

## **Small Business Compliance Assistance Advisory Council**

### **Meeting Notes – December 19, 2016**

In Attendance:

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

Small Business Compliance Assistance Advisory Council (Council) Member Terry Schultz was not available to attend the meeting. As a note, Diana Vanek's and Michelle Bryan's Council tenure had expired; however, they recently submitted application materials to Governor Bullock for Council re-appointment consideration.

John called the meeting to order at 2:00pm and everyone in attendance introduced themselves.

John summarized 2016 activities of the Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP):

- Concentrated on building relationships with Montana's Department of Commerce, Department of Labor and Industry Safety Bureau, 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.
- Contracted 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) and recruited 10 breweries and are in the process of assessing energy and water use and teaching sustainable business practices to those breweries – the Montana Breweries Project.
- In an effort to leverage resources of other resource-limited programs the SBEAP co-founded "MTP4." MTP4 is a collaboration of the SBEAP, Montana State University Extension Pollution Prevention Program, MMEC, UCS, NCAT, and the Department of Commerce's Small Business Development Centers in promoting pollution prevention, environmental regulatory compliance assistance, energy and water use efficiencies, business efficiencies and production, and sustainability.
- Advocated for a number of small businesses who had been cited and/or fined by DEQ for regulatory non-compliance or had concerns over regulations. The businesses

included a gravel pit operator, a number of asbestos contractors and consultants, a recycler, and a property developer.

- Participated in/hosted a number of conferences and seminars including Park County Brownfields workshop, Department of Commerce Invest in Success Conference in Havre, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Montana Radon Conference, Petroleum Refinery Training for DEQ Inspectors, annual SBO/SBEAP national conference in Raleigh NC, Governor's Office Innovate Montana symposium in Billings, SafetyFestMT trainings, MMEC's Compete Smart Conference in Hot Springs, Montana Association of Counties conferences, and others.
- Administered to 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 PSA, reports to EPA, and conducts outreach.

Council members reported on their activities:

- Duane Mitchell reported he retired from his company and now is a full-time county commissioner for Richland County. He felt the SBEAP should do more outreach, assistance, and advertising in eastern Montana. He said dusty roads are an issue for Richland County.
- Diana Vanek reported she continues to coordinate the Peaks to Prairies Program at the Montana State University Extension Center assisting parties with pollution prevention, air quality, solid waste management, and working with tribal entities on environmental subjects. She mentioned her counterpart in Texas works with oil and gas producers. She said she'd be interested in working with John and Duane on pollution prevention outreach efforts in eastern Montana.
- Matt Regier reported he continues operating his turf/sod farm and building spec homes. He was recently elected to the State legislature as a House of Representative for House District #4 in Kalispell. He said he prefers the carrot approach to regulatory compliance rather than enforcement.
- Michelle Bryan reported she continues to teach environmental law at the University of Montana. She mentioned John and the Council should engage more, prioritize efforts, survey small businesses with regard to pollution prevention and violations.
- Keith Ouzts reported he's been busy teaching safety classes and working with heavy equipment contractors for the Montana Contractors Association. He suggested John submit an article to the MCA newsletter on the SBEAP and consider resurrecting the state-wide Environmental 101 training efforts that were done in the past for entities regulated by DEQ.
- Hoby Rash reported he continues managing DEQ's air quality sections including the permitting, field inspection, and oil and gas well facility registration sections of DEQ's Air Quality Program. "Healthy air for every Montanan," was his quote for the meeting. He thought it would be beneficial to share pollution control tax incentive information with small businesses in Montana.
- 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 ten breweries across Montana on sustainability, and energy and water use efficiencies.

- Bonnie Rouse reported she continues supervising sections of the DEQ Energy Bureau including the SBEAP and energy outreach.

The Council discussed having the next meeting during the summer of 2017 in Billings or Miles City.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30pm.

Lastly, as of January 6, 2017 Governor Bullock re-appointed Michelle Bryan and Diana Vanek to the Council.