything is OPEN and BUSY!
C. **Babb/St. Mary:** Summer Social Fundraiser benefiting the BABB Foundation on August 1st at 9 a.m. at Park Cabin Company.
D. **Cut Bank:** 47th Annual Lewis and Clark Festival July 23rd – 26th. Cut Bank Chamber Business Appreciation BBQ August 12th at 5:30 pm. Farmer's Market every Wednesday 3-6. Town Hall meeting on water/sewer infrastructure on August 20th.

VIII. Correspondence: None.

IX. Public Comment: None.

X. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m. by Tony. The next meeting will be on September 17th at 2:00 p.m. at the Glacier Satellite Office in Browning, MT and via Google meets.

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