

January 12, 2021
HB 9. Long Range Planning Appropriations
Subcommittee.
Helena, MT
By ZOOM

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Committee. My name is Bill Jones and I am from Harlowton and I am the Chairman of the Culture and Aesthetic Projects Advisory Committee. I am an appointee representing your Montana Historical Society.

The committee consists of 16 members, 8 appointed by the Montana Arts Council and 8 appointed by the Montana Historical Society.

Our 2020 committee meetings were scheduled for October 22 and 23, final scores were due by October 27 and follow up meetings were October 29 and November 12. All meetings were held by Zoom. Zoom worked reasonably well with minor complications with some connections.

Members were charged with reviewing 84 applications. Members declared a conflict of interest on applications they had board membership, family connections or business relationships with. No scoring, written comment, discussion or voting was allowed on those applications where the members declared a conflict of interest.

Applications were reviewed based on:

Unique value or service provided to people who attend and/or support the work of the applicant.

Services appropriate and of value to people who attend and/or support the applicant.

A cohesive, complete, well-thought out application.

Each panel member scores each application and provides written comment for each of the three criteria mentioned above. It is estimated each member of the committee spent a minimum of 40 hours on this task.

This information had to be to staff by mid October . Staff compiled all the scores and written comments and the panel received this compilation before the meeting to review.

The information before you is the results of the four committee meetings. Discussion at times was robust and thoughtful. At no time did politics enter the discussion. Compromise and negotiations ruled the day.

The committee did have a productive discussion on one concern that was brought up. One of the committee members prepared a spread sheet showing the disbursements across the state over the last three disbursement cycles. Splitting the state into 4 quadrants by using Lewistown as the center and drawing lines N-S and E-W there is a definite disparity in regards to the disbursement of funds.

% MT Population	% \$ Disbursement	
NE	18%	3%
SE	26%	18%
SW	30%	63%
NW	37%	16%

This is an issue that the committee has no guidance to address. It is something that we felt the Long Range Planning Appropriations Subcommittee and the Montana Legislature may want to study.

As committee members we learned about organizations that we had never heard of. We also garnered deeper appreciation of the exemplary work non-profits are doing all across this state.

The committee, who conservatively donated 1000 hours of service in reviewing and scoring the applications and participating in the Zoom committee meeting, I heart-fully thank.

And to the staff who professionally led us through the process we also thank.

The panel proudly presents our recommendations to you for your consideration.

Thank you

Bill Jones, Chairman

