

**Southwest Colorado Council of Governments
August Board Meeting
Thursday, 03 August 2017, 1:30pm
1188 E. 2nd Ave., Carnegie Bldg., Durango, CO 81301**

In Attendance:

John Egan – Town of Pagosa Springs
Mark Garcia – Town of Ignacio
William Tookey – San Juan County
Fred Brooks – Town of Mancos
Lana Hancock – Town of Dolores
Greg Schulte – Town of Pagosa Springs
Karen Sheek – City of Cortez
Ron LeBlanc – City of Durango
Dick White – City of Durango
Gwen Lachelt – La Plata County

Staff in Attendance:

Miriam Gillow-Wiles – Southwest Colorado Council of Governments
Jessica Laitsch – Southwest Colorado Council of Governments
Dennis Wegienek – Southwest Colorado Council of Governments
Sara Trujillo – Southwest Colorado Council of Governments

Guests in Attendance:

None

I. Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 1:33 pm, everyone introduced themselves.

II. Consent Agenda

a. 26 June, 2017 SWCCOG Meeting Minutes

The June meeting minutes were accidentally excluded from the board packet; Miriam said these minutes will be presented at the September board meeting for review and approval.

b. June 2017 Financials

Mark Garcia motioned to approve the June 2017 financials, William Tookey seconded, unanimously approved.

Dick White said he was surprised to see that some budget items are underspent, including salary and wages. Sara explained that the approved budget from August 2016 is the budget in QuickBooks. Because this budget has changed significantly, the budget versus actual will not be accurate, but Sara cannot input a budget other than what was last approved by the board. However, Sara said she recently did a budget versus actual with the updated 2017 budget numbers presented to the board in March 2017 (not an amendment but simply an update) and the budget is on track and actually looking better as the updated budget estimated a deficit of -\$26,000, and with some small adjustments and the \$5,000 fee for service from the RHA, the deficit estimate is now at -\$20,000.

III. Reports

Director's Report

Miriam said there were only 2 weeks between the last director's report and this one due to vacation, so there is not much to report. Miriam did share some pictures from her Alaskan vacation.

Broadband Report

Miriam reported that the Colorado Telehealth Network (CTN) approached the COG about assisting with the FCC grant application. Previously Miriam had reported talking to CTN about them completing the complicated application but CTN's fee is 5%, which is a large fee on a \$40 million application that is not covered by the grant. CTN is willing to discuss a reduced flat rate fee that may be something covered by a DoLA grant. Miriam said she will gather more information from CTN and have the board decide in September or October if we want to apply ourselves or through CTN.

Miriam said she is continuing work on the aggregation of services. Mammoth bought Skywerx and is a wholesaler, which will help negotiations and providing services. The cost could be reduced to \$1 per Mb depending on how many gigabytes are aggregated together. The goal is to have this sorted out by quarter 1 of 2018.

Miriam reported that Century Link will be attending the September COG board meeting to discuss the CAFII funding and how they are using or not using those funds in our area. More and more residents are stating that they are losing services. Miriam said another concern is that Century Link was previously using county-wide areas for developing new infrastructure but are reporting on municipal levels. For example, Durango is not eligible for the CAFII funding project because they are not an underserved or unserved area; however, Century Link is reporting to the FCC that they increased broadband in Durango. John said the Executive Committee talked about this and the efficacy of which Century Link is performing that led to the decision to ask Century Link to attend a meeting and discuss. Miriam said members of the state legislature will be attending as well. John encouraged all members to attend the September meeting and bring any and all elected officials. Miriam said she will talk with the county about reserving the board room for this meeting. William suggested inviting Region 9 and other economic development organization to this meeting. Miriam will send out invites.

Miriam reported that there may be a transfer of Eagle Net assets. The National Telecommunication Information Association (NTIA) does not want to break up the network so is working to see where assets could be transferred. Miriam will keep the board updated as more information is known.

Karen Sheek said she recently attended the Club 20 meeting in Montrose where Century Link proposed a resolution for government un-involvement in broadband matters as broadband should not be considered a utility. As Miriam said previously, Club 20 did not vote on this resolution. Karen said other items were discussed such as easements and how to change the use of easements to accommodate internet and electricity among other things. There has been a state successful in the restructuring of easements that could serve as a blue print for Colorado. Karen said she has been asked to serve on a broadband development board; the first meeting will be sometime in October. Lastly, Karen reported that public private partnerships were discussed at the Club 20 meeting. It was emphasized that rural area folks need to better educate their state legislators.

Transportation Report

Jessica reported that the TPR met in the morning. There was a presentation on expected impacts of SB267. There was also a presentation from CDOT regarding preparation for the

statewide planning processes. CDOT will be doing a series of trainings. Miriam said she will send out the presentations to COG members via email.

VISTA Report

Dennis reported that the RREO grant is now complete with all funds spent. Teachers are looking at curriculums and how to incorporate recycling into their education plans. All recycling bins have been ordered and received for classrooms to help kids learn to sort. Dennis announced that he will be moving to the Denver area and starting grad school in a couple of weeks. He thanked the board for their support throughout the last year.

IV. Discussion Items

None.

V. Decision Items

a. 26 June, 2017 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Gwen Lachelt motioned to approve the June 26, 2017 Executive Committee meeting minutes, John Egan seconded, unanimously approved.

VI. Other Items

Miriam presented thank you gifts to both Dennis and Greg.

VII. Community Updates

Karen Sheek, City of Cortez:

- There are several big construction projects underway including the county courthouse and a new facility for medical professionals closer to the hospital.
- The planning and zoning committee is looking at a 3-mile plan.

Greg Schulte, Town of Pagosa Springs:

- The town is on track to have another record year for sales tax.
- There are 2 road projects and 2 trail projects underway that should be complete this year.
- There have been a lot of improvements done to parks and installation of new playground equipment.
- A comp plan update should be complete in the next 2 months.
- Andrea Phillips was hired as the new town administrator and will be starting August 17.

Dick White, City of Durango:

- The Fire Protection District has been financially troubled by the Gallagher Amendment along with the decrease in oil and gas revenues. The city is proposing to amend their contract with the Fire Protection District in order to assist financially. In addition, the existing fire station shares a space with River City Hall, which was a temporary solution 30 years ago. A new downtown fire station and a couple city properties are being considered.
- Durango became the third Colorado municipality to receive a STAR Community rating for sustainability. An objective to provide cross training to staff will help deepen the understanding across organizations about climate goals.

Gwen Lachelt, La Plata County:

- Joanne Spina was hired as the new county manager. She had been the assistant county manager for many years. The county will advertise for a new assistant county manager in early fall.

- The EPA administrator, governor of Colorado, and Senators Bennet, Tipton, and Gardner will be in town tomorrow to do an EPA mine tour. With the EPA proposing to slash the 2018 budget by 30%, it is essential we make it known how important superfund funding is in our region.
- The county is in process to completely rewrite the land use code.
- A consultant will be doing an impact fee study as the county is considering implementing impact fees.
- The city and county had talked about a marijuana tax; however, the county decided against this as these companies cannot deduct business expenses and cannot bank because they are not legal at the federal level. The county is hoping to support these businesses.
- The county is hosting an economic roundtable on September 8 from 8:30am – 12pm. There will be a panel.
- Dick added to Gwen's report that he received an email just this afternoon from John Whitney with a press release from Governor Hickenlooper that there will be a town hall meeting after the Silverton mine tour from 2:15pm – 3:00pm. Miriam will send information to COG board members.

Lana Hancock, Town of Dolores:

- A vacant building has been purchased by the Southwest Health System.
- Escalate days is coming up next weekend.

William Tookey, San Juan County:

- A sales tax increase will be put on the November ballot. The increase amount is still being discussed but will be between 1-2%. The increase will be used solely for emergency services.
- The county is overwhelmed with OHV issues as these vehicles are aggressive on the back county roads to the point where 2-wheel drive vehicles cannot access any longer; roads need repair.

Fred Brooks, Town of Mancos:

- Mancos days has completed and was successful.
- The school system got a grant for \$19 million that will be matched with a \$5.4 bond issue. The bond will be put on the November ballot.
- A street study was conducted and some stop signs removed as every intersection was a four-way stop.
- There have been proposals to pave a couple sections of road. This has been met with some opposition.
- The town is looking to do a land use code as some ordinances are from 15 years ago.
- The town is doing well without an administrator so plans to continue without and reassess the need at the beginning of next year.

Mark Garcia, Town of Ignacio:

- Ignacio will be going out for a recycling RFP.
- There had been a public outreach to build support for a home rule charter commission; unfortunately, this did not work out and the town will not be moving forward with this endeavor.
- The town is about to wrap up their branding and wayfinding signage study.

William Tookey motioned to adjourn the meeting, Mark Garcia seconded, unanimously approved.

The next meeting is September 7, 2017.

End 2:38 pm