

**Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc.**  
**Board of Directors' Meeting**  
**November 20, 2025, 3:30 p.m.**  
**Neighborhood Center Card Room/Zoom Conference Call**

**Rocky Board Members present:** Katelyn Buck, Bruce Day, Susan Geise, Andy Hunthausen, Trever Kirkland, Cory Kirsch, Teri Lilletvedt, Erin Lyndes, Jesse Swenson

**Rocky Board Members absent:** Kate Anderson, Dannai Clayborn, Debbie Havens, Paula Jacques, Charlie Lane, Dan Rispens

**Others present:** Brianna Bogad, Beth Branam, MacKenzie Chatriand, Genevieve Cox, Mindy Diehl, Diane Edgar, Steven Ferriter, Joanna Halland, Taya Hovan, Lori Ladas, Jean Leischner, Samara Lynde, Jim Marks, Liz Mogstad, Angela Nelmark, Ashley Peña-Larsen, Tom Robel, Jonathan Schmitz

**Call to Order/Roll Call:** The meeting was called to order at 3:31 p.m. by Trever Kirkland and a quorum was present. No public comment was received. Katelyn Buck, Head Start Policy Council Chair, was introduced as a new member of Rocky Board.

**Approval of Minutes**

**Susan Geise made the motion to approve the October 23, 2025, Board of Directors' meeting minutes and the June 26, 2025, Finance Committee meeting minutes. Erin Lyndes seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**

**General Fiscal Update**

Cash balance today is \$2,141,783, which is lower than last month due to a delay in receiving some Area IV funds from the state. Accounts payable balance is \$32,781.86, with one outstanding Blackfoot invoice which is 20 days past due.

Jonathan Schmitz provided an overview of the financial statements as of September 2025. Rocky's cash balance has remained consistent through the first quarter of the fiscal year. Rocky continues to have just over 2 months of cash on hand. The Statement of Activities shows a positive variance to date of \$91,034 compared to the budget, mainly due to positive income from the Preschool program.

**Director's Report**

Lori asked for any questions on her written report. Rocky Aging Director Jim Marks provided information about TruAlta, a subscription that will be used by Rocky Aging to provide education and support to caregivers. Lori reported that Rocky's auditors are expecting to present their audit report to the Board at the December meeting. Lori spoke about the Community Needs Assessment, and the role it plays in creating Rocky's work plan and annual report. No updates about the CSBG and LIHEAP funding are available, outside of the approval by Congress of the continuing resolution through January 30.

### **Approval of Community Needs Assessment**

Genevieve Cox and Brianna Bogad from JG Research and Evaluation explained the process of completing the Community Needs Assessment. Completion of a Community Needs Assessment is a CSBG requirement every three years. The purpose is to identify resources and unmet needs of individuals and families in the community. The assessment included both qualitative and quantitative data, such as focus groups, community surveys, and census data. Demographic information for Rocky's three-county service area was shared. Based on survey results, the top barriers to clients using programs offered by organizations such as Rocky include the lack of a local office to visit in person, complexity of applications and paperwork, and understanding program eligibility requirements. The five most important community needs selected by respondents included availability of safe and affordable housing, availability of jobs that pay enough to live on, access to affordable childcare, help for people who are unhoused, and access to mental health services. Lack of affordable housing was the top community need noted. Recommendations in this area included focusing on expanding affordable housing options and supporting local zoning changes. Another top need was lack of affordable childcare. Recommendations to address this concern include raising pay for childcare providers, expanding program capacity, and building partnerships with other providers. To address administrative barriers to use of Rocky's programs, recommendations included adding community navigators and further developing both online and in-person application processes. Brianna noted that respondents acknowledged the significant role of Rocky staff and volunteers and expressed appreciation for Rocky's vital services in the community. Lori noted that it had been four years since Rocky's last Community Needs Assessment, but that Rocky had received a waiver to be part of the statewide survey.

**Susan Geise made the motion to approve the Community Needs Assessment as presented. Andy Hunthausen seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**

### **Head Start Update**

Katelyn Buck reported that Policy Council met and approved all their agenda items, along with discussing Head Start's upcoming Winter Wonderland event.

Ashley Peña-Larsen spoke about the Head Start Supplement to the Community Needs Assessment. The document includes information from Rocky's document in addition to specifics surrounding children and families. Head Start's needs assessment is completed annually and is used to update program goals and action plans.

**Susan Geise made the motion to approve the Head Start Community Needs Assessment Supplement. Erin Lyndes seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**

Ashley reported that the Head Start Federal team is back in their offices. Head Start grant application instructions are delayed and have not yet been received. Ashley spoke about Head Start's ability to access practice-based coaching cycles for new management staff. Notifications have been received for upcoming immunization and program systems reviews. Two teachers are awaiting waivers to continue teaching in the classroom. Head Start's wage survey has been completed and will be presented to the Board in December. Ashley noted that the survey revealed a living wage in Montana of \$27 per hour. The Head Start budget is looking good, on track for the April 30 grant end date. The budget has been helped by vacancy savings. The program has been working hard on in-kind but are currently still short of meeting the requirement.

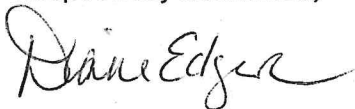
**Susan Geise made the motion to approve the Head Start Director's Program and Budget Report. Andy Hunthausen seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**

**Senior Nutrition and Transportation Program Presentation**

Mindy Diehl provided an overview of the Senior Nutrition and Transportation program, which is supported by the Older Americans Act. Services within this program include congregate meals, home delivered meals, the Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). The Senior Transportation program is supported by County Mill funding. Six sites in the region host congregate dining, along with meals prepared for Helena Indian Alliance. These sites also deliver meals on wheels. Almost half of congregate meals revenue comes from federal funding. In fiscal year 2025, over 83,000 meals were delivered to 750 older adults in the tri-county area. Nearly half of home delivered meals revenue comes from state and local funds. Mindy spoke about menus for the program, noting how they comply with Dietary Guidelines for Older Americans and are reviewed by a registered dietician. The program works hard to monitor and control the cost of groceries. Rocky's Meals on Wheels volunteer program continues to grow, and in fiscal year 2025, volunteers delivered 45,205 meals. Mindy highlighted the NSIP program, which provides frozen meat and canned fruits and vegetables to the senior center, and the CSFP program, which distributes boxes of food to income eligible seniors every other month. Rocky's transportation program provided 3,751 rides to seniors in fiscal year 2025, operating within Helena city limits to transport older adults to meals and activities at Rocky sites. Mindy shared the story of Bill, a senior who initially became connected with Rocky through home delivered meals. With the encouragement of Rocky volunteers, Bill started coming to the senior center and now attends regularly, becoming involved in a variety of activities.


The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Diane Edgar  
Executive Assistant

Approved by the Board of Directors:

  
Name

12/18/25  
Date

