



Montana Association of Counties

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Monday, February 9, 2015

6:00 P.M.

Red Lion Colonial Hotel
Helena, MT

MINUTES

- 1. Roll Call and Introductions:** President Schulz called the meeting to order. Roll call was conducted. Paul Roland was introduced. Mike Sehestedt introduced Brian Hopkins, MACo Associate General Counsel, and provided an overview of his background prior to working for MACo.
- 2. Approval of Minutes:** Commissioner Prinkki moved and Commissioner Davey seconded to approve the minutes of December 1, 2014 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
- 3. Finance Report:** Finance Director Johnson reviewed the MACo financials as of December 31, 2014. Commissioner Reno asked what the contract amount was for John Esp, the contract lobbyist. Director Blattie responded the contract is for \$28,000 from January through April, and includes lodging costs.

Commissioner Macdonald moved and Commissioner Reno seconded to accept the financial report as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

- 4. QCI Investment Report:** Paul Roland provided an overview of the national and international bond markets and projections.
- 5. FY 2016 Preliminary Budget:** Director Blattie reported that the final Consumer Price Index for CY 2014 was 1.6%. It changed from the December projection due to the reduced price of gasoline. Director Blattie requested authority to include a 1.6% cost of living adjustment in staff salaries for the FY 16 preliminary budget.

Commissioner Devlin moved and Commissioner Malone seconded to authorize staff to include a 1.6% cost of living adjustment for staff salaries for the FY 2016 preliminary budget. Motion carried unanimously.

- 6. NACo County Leadership Institute Nominee:** President Schulz provided an overview of the process for nomination, and the experience he gained from attending. Commissioner Davey also noted the Institute is not just for Commissioners, but also Executive Directors and other county officials.

President Schulz reported that 2nd Vice President Todd Devlin has been nominated to attend and has accepted the nomination. It was noted that only 25 applications are approved, and the nomination has not been confirmed yet. However, due to our relationships at NACo, the application has a better than average chance of approval.

7. **NACo & NW President's & Execs Meetings Report:** President Schulz reported that Montana and Madison County hosted the Northwest President's and Execs meeting at Big Sky in December. The NW President's and Execs consist of five states: Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Alaska and Montana.

Madison County helped provide the transportation for a tour of the Big Sky Area, and resort developers joined the tour to provide information on the development in the area.

President Schulz reported this meeting provided an opportunity to meet fellow President's and Executives, and take those acquaintances to the NCCAE President's and Exec's meeting in Washington in January. He noted the first night was spent at a reception for newly elected Congressman Zinke, and the next two days were spent in meetings with 40 of the 50 states Presidents and Exec's. The meetings also included a meeting in a side room at the White House and at the National Press Club. He commented it was a great opportunity, and he and Director Blattie also met with Congressman Zinke, and Senators Daines and Tester.

8. **Association Reports:**

- a. **County Attorneys:** Leo Gallagher reported that the County Attorneys are working with MACo on monitoring bills. Mr. Gallaher added that they are working hard on a bill to allow county compensation boards to consider a revised longevity schedule for deputy county attorneys.

He also added that Representative Essmann has a bill regarding the commitment of individuals with dementia to the State Nursing Home, rather than the State Hospital. This will impact the nursing home in Lewistown, which may need to be expanded to accommodate the additional placements.

- b. **Clerk and Recorders:** Bret Rutherford reported that HB 247 had been tabled in committee. This bill would have allowed mail ballots to be opened and flattened prior to Election Day. They are also monitoring HB 63, regarding changing the mail date for absentee ballots, and a disabilities bill regarding online voting for the disabled.
- c. **Clerks of District Court:** Connie Mattfield thanked MACo for supporting HB 366, which would allow a discretionary \$2,000 in additional salary for Clerks and Magistrates.
- d. **Magistrates:** Linda Budeski reported that certification training was held in November. The magistrates are monitoring bills related to courts of limited jurisdiction, including a proposal that city judges be elected rather than appointed. She also added appreciation for MACo's support of the equal compensation bill.

Commissioner Reno added that Judge Carter in Yellowstone has a bill to raise Magistrate's salaries up to 90% of the District Court Judges salary.

9. **Staffing Update:** Associate Director Wood reported that a number of new employees have been hired to fill new and vacant positions. Mitch Young has been hired as Defense Counsel; Brian Hopkins has been hired as Associate General Counsel/Personnel Services Administrator; Kim O'Brian has been hired as Claims Specialist; Debbie Bjerke has been promoted to Claims Representative, and her former position of Claims Support Specialist is currently being advertised. Also, Deanna Carpenter has been hired in the new position of HCT Administrative/Enrollment Assistant. Ms. Wood added that the furniture, phones and computers have been ordered and installed, and all vacant offices are now filled.

- 10. Legislative Report:** Director Blattie reported that with the implementation of the Succession Plan, Associate Director Wood has assumed responsibilities for day to day operations, and is only working on pension issues at the legislature.

This change left a large hole in the areas of health and human services and mental health. MACo was fortunate to engage the services of former Representative and Senator John Esp to fill that hole. Mr. Esp has been contracted with from January to April to handle those areas.

Shantil has also assumed significant lobbying and legislative coordination duties along with her regular duties. Director Blattie also recognized and thanked President Schulz for his assistance at the capitol and the expertise he brings on particular bills.

Director Blattie reported that with the high number of new legislators and legislative staff, a lot of time has been spent working on bills while they are in the drafting process. This has resulted in numerous bills not being drafted and/or introduced. He also noted that a large number of agency bills died in the process, which means they will not be introduced, and is something that rarely happens.

Director Blattie provided an overview of MACo's legislative process including the weekly conference calls with the Executive Committee and Past Presidents. Ms. Siaperas reviewed the status of MACo bills and resolutions.

Director Blattie provided an overview of the infrastructure bills and their evolvement. John Esp and Ms. Wood provided an overview of the mental health and Medicaid bills in the process.

Director Blattie requested guidance on a proposed amendment to HB 304 regarding encroachment permits. Extensive discussion was held and the consensus of the Board was to circulate the amendments and have the Executive Committee provide direction.

President Schulz added that MACo has an incredible team that does a great job, and added that MACo has the respect and appreciation of the commissioners, lobbyists and legislators.

- 11. U. S. Forest Service (USFS) Memorandum of Understanding:** President Schulz reported that a conference call was held regarding the proposed changes and the removal of the boiler-plate language. The final document has been approved by the U.S.F.S. legal department and is awaiting signature by the Interim Director.

- 12. Next Meeting:** Associate Director Wood reminded the Board that the next meeting is scheduled for June 24, 2015 in Helena in conjunction with the joint budget adoption meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Approved this 24th day of June, 2015.



Dave Schulz, President



L. Harold Blattie, Executive Director

Executive Committee

- Dave Schulz, President
- Maureen Davey, 1st Vice President
- Todd Devlin, 2nd Vice President
- Joe Briggs, Immed. Past President
- Mike McGinley, Fiscal Officer
- Jim Reno, Urban Representative

Past President's

- Greg Chilcott
- John Ostlund
- Carl Seilstad
- John Prinkki
- Bill Kennedy
- Carol Brooker
- Bob Mullen

District Chairs

- Gary Macdonald, District #1
- Doug Buxbaum, District #2
- Doug Martens, District #3
- Larry Hendrickson, District #4
- Ron Ostberg, District #5
- Richard Moe, District #6
- Susie Mosness, District #7
- Leonard Wortman, District #8
- Marty Malone, District #9
- Bill Barron, District #10
- Jeff Burrows, District #11
- Tom Rice, District #12

Association Representatives

- Leo Gallagher, County Attorneys
- Bret Rutherford, Clerk and Recorders
- Connie Mattfield, Clerks of Court
- Valerie Hornsveld, Clerks of Court
- Vacant, Coroners
- Linda Budeski, Magistrates
- Chris Hoffman, Sheriffs & Peace Officers
- Jane Stene, Treasurers
- Susan Beley, School Superintendents

Others present: Harold Blattie, MACo Executive Director; Sheryl Wood, MACo Associate Director; Mike Sehestedt, MACo General Counsel; Brian Hopkins, MACo Associate General Counsel; Kathy Johnson, MACo Finance Director; Shantil Siaperas, MACo Legislative Analyst/Communications Specialist; Paul Roland, QCI Investments.