

MACKINAC ECONOMIC ALLIANCE
Director's Report
November 9, 2015

Following their signed Land Transaction Agreement with the DNR Graymont issued their check for \$100K to MEA. Representing the Year 1 contribution to Graymont's Community and Economic Development Fund, the check was directly deposited into a dedicated bank account established for the disbursement of grant funds. MEA evaluated investment options at all EUP banks and opened an account at First National Bank.

On Monday, September 28th the Graymont Community Economic Development Committee met at the Snowmobile Museum in Naubinway to finalize the grant application and evaluation forms, and to determine the policies and procedures under which the Committee will operate. It was decided that grant application would be available November 1, 2015. The first grant application deadline is March 1, 2016. The Committee will then have a 60-day period within which to review applications and award grants. MEA placed an ad in the following papers to advise the public about the availability of grant funds:

St. Ignace News
Sault Ste. Marie Evening News
Newberry News
Mainistique Advisor

In addition MEA uploaded all pertinent information and documents relating to the Graymont Fund onto their website prior to publication of the ads.

On Wednesday, September 30, 2015 members of the newly formed MEA Revolving Micro Loan Committee met at First National Bank in St. Ignace. For now, members of this Committee include:

Luke Jaroche-President, Maples Sawmill Inc.
Bob Richardson-Sr. Vice President, First National Bank
Dave Thomas-Vice President, M Bank
Coleen Duflo-Commercial Lender, Northern Initiatives

The Mackinac Island Community Foundation is canvassing business owners on the Island to identify a fifth member for this Committee. In addition, though not sitting on the Committee, Josh Billington of MI SBDC will play an integral role in vetting each applicant and providing assistance in the preparation of business plans. MEA continues to work with the Alpena EDC in establishing best practices, based on the USDA Micro Loan Fund Target Alpena has been administering for over 15 years.

On Tuesday, September 29, 2015 a special meeting of Mackinac County Commissioners convened to hear a presentation from MEA. Utilizing a Powerpoint format Commissioners were informed about MEA 2015 initiatives and the successes that accrued from each of them. Specific reference was made to the fundraising accomplished to establish a Micro Revolving Loan Fund in Mackinac County. MEA submitted their 2016 budget and Commissioners were asked to consider increasing their annual MEA contribution from \$50K to \$85K.

As a result of ongoing dialogue with Novi Energy and Cloverland Electric, MEA was invited to meet with ITC Transmission Executive Vice President Linda Blair, together with several other ITC representatives, on September 25, 2015 at Treetops in Gaylord, MI. Cloverland Electric CEO, Dan Dasho joined Dean Reid and Anne Ottaway in discussing transmission and generation deficiencies in the UP, and strategies designed to address them. ITC shared information about MI Senate Bill 282 and MI House Bill 4575, identical legislation now under consideration in the legislature. Following this meeting MEA drafted a Resolution of Support and distributed it broadly across the Eastern UP among local units of government, Regional Planning and EDC's, County Commissions and other non- governmental organizations. MEA has been asked to facilitate an ITC presentation on November 9, 2015. This meeting has been designed to inform selected representative leaders from EUP local government and economic development organizations about the "Michigan Electric Infrastructure Act".

MEA has been working closely with Beacon Specialized Services CEO, Ken Ratzleff to determine if undetected contamination not set forth in their initial Brownfield Plan can be addressed in an Amended Brownfield Plan. Discussions with MI DEQ and MEDC have made clear the benefits of filing an Amended Plan. This process has been instrumental in highlighting certain steps that MEA can recommend to the Mackinac County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority in their review and approval process of the next Brownfield Redevelopment Project.

Caroline Crecelious has taken over the position of Assistant Director of MEA. Earning a Master Degree in Anthropology Caroline's background includes extensive teaching experience as a Graduate Teaching Assistant at University of Alaska Fairbanks, and as an Adult Literacy Teacher in Missouri. Caroline served as an intern at the National Park Service in Arizona and worked closely with indigenous populations in Alaska. Selected as a Rotary Ambassador to Russia Caroline gained a wealth of experience building relationships at the community level. Coupled with her writing, speaking and extensive computer skills, MEA is very fortunate to have her on board. Please welcome her!