

# **Small Business Compliance Assistance Advisory Council**

## **Annual Meeting Notes – December 11, 2017**

### In Attendance:

- Michelle Bryan, Council Member – on phone
- Duane Mitchell, Council Member – on phone
- Hoby Rash, Council Member – in person
- Keith Ouzts, Council Member – in person
- Bonnie Rouse, Council Participant – in person
- Heather Higinbotham, Council Participant – on phone
- John Podolinsky, Council Secretary – in person

After a brief issue with the phone John called the meeting to order around 2:15pm and everyone in attendance introduced themselves. Small Business Compliance Assistance Advisory Council (Council) Member Diana Vanek was not available to attend the meeting. Council members Terry Schultz and Matt Regier have resigned.

The Council discussed existing members being re-appointed to the Council since some tenures have expired. John said he's working with Legislative Services on appointments.

The Council discussed retaining Keith Ouzts as Presiding Officer predicated on him being reappointed to the Council.

John summarized 2017 activities of the Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP) including the following:

- Concentrated on building relationships with Montana's Department of Commerce, Department of Labor and Industry Safety Bureau, Department of Agriculture, Department of Public Health and Human Services, Governor's Office, US Small Business Administration, US EPA, Montana Association of Counties, Montana universities, and a variety of associations in an effort to advertise and promote the SBO/SBEAP and its services.
- Continued contracting with Heather Higinbotham's small business, UnCommon Sense (UCS), and in participation with the Montana State University Montana Manufacturing Extension Center (MMEC) and the National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) we continue working with nine (9) breweries across the State assessing energy and water use and teaching sustainable business practices to those breweries – the Montana Breweries Project.
- With a grant from the EPA, the SBEAP managed the Montana Resource Efficiency Project (MREP) aimed at conducting eighty-two (82) energy audits at a variety of facilities across the State. NCAT was selected to do the audits at facilities such as schools, government, industry, offices, breweries, distilleries, retail, lodging, and healthcare.
- Advocated for a number of small businesses who had been cited and/or fined by DEQ for regulatory non-compliance, requested permit acquisition assistance, or had concerns over regulations. The businesses included three gas station owners, a gravel pit operator, a number of asbestos contractors and consultants, an electronics recycler, a

metal plating company, a dog groomer, and a property developer. Compliance assistance also included site visits.

- Participated in and did SBEAP outreach at several conferences and seminars including a US Green Buildings conference, two Montana Association of Counties conferences, Montana Economic Developers Association conference in Great Falls, annual SBO/SBEAP national conference in Denver CO, Governor's Office Innovate Montana Symposium in Billings, four SafetyFestMT trainings in Missoula, Havre, Helena, and Billings, and the Montana Brewers Association conference in Missoula.
- Administered the Radon Control Program which occupies 15% of John's time. The Radon Control Program hosts a website, telephone hotline, distributes radon test kits, hosts an annual radon conference, issues an annual public service announcement in January, reports to EPA, and conducts outreach.

Council members reported on their activities including:

- Michelle Bryan reported she continues to teach environmental law at the University of Montana. She mentioned the Land Use & Natural Resource Clinic, whose primary mission is to provide government support on land use and natural resources issues facing Montana. University law students work with local government, state agencies, or other organizations on projects related to land use, water, wildlife, or other natural resources issues.
- Duane Mitchell reported he is a full-time county commissioner for Richland County. He mentioned he gets involved with a host of government-related activities impacting his community including drinking water and wastewater treatment, solid waste, oil and gas taxation, etc. He said Richland County is open for business.
- Keith Ouzts reported he's been busy working with his associate members of Montana Contractors Association on safety and water quality. He too participates in SafetyFestMT teaching classes.
- Hoby Rash reported he continues managing DEQ's air quality compliance sections. He discussed the remarkable fire season Montana experienced this past summer. He mentioned there are more air quality challenges to tackle in light of reduced funding and resources.
- Heather Higinbotham reported she works part-time for the City of Bozeman in its energy section and running her UnCommon Sense business promoting business sustainability. She repeated information on the Montana Breweries Project working with nine breweries across Montana on sustainability, and energy and water use efficiencies.
- Bonnie Rouse reported she continues supervising the Energy Efficiency and Compliance Assistance section of the DEQ Energy Bureau including the SBEAP and energy outreach.

The Council discussed having the next meeting during the summer of 2018 in Miles City.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30pm.

End of notes.