

Marijuana Excise Tax Advisory Board (METAB)

Minutes from Meeting on Thursday October 26, 2023

Meeting called to order at 10:10 p.m.

METAB Members present: Beth Helmke, Cecil Rhodes, Daryn Ridenour, Monica Haskell and Bob Christiansen. Also present, Ben Doon, METAB Administrative Support.

METAB Members absent: Jodi Breckenridge Petit.

Approval of minutes from previous meeting

Motion by Daryn to approve the November 18, 2023 minutes. Second Cecil. Vote unanimous.

Approval of agenda

Motion by Monica to approve the agenda. Second Cecil. Vote unanimous.

Financial Update

Ben said Dan Short sent him an email on October 19th that stated the Marijuana Excise Tax fund balance was \$109,852, but one grower hadn't submitted their 3rd quarter taxes yet, but it should be approximately \$15,000. Therefore, about \$120,000 should be available to award after 4 quarters of tax collections minus administrative expenses. The METAB fiscal year runs from Oct 1 to September 30. Funds available to grant in previous years were: \$99,685 in 2017; \$99,800 in 2018; 111,000 in 2019; \$264,350 in 2020; \$405,742 in 2021 and \$245,550 in 2022.

Monica asked about the METAB funding priorities. Ben said the authorizing resolutions for the Marijuana Excise Tax grant program state that revenues are to be used for human services (including without limitation those that serve the youth of Chaffee County), public health (including mental health), workforce housing (including family housing), and expenses related to the regulation of marijuana and other drugs and enforcement of related laws. He said there has never been an application for the enforcement of drug laws. Monica said law enforcement has not been aware of the METAB grant opportunity, but we could see an application for this program goal in the next cycle.

Ben said during the last grant cycle the Board had questions about policies related to multiple applications from the same applicant and applications from county entities and had a question regarding the rubric where points were given based on how dependent a program or budget was on METAB funds. The less dependent the more points are given. Cecil stated that that seems backwards to him. There was also a past suggestion to have a policy regarding unsuccessful applicants that want to have an audience or extensive dialogue with the Board.

Bob said METAB is not required to have a grant cycle every 12 months. He also asked about creating a reserve.

Daryn said given the current and forecasted revenue for the next year or two, he believes it will take a while to build a reserve.

Cecil said he believes it is important to have a grant cycle this year even if funds are reduced. METAB grants serve as an important funding source for a number of programs and organizations.

Board Terms and Vacancy

Ben said Daryn and Beth's current terms expire on 1/31/24. Daryn serves as the industry rep, which is a required seat and he'd like to continue to serve on the Board if possible. Beth said she would stay on if needed, but she doesn't want to serve as Chair or Vice-Chair moving forward. Becky Grey's seat is also vacant since she no longer lives and works in Chaffee County. The county is expected to put out an advertisement for vacant and expiring Board terms in November. Usually, letters of interest are due in early December and the County Commissioners make appointments in January. Monica said she has some law enforcement contacts that serve on other boards. She'll approach them about the METAB vacancy. Ben said it is helpful for current Board members to recruit and encourage people to serve on the METAB. Without that kind of effort, there hasn't been much interest from the public.

Board Officer Positions

Ben said the group hasn't had a Board Chair since Dave Henson passed away. Beth was Vice-Chair at that time and she provided leadership during last year's grant cycle. Cecil nominated Monica to serve as Chair. Beth second. Vote unanimous. Monica nominated Cecil to be Vice-Chair. Beth second. Vote unanimous.

Next Grant Cycle

Ben said a grant cycle usually takes about 3-4 months. One month from when the cycle is announced until the pre-application deadline. A week or two after the announcement there is a Q&A session with potential applicants about the grant program. Ben also gives a tutorial about the grants portal at this time. It is another month from the pre-application deadline to full application deadline. Mini-grants do not have a pre-application requirement. The board members then have about 4-6 weeks to review and score all of the applications and make funding recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners. Finally, it usually takes another week or two to get approval of the recommendations from the Board of County Commissioners.

There was support to get funds out the door for the next grant cycle before the end of Q1 2024. Monica said the Department of Human Services has funds that are distributed to appropriate community groups and she would like to ask the Board of County Commissioners if these funds could be rolled into the METAB grant cycle and awarded through the grant cycle process to address service gaps in the community. She'll approach the Commissioners about this on November 13th.

There was group consensus to advertise and open the next grant cycle in November, set the pre-application deadline on Friday December 15th and the full application deadline on Wednesday January 31, 2024.

Other Business

None.

Next Steps/Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday January 22nd at 1:00 p.m. Agenda items will include a review of the submitted pre-applications and discussion of any new policies related to the questions and concerns from the last grant cycle.

Public Comment

None.

Adjourn

Adjourn at 11:38 a.m.