



**Big Sky EDA/EDC  
Executive Committee Agenda**

**October 1, 2025**

**7:30 AM to 9:00 AM**

**Venture Conference Room (BSED Building/Lower-level Rock 31)**

**BIG SKY ED Mission Statement:** - Focused on sustaining and growing our region's vibrant economy and outstanding quality of life, **Big Sky Economic Development** provides leadership and resources for business creation, expansion, retention, new business recruitment and community development.

**Committee Members**

**EDC**—Nick Pancheau, Jennifer Kobza, Jennifer Weaver Kondracki, Andy Gott, Stefani Hicswa

**EDA**—Debbie Desjarlais, Lucy Aspinwall, Bryan Wood, Riley Bennett, Kate Vogel

**7:30 A.M.— Call to Order** – Nick Pancheau, EDC Chair

**Public Comment/Board Member and Staff Announcements & Introductions**

- Public Comment/Introductions

**Agenda Changes**

**REGULAR AGENDA**

**A. Approval of EDA/EDC Minutes**

- September 3, 2025- Executive Committee Meeting

(Attachment A) (Action)

**B. Approval of EDA/EDC Financials—Tami**

- FY'26 July Financial Statements
- FY'26 August Financial Statements

(Handout) (Action)

(Handout) (Action)

**C. Executive Director Report—Paul**

- APEX update

(Info)

**D. Program Updates**

- Brownfield Committee Recommendation

(Attachment B) (Action)

**Consideration of Executive Session (as needed)**

**Adjourn**

**Next Executive Committee Meeting – November 5, 2025 (7:30 A.M. to 9:00 A.M.) Location-Zoot Training & Event Space, BSED Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor.** Big Sky Economic Development Board of Directors will make reasonable accommodations for known disabilities that may interfere with an individual's ability to participate. Persons requiring such accommodations should make their requests to Big Sky Economic Development as soon as possible before the meeting day. Please email Reann Keller, [reann@bigskyeda.org](mailto:reann@bigskyeda.org), or call Big Sky Economic Development at 406-256-6871.

# ATTACHMENT A

**Big Sky EDA/EDC Joint Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**September 3, 2025 – 7:30AM to 9:00AM**  
**Zoot Conference Room (2nd Level- Rock31/BS&ED)**

**BIG SKY ED Mission Statement:** - Focused on sustaining and growing our region's vibrant economy and outstanding quality of life, **Big Sky Economic Development** provides leadership and resources for business creation, expansion, retention, new business recruitment and community development.

**Committee Members Present:**      **EDA** – Debbie Desjarlais, Lucy Aspinwall, Bryan Wood, Riley Bennett, Kate Vogel  
**EDC** – Nick Pancheau, Jennifer Kobza, Jennifer Weaver Kondracki, Andy Gott

**Committee Members Absent:**      **EDA** –  
**EDC** –Stefani Hicswa

**Staff and Others Present:**              Ashley Kavanagh, Reann Keller, Paul Green, Tami Fleetwood, Marcell Bruski

**Call to Order:**

Debbie Desjarlais, EDA Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:31 A.M.

**Public Comment/Introductions**

- Marcell extended an invite to the Member Investor Bus Tour scheduled September 4<sup>th</sup> and requested that they RSVP if they are interested.

**Agenda Changes for Today's Meeting:**

None

**REGULAR AGENDA**

**Approval of July 2, 2025 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

Motion: **Riley Bennett** to approve the July 2, 2025, Executive Committee meeting minutes as presented to the Executive Committee.

Second: **Bryan Wood**

Discussion: None

Motion: Carried

**Approval of August 13, 2025 Special Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

Motion: **Bryan Wood** to approve the August 13, 2025, Special Executive Committee meeting minutes as presented to the Executive Committee.

Second: **Jennifer Weaver Kondracki**

Discussion: None

Motion: Carried

### **Executive Director Report**

- Nominating Committee Recommendation- reviewed recommendation made for Debbie Desjarlais and Shannon Christensen to fill EDC vacancies. Discussion regarding whether our records are accurate surrounding Board terms as Andy Gott believes his term is also up in 2025 and there were a few other members that joined the Board at the same time that he did. Reann will confirm EDA terms with Yellowstone County Commissioners office and will confirm the accuracy of EDC terms by reviewing archived directories.

Motion: **Andy Gott** to approve the Nominating Committee recommendation as presented to the Executive Committee and forward to the Board for approval.

Second: **Bryan Wood**

Discussion: None

Motion: Carried

- AEDO Reaccreditation Recap- Paul shared that the reaccreditation committee's visit was successful and that there were a lot of great ideas and feedback shared. They will be recommending BSED for reaccreditation. A preliminary report was received that included four recommendations-
  - Diversify funding stream by increasing private investment
  - Get Customs back at the airport/create a foreign trade zone in Billings
  - Become regional economic development leader for Eastern Montana
  - Suggestion of changing the organization's name

Paul shared that Billings and Yellowstone County are the two largest economies in the state and contribute a significant portion of Montana's GDP. Paul emphasized the importance of demanding a seat at the table and speaking with one united voice to make an impact in Helena. Discussed the loss of customs at our airport back in 2001 and focus on getting that back otherwise we do not have option to consider import/export opportunities and are unable to become a foreign trade zone. Work with legislators to have more power in the next session and better representation for our side of the state. Paul shared concerns with tax structure changes and the impact on our region. He encourages supporting the idea of implementing sales tax to aid in our budget concerns. Executive Committee has asked Paul to provide a presentation on tax structure to the Board at a future meeting. BSED has been inviting members of legislature to various events like Behind the Build to strengthen these connections and relationships.

- Defense Innovation Unit- Working with MSUB Bozeman who will be completing the research portion, and they will rely on BSED to supply the leads for the program. Meetings with Sentinel project and VACOM.
- BNSF- they are looking at selling a portion of Montana Avenue, but they only want to do a single transaction. BSED may be looking at bonding or using the Opportunity Fund.
- Intermountain Health- Discussions had and connections shared that will help with western air service opportunities.
- SBA Industry Round Table- BSED had the pleasure of hosting Justin Everette (Region 8 Administrator of SBA's Office of Field Operations), Marta Bertoglio (Director of Commerce) and Christi Jacobsen (Secretary of State). Great turn out.

**Consideration of Executive Session:**

Motion: **Kate Vogel** to enter Executive Session due to individual privacy concerns.

Second: **Riley Bennett**

Discussion: None

Motion: Carried

The meeting entered Executive Session at 8:23 A.M. on September 3, 2025.

The meeting returned to Open Session at 9:07 A.M. on September 3, 2025.

Summary of Executive Session was provided by Debbie Desjarlais: Reviewed Employer Flexible's action plan and discussed next steps.

**Adjourn:**

Motion: **Nick Panchneau** to adjourn the meeting.

**Debbie Desjarlais** adjourned the meeting at 9:08 AM.

Next Meeting – October 1, 2025

Respectfully submitted,

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Bryan Wood, EDA Secretary/Treasurer

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Jennifer Weaver Kondracki, EDC Secretary/Treasurer

# ATTACHMENT B

**Recommendation for Brownfield Community Wide Assessment  
Qualified Environmental Professional**

Date: September 23, 2025  
Memo to: BSED Executive Committee  
From: Thom MacLean, Community Development  
RE: Qualified Environmental Professional recommendation for Brownfield Assessment Grant

The Brownfield Review Committee recommends that Big Sky Economic Development contract with Granite Peak Environmental to serve as the Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) for our Brownfield Community Wide Assessment grant. Our Brownfield CWA grant is for \$500,000, of which about \$436,000 is dedicated to contractual obligations. The bulk of that amount will go to the selected QEP for assessment work, cleanup planning, community outreach, and other tasks. We request Board approval to establish a contract with Granite Peak Environmental for their services.

Brownfield Review Committee:

- Wyeth Friday
- Zack Dunn
- Vince Mistretta
- Dianne Lehm
- Thom MacLean

BSED published a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for environmental consultants in August with a deadline of September 11, 2025. We received four responses – Granite Peak Environmental, Hydrometrics, WWC Engineering, and WGM Group. The Statements of Qualifications were sent to the Brownfield Review Committee for review and scoring. We met on September 23<sup>rd</sup> to review the scores. Granite Peak was the top choice of all committee members. Hydrometrics and WGM were second and third. Because Granite Peak was the consensus top choice, we did not elect to conduct interviews with the firms. Granite Peak displayed much more relevant experience and expertise.

Though not a deciding factor in their selection, Granite Peak also serves as the QEP for our EPA Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund grant. This will provide some efficiencies in our overall Brownfield program.