

**Southwest Colorado Council of Governments  
August Board Meeting  
Thursday, 12 August, 2021, 1:30 p.m.  
Video Conference**

In Attendance:

David Black – Town of Bayfield  
Marsha Porter-Norton – La Plata County  
Mike Lavey – City of Cortez  
Olivier Bosmans – City of Durango  
Andrea Phillips – Town of Pagosa Springs  
Gloria Kaasch-Buerger – Town of Silverton  
Drew Sanders – City of Cortez  
Mark Garcia – Town of Ignacio  
Alvin Schaaf – Archuleta County  
Katie Sickles – Town of Bayfield

Staff in Attendance:

Miriam Gillow-Wiles – Southwest Colorado Council of Governments  
Jessica Laitsch – Southwest Colorado Council of Governments  
Bryce Bierman – Southwest Colorado Council of Governments

Guests in Attendance:

Kelly Polites – Town of Bayfield  
Lisa Bloomquist – HomesFund  
Rachel Taylor-Saghie – Habitat for Humanity of La Plata County  
Andrew Atchley – Colorado Division of Housing  
Shari Pierce – Town of Pagosa Springs  
Laura Lewis Marchino – Region 9 Economic Development District  
Shannon Fuller – Haynie and Co  
Helen Katich -Senator Hickenlooper  
John Whitney – Senator Bennet  
Cindy

**Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 1:32 p.m.

**Public Comment**

None.

**Consent Agenda**

- a. April 2021 SWCCOG Meeting Minutes
- b. March and April 2021 Financials

**Drew Sanders motioned to approve the consent agenda, Alvin Schaaf seconded, unanimously approved.**

**Presentation**

- a. 2020 Audit Presentation  
Shannon presented a summary of the 2020 audit.

a. Department of Housing Presentation of Funding and Programs  
Andrew presented information about pending funding opportunities related to housing. There was discussion about expectations for various potential funding sources. There was discussion about various pending bills and what implications there may be as a result. There was discussion about rental assistance and housing voucher programs. There was discussion about potential opportunities for and the importance of regionalism when addressing housing. There was discussion about how to use the SWCCOG to support collaboration, the consensus was to create a housing subcommittee to provide guidance moving forward. There was discussion about focusing on home ownership versus renting.

### **Discussion Items**

a. 2022 Preliminary Budget

Miriam explained that the SWCCOG submits a draft budget earlier in year to avoid overlap with when member jurisdictions are working on their budgets. She described the outstanding issues that are expected to change including various pending grant applications. There was discussion about leveraging ARPA funds for specific time-limited projects.

b. Update on DOLA Broadband Grant

Miriam explained the questions DOLA had on the broadband grant request and how she is moving forward with various partners.

### **Decision Items**

a. Accept Audit

**Drew Sanders motioned to accept the audit for the prior fiscal year, Andrea Phillips seconded, unanimously approved.**

b. Approval to apply for NTIA Broadband Grant

Miriam described the process for determining the projects to be included in this request.

**Marsha Porter-Norton motioned to approve application for the NTIA Broadband grant, Drew Sanders seconded, unanimously approved.**

c. Approval to apply for DOLA TA Grant

Miriam described this grant opportunity and options for projects. There was discussion about determining the appropriate funding source for various types of solutions to regional issues. There was discussion about staff finalizing the request and setting up a special meeting to approve submission of the application.

d. Ratify Letters of Support

**Mark Garcia motioned to ratify the letters of support Marsha Porter-Norton seconded, unanimously approved.**

### **Reports**

Director's report:

Miriam reported the SWCCOG has hired two new staff. The executive committee had asked Miriam to send a letter to Montezuma County regarding partnership. There was discussion about their reluctance to participate including concerns about dues. She asked about what the SWCCOG's role should be in the opioid settlement discussions. The consensus was that the SWCCOG may have a role, staff will participate in discussions and apprise the Board of any potential roles for the COG.

Broadband report:

Miriam provided an update on the various potential projects.

John Whitney detailed some of the broadband elements included in the infrastructure bill. He summarized the current status of the budget bill. Mark asked about future water reservoir projects. John replied there are funds included for rural water storage. John summarized the review process for Congressionally Directed Spending projects. He reported that some funding to address tribal water projects was included in the infrastructure bill. There was discussion about the benefits of childcare credits.

Fiscal update:

Jessica summarized the status of various projects.

Grant report:

Miriam summarized the status of various grant awards and opportunities.

Transportation report:

Jessica summarized the SWTPR meeting held earlier in the day. Mark added there will be new monies available. He added that CDOT is working on greenhouse gas emissions rules.

### **Community updates**

Marsha reported that La Plata County is exploring a new potential location for their weather radar.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:04 p.m.