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## Northern Rocky Mountain ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

# NRMEDD Newsletter

Vol 1-9

### District elects officers of the board

The Northern Rocky Mountain Economic Development Districts board of directors elected three officers today, each for a one-year term. Sean Becker was Elected for a second straight year as the Board President. Newly elected to the Vice President position is Peter Fox, a current board of directors member serving from Park County. Scott Pogh was also elected for a second straight year as the Board Secretary / Treasurer.

Sean Becker, former Mayor and City Commissioner of Bozeman, is currently a Business Advisor for the Small Business Development Center at the Montana Community Development Corporation. He also serves on Governor Bullock's Economic Development Advisory Council, the City of Bozeman Economic Development Advisory Board, and the Bozeman Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. This is his second consecutive term as the NRMEDD President.

Peter Fox is Western Region Sales Manager for Minnesota-based ArcaSearch Digital Archiving. He is chair of the Park County Planning and Development Board and serves on the City of Livingston Planning Board. Over a 30-year career, he served as daily newspaper editor in Wisconsin and Montana, as well as an administrator in the University of Wisconsin System and as secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Employment Relations. He lives in the Shields Valley and has been a member of the NRMEDD Board and Executive Committee for two years. He is elected for a one-year term.

Scott Pogh is the Vice President for Relationship Management for Northwest Farm Credit, and has been at work in the financial industry for nearly 30 years. Pogh focuses on financial considerations for clients primarily on agricultural and recreational real estate. Pogh serves as an Executive Board Member of the Northern Rocky Mountain Economic Development District. He is also a member of the Bozeman Chamber of Commerce and the Leadership Bozeman program. Pogh has served as former President of Whitehall Chamber of Commerce. This is his second consecutive one-year term as Secretary / Treasurer.

### Start Up Park County round tables set for November 6<sup>th</sup>

Start up Park County will be held in both Livingston and Gardiner on Nov 6, 2014. The objective of the first gathering is to better understand the needs of the local entrepreneurs and to mobilize resources as needed. The events are scheduled 90-minute sessions at both Livingston and Gardiner to understand what types of businesses are being built, what challenges they are facing and what resources are necessary to help them overcome obstacles. The plan is to maximize attendance by having an early morning event and a noon event. Livingston will begin with a 90 minute morning coffee round table. In Gardiner, a 90 minute session is scheduled over the lunch period.

Defined, Start-up Park County is an event, headed by the NRMEDD and a group of volunteer entrepreneurs coming together around a shared passion for the art and science of starting businesses. The goal is to build a network of in-the-trenches entrepreneurs who can share ideas, tips, and brainstorm solutions. The District will be there to provide post-event consulting and business development.

### Mark your calendar!

*NRMEDD Final board meeting for 2014 is November 20<sup>th</sup>, 11am-1pm. Location will be determined at a future time.*

### This Quarter's Top Stories

- District Elects Officers of the Board
- Carroll College joins WYED Consortium
- Big Sky seeks approval of TEDD
- Start Up Park County Coffee Clatch and Lunch Round table in Livingston/Gardiner
- Small communities have large workforce housing issues
- Executive Board Member Highlight
- Executive Director's Quick Notes
- TOPs Team Member Highlight

## Big Sky Chamber of Commerce forms committee to study creation of a Targeted Economic Development District (TEDD)

The Big Sky Chamber of Commerce has formed a committee to study the creation of a Targeted Economic Development District (TEDD) for the purpose of addressing infrastructure deficiencies that impede economic development in the community. TEDDs were authorized by state statute in 2013 and they can be created under county government.

Because half of the Big Sky community is in Gallatin County and half is in Madison County, the committee believes that it would need to create two districts that would be administered by a single board under an inter-local agreement. There is a history in Big Sky of the two commissions working together towards a common goal, with recent examples being the creation of the park districts and the community wayfinding signage project.

The purpose of a TEDD is to provide the planning and financing tools for a community to address infrastructure deficient areas. Long-range planning tools are provided by doing a comprehensive development plan, and financing tools are provided by a source of investment capital (Tax Increment Financing - TIF) for the infrastructure improvements in order to promote value-adding economic development. TIF

provides this capital without adding any new taxes and without relying on federal funds, and has been very popular and successful around the country, the state, and locally in Bozeman where there are five such districts, including the downtown district which used TIF to build the 400+ space parking garage, among other public projects.

“The committee is optimistic that this tool could be used to ensure a stronger private-public partnership to address infrastructure needs for the community”, stated committee member and Chamber Board member, Kevin Germain. A prime example of a critical need is housing for primary homeowners, year-round workers, and rising professionals. There are a number of infrastructure deficiencies that stifle the supply of workforce housing, and the committee believes that careful planning and implementation of this tool can address cost prohibitive infrastructure upgrades supportive of value-added industries. By so doing, new opportunities will be created for the private sector to develop lower cost housing. Without a range of housing supply for a

growing workforce, the economy will falter as local businesses, schools, public service providers and resorts find it very challenging to staff their operations.

The Big Sky TEDD committee includes over twenty community leaders, including managers or directors of the major public service entities (fire, police, school, transportation, water/sewer). Committee and Chamber Board member Bill Simkins explained, “the committee is currently drafting a document that details the areas in which the community’s infrastructure is lacking, and we plan to submit this document to the commissioners of both Madison and Gallatin Counties so that, after a public hearing, they may make a finding of infrastructure deficiencies.” A public engagement process will follow with the purpose of gathering input in advance of creating a development plan that will outline various public infrastructure projects to address the deficiencies and promote economic development. This plan will also go before both commissions for approval and annual oversight.

## TOPs Team member highlight Benjamin Bennett - Principal; Massive Studios

Benjamin founded Massive Studios with the belief that even a small brand management firm can competitively deliver big results. In the marketing and design business for over 17 years, Benjamin brings a professional, yet creative approach to brand strategy, social media, print and web development.

Benjamin's client experience have run the gamut from retail and outdoor industries, technology and manufacturing, aviation, health and

pharmaceuticals, architects/planners and builders trade.

As a passionate cyclist, Benjamin's time in the saddle has taught him the lessons of perseverance and endurance: just a little something Benjamin integrates daily as part of Massive Studios' modus operandi.

The rest of his co-workers at Massive are just glad they don't have to keep up with him on his pre-dawn mountain bike rides.



**Benjamin Bennett**

## Madison County commits \$20K to economic development

By Abigail Dennis

*The Madisonian, 08/01/14*

A new agreement between Madison County and the Northern Rocky Mountain Economic Development District (NRMEDD) will give businesses and not-for-profits in the Madison and Ruby Valleys resources for economic growth.

“What is important to me is the end result,” said Les Gilman, a Madison County Economic Development Council (MCEDC) board member and owner of IH Cattle Company near Alder. “In the end, we want economic development.”

Gilman, county commissioners Dave Schulz and Dan Happel, county planning director Charity Fechter, and Rob Gilmore with the NRMEDD met last Friday to discuss a tangible plan for moving forward and reaching out to businesses around the county.

“We’re starting with a framework,” Gilmore said. “Next we engage with businesses...first we are proactive and then we become reactive to the needs we discover.”

The NRMEDD is cooperating with the county and the MCEDC. Though the exact structure of the six-person MCEDC is still up in the air, Schulz said it is important to keep the council involved with the process to advise Gilmore and serve as a sounding board. “Even though it’s funded through the county, the council needs to be

involved in the everyday coordination,” Happel said. “The government shouldn’t be involved in that.”

Happel moved to accept a one-year contract with the NRMEDD with a county commitment of \$20,000, which was seconded by Schulz. Commission Chairman Jim Hart was absent, but both Happel and Schulz voted in favor of the contract.

What’s next? The first step is reaching out to the companies, businesses and not-for-profits and compiling information about what resources each one feels would be beneficial to growth. To do that, the NRMEDD has created a business assessment—a survey that will take less than five minutes for business owners to complete. That survey is available for all Madison County businesses and not-for-profits at: [www.research.net/s/MadisonFirst](http://www.research.net/s/MadisonFirst).

“[The assessment] will examine over-all health of businesses in the county and provide insight on individual businesses that may need assistance,” Gilmore said. “This is really an opportunity for companies to check what services they would benefit from—it’s about providing access to services.”

This is a tool businesses can benefit from, Gilman said.

“We’re not asking businesses to help us, we’re asking them to tell us how we can help them,” he said. “It’s a business development tool.”

Gilmore said it should take approximately 60 days for the NRMEDD to saturate the county and get the word out to businesses about the services they offer. For example, if a business feels like it would benefit from assistance with a marketing plan, the NRMEDD has the capacity to bring people into the community to directly offer that help.

“We’re asking people to talk to us about their business specifically,” Gilmore said.

Role of the MCEDC. The current economic development council in the county will make a decision about its future role next week, Gilman said.

“I think having the council in place in the future is invaluable,” Schulz said. “As guidance and a sounding board for [Gilmore].”

Gilmore agreed, saying an advisory council of people interested and invested in economic development is important—especially since they will bring local experiences to the discussion.

“Everybody who wants to be engaged should be engaged,” Gilmore said.

The type of economic growth the commissioners’ want should be felt county-wide, Schulz said.

“Your first impression driving into a town is what makes you want to stay or get out of there,” he said. “It’s important this is a county endeavor and both valleys benefit equally from the services offered.”

## Carroll College joins Yellowstone Studies Center Consortium

Just in time for the Fall YSCC fall conference, Carroll College in Helena, Montana has joined the Yellowstone Studies Center Consortium. President of Carroll College, Dr. Thomas Evans, and Vice President for Academic Affairs worked closely with Mike Hedegaard, Program Director for NRMEDD during this past summer to add Carroll College to the group.

Besides Carroll College, the current consortium consists of Montana State University, Montana Tech, Idaho State University, Indiana State University, and Kennesaw State University out of Georgia. The Consortium will meet at the West Yellowstone Economic Development Center for their annual conference from October 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>.

## Small communities have large workforce housing issues

Tracy Menez, former Director for Community Development at the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) District IX, has seen many issues with affordable and workforce housing in her 12 years of experience. Throughout the Northern Rocky Mountain Economic Development District's (NRMEDD) area of responsibility, Tracy has helped eight towns and four counties with this very complex issue.

Menez started at HRDC in 2002 in the Resource Property Management Division, which manages the HRDC subsidized rental housing portfolio. In 2003, she moved to the Community Development Division, where she remained until this summer. Her focus in the policy arena began in 2003, assisting with the City of Bozeman's Affordable Housing Study and subsequent implementation of their Affordable Housing Plan. She's since worked with not only Bozeman, the largest city in the District, but also some of the smallest towns like Three Forks and Big Sky.

"There is no one best strategy, rather, we help communities learn from themselves and the experiences of others to select the "menu" that will help meet that particular community's need." said Menez. "We encourage every community we work with to first create a stakeholders' group; this group should consist of business owners (both large and small), school representatives, elected officials, housing providers (both private and non-profit) and

others parties interested in addressing the community's need for affordable housing." she said. This group creates the foundation of a successful effort.

With the help of HRDC, MSU, NRMEDD and other capacity building partners, communities can assess their areas of greatest housing need. It's crucial that the assessment leave the report stage and become the community's housing working plan with measurable outcomes and responsible parties. Menez added, "The stakeholders are essential in moving the plan from the idea stage; without the momentum, leadership and political will they offer, studies end up on the shelf, and nothing gets fixed. There are a lot of great ideas out there; the HRDC's job is to help guide communities as they evaluate which ones will best meet their needs."

Asked what makes a city successful in attaining their goal of workforce housing, Menez was confident in the one force that is essential; a champion! Tracy said, "We find that successful communities have a core group of dedicated citizens that work to understand the issues, gain support, and serve as champions for the effort. None of the communities we work in are entitlement cities under HUD (receiving funds directly annually from HUD), which means that they all have to compete for funding at the state level, which can increase risk for any proposed project. Nearly all of the communities we work with have experienced the adverse impacts of housing costs rising far out of step

with incomes and the market influence (both positive and negative) of second home buyers. These communities generally have an affordability gap for working households, both in rental and ownership opportunities. The most common obstacle faced by all communities is the need to secure affordable land. A project that does not start with affordable land will not be affordable."

Lack of affordable land is a common theme among communities struggling with workforce housing issues, however, the reasons for this challenge vary by community. Some of the communities are simply unable to annex land for future development, while other markets may have available land that is too costly; many communities face both challenges. Unincorporated communities face a unique set of challenges as well, particularly with regard to land use.

Another difference is access to funding; the larger communities tend to be more experienced in securing grant funds and attracting private development, and resort tax communities have the ability to tap into that funding source. Community leadership and political will matter as well. Local governments are limited to carrots (incentives) and sticks (regulation) – the ability and willingness to use both can vastly improve the odds of creating affordable housing.

Menez concluded, "The willingness of community leaders and elected officials to speak up in favor of affordable housing is key to a successful effort."

## Quick Notes:

In 2014, the NRMEDD has continued its work with industry sectors, for profits and the TOPs team (team of professionals). It has also committed significant resources to provide nonprofits with business services. A study conducted by the District shows that nonprofits contribute more than \$1.1 billion to the Gallatin County economy alone and the sector supports more than 5,000 local workers. A total of 57 nonprofits (27 from Park County and 30 from Gallatin County) have completed surveys and requested information about the District's programs. Since the first of the year the District has prepared 11 economic impact reports for nonprofit organizations including the Museum of the Rockies, Eagle Mount, the YMCA, the Emerson, Child Care Connections, the Intermountain Opera and many others. There is economic benefit to raising awareness of this important sector.

The District was a key partner in establishing the Montana High Tech Alliance. Today there is a full time executive director, more than 100 high tech members and a jobs portal with dozens of high value listings. You can visit the portal at [www.MTHighTech.org/jobs](http://www.MTHighTech.org/jobs), note the link to Oracle has more than 800 job listings.

Stormwater regulations are changing and the early predictions are that new regulatory demands will financially impact small communities within Gallatin and Park Counties. The District is meeting with leaders and water advocates to better understand the new rules and the impacts to our local economies. Watch for more to come on this topic during the November 20 board meeting, save the date 11:00 to 1pm.

The District has applied for a VISTA worker to assist in its housing programs – will keep you posted on the status of our application.

The District is assisting Big Sky in formation of a Targeted Economic Development District (TEDD) under the new Montana law. If successful, the TEDD promises to deliver millions of dollars for new infrastructure and economic development.

## Executive board member highlight - Secretary/Treasurer Scott Pogh

Scott Pogh, the Vice President/Relationship Manager for Agribusiness at Northwest Farm Credit Services has been with the Northern Rocky Mountain Economic Development District for many years. He was involved in the previous organization from 2006-2010, seeing its ultimate demise due to a cumbersome, and overly complex structure. Scott said it has been extremely rewarding playing a very minor role in seeing it reborn and quickly progress under Rob Gilmore's leadership and a very knowledgeable, and diverse board.

In his career, Scott is used to working in small towns and particularly rural areas. He said he likes how our group works on projects over a wide area of Gallatin and Park counties in towns and outlying areas. He believes our primary role is to promote, enhance and support economic and entrepreneurial opportunities for these areas, and to try

to help communities achieve their goals. "This can include a wide array of activities such as enhanced infrastructure, promotion, tourism, business retention, agriculture, collaboration, etc."

Scott is originally from New Mexico and is a graduate of New

Mexico State University. He has lived in Montana for 19 years residing in Great Falls, Whitehall area, and west of Bozeman. In his career, Scott has gained 11 years of banking experience, including eight as bank president, nineteen years of experience with farm credit.

Through the Bozeman Area Chamber of Commerce, Scott completed Leadership Bozeman, a program aimed at creating able leaders for the private and public sectors of our community. Scott completed the Western State School of Banking School for banking professionals, in 2014.

When he isn't working, you can find Scott spending time with his wife and three children in Bozeman, hiking, or catching a Bobcat game on Saturday afternoon. Scott was recently elected to his second consecutive term as the Secretary/Treasurer of NRMEDD.



Scott Pogh

## Mark your calendar!

**NRMEDD Final board meeting for 2014 is November 20<sup>th</sup> from 11am-1pm.**

**Location to be determined at a future time.**

**Find us online at: [NRMEDD.ORG](http://NRMEDD.ORG)**

## NRMEDD Board of Directors

## TOPs Team 2014

### Government Representation

**\*\*Sean Becker, City of Bozeman – President**  
**\*\*Steve Caldwell, City of Livingston**  
**Joe Skinner, Gallatin County**  
**\*\*Marty Malone, Park County**  
**David Rowell, City of Manhattan**  
**Brit Fontenot, City of Bozeman**  
**\*\*Pierre Martineau, Gallatin County**  
**Russ Nelson, City of Belgrade**  
**Brian Sprenger, Gallatin Field-Airport**  
**Steven Hamilton, City of Three Forks**  
**Bill Berg, Community Council, Gardiner**  
**James Bennet, City of Livingston**  
**Mark Shyne, MT Mfg. Extension Service, MSU**

### Non-Government Representation

**Tony Martel, Martel Construction**  
**Bill Simkins, Simkins-Hallin Lumber**  
**\*\*Scott Pogh, NW Farm Credit**  
**\*\*Don Seifert, TerraSentia Mineral LLC**  
**Lew Wilks, Three Peaks Ranch**  
**\*\*Peter Fox, ArcaSearch Corporation**

### Stakeholder Organization Representation

**Dr. Paul Lachapelle, MSU Faculty**  
**Debra Youngberg, Belgrade Ch. of Commerce**  
**Don Gimbel, Vision Livingston**  
**Debbie Berg, Montana Job Service**

### Members at Large

**Stuart Leidner, Prospera Business Network**  
**Cheryl Ridgely, Bozeman Deaconess**  
**\*\* Denotes Executive Board Member**

**Jake Anderson – President: *The Pulse Marketing Group***  
**Rebecca Baker – President: *Digital Velocity***  
**Dave Bayless – Principal: *Evergreen Innovation Partners***  
**Benjamin Bennett – Principal: *Massive Studios***  
**Shannon Benser – President: *Promo West***  
**Jessica Burch – Founder: *Betula Creative***  
**Steve Caldwell – Finance & Economics Consultant**  
**Karen Cates – Leadership and HR Strategy Consultant**  
**Jon Cousin – Patent Attorney PLLC: *MSU***  
**Brit Fontenot – Dir. Economic Devel: *City of Bozeman***  
**Rob Gilmore – Executive Director, NRMEDD**  
**Mike Hedegaard – Program Director, NRMEDD**  
**Rick Keller – Certified Public Accountant**  
**Dr. Christophe Lambert – Chairman: *Golden Helix, Inc.***  
**Robert Kent Levi – President: *Rocky Mountain Bank***  
**Deb Matus – CPM, CPMM, Product Dev. Consultant**  
**Russ Nelson – Senior Vice President: *First Security Bank***  
**Surale Phillips – Business & Marketing Research Consult**  
**Jerry Pape – Principal & CTO: *Excalibur***  
**Scott Pogh – VP: *Northwest Farm Credit Services***  
**Dr. Mike Reilly – Professor of Marketing: *MSU***  
**Jeff Riggs – Owner: *Clark's Fork Restaurant***  
**Drew Schug – Website & SEO Consultant**  
**Jon Shafer – Exec. Director: *Northern Rocky Mtn. RC&D***  
**Dr. Andreas Scherer – CEO: *Golden Helix***  
**Tom Starner – Investment Advisor: *Gene Cook Real Estate***  
**Warren Vaughan – Planner, Community Dev - *Gallatin Co.***  
**Kathy Wojcik – CPC, SPHR: *Bluheron Coaching***  
**Lew Wilks – Director: *ARC9***

