



ASSOCIATED GOVERNMENTS  
OF NORTHWEST COLORADO

MINUTES

**AGNC BOARD OF DIRECTORS & MEMBER MEETING**

**November 15, 2017**

**9:00 am – 1:30 pm**

**Rio Blanco County Courthouse, 555 Main Street, Meeker, CO 81641**

Pledge of allegiance

**Call to order and introductions**– Chairman, Ray Beck Called the meeting to order at 9:07 am; introductions were made.

Approval of minutes: Si Woodruff made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; Duncan McArthur seconded the motion; motion passed.

**Financial report:** Bonnie Petersen presented the financial report; revenue continues to be ahead of budget, however, October expenses were slightly more than budget due to the ED Summit and EDD project expenses. Net Income continues to be favorably ahead of budget and it is anticipated that the year will end with positive overall net income. Mike Foreman moved to approve the financials; Andy Key seconded the motion; motion passed.

2017 Budget Resolution Consideration: In reviewing the 2017 budget, some expense items may be exceeded so a request for additional funding was presented to address those potential overages. The 2017 budget was approved without line items for revenue and expenses associated with the EDA grant as well as the ED Summit. Also presented were items to address this issue as a modification to the 2017 budget. Mike Samson moved to amend the budget as presented and to approve the supplemental funding request in the amount of \$47,460.00. Jeff Rector seconded the motion; motion passed.

**Project and Committee Reports:**

Dinosaur Welcome Center – Cheryl McDonald provided a written report for DWC (see attachment A) and provided highlights for the center over the past month. The Center visitation has slowed significantly, there have been a lot of hunters in November; the center acts as a liaison for hunters to help connect them to CPW, etc. The restroom update will have to be postponed as the company that was being considered for the update has gone out of business. The Governor's conference was in Grand Junction and was well done; the 2018 conference will be in Vail. Cheryl continues to need ideas on recruiting volunteers for the DWC. The center closes for the winter on November 30, 2017.

Area Agency on Aging - Dave Norman provided an update on AAoA matters. A caregiver conference was hosted in November and provide guidance on taking care of oneself and others. Law Day was hosted in Glenwood Springs, Steamboat Springs and Moffat County; all were well attended. The AAoA fiscal situation is still unknown; at the AGNC meeting in October, AAoA received notice that partial program funding would be coming through, but the organization has not received the letter stating the funds will be available. Without confirmation of funding, the AAoA will only have enough funds to continue programs through December of 2017 after that, all programs will have to cease. Someone needs to step in at the state level to address this critical situation – Dave and Bonnie will have a conference call with the state to determine the status of funding and escalate the matter to the federal level if necessary.

Government Relations - Dianna and Richard Orf provided an overview of bills expected to be introduced in the 2018 legislative session. (See written report attachment B) The Committee on County Courthouse and County Jail Funding and Overcrowding Solutions will recommend three bills and a resolution in the next session. Bill A would provide a grant program for jail construction or renovation in addition to grants for improvements to court facilities. Bill B would set the reimbursement rate for housing inmates at an amount double the current rate. The annual cost is estimated to be \$15 million. Bill C would require the Division of Criminal Justice to consult with the Office of the State Court Administrator to operate a tele justice program which the county and district courts would be encouraged to use. Resolution A urges Congress to amend the law concerning Medicaid eligibility of incarcerated individuals so that persons detained in state and local facilities but have not been convicted of a crime retain their Medicaid eligibility until conviction.

The Transportation Legislative Review Committee recommended two bills. One requires the Department of Revenue to promulgate rules in order to allow a private provider to perform expedited vehicle registration for Class A commercial vehicles to streamline and speed up the registration process. The second bill requires commercial driving schools to include recognition, prevention and reporting of human trafficking.

The Wildfire Matters Interim Committee recommended two bills; one would continue the committee and expand its charge. The second changes the penalty for leaving an unattended campfire or failing to extinguish it from a class 2 petty offense and a \$50 fine to a class 3 misdemeanor, punishable by a minimum \$50 fine and maximum of six months in jail or a \$750 fine, or both. The bill also removes the requirement that counties post certain notices related to unattended campfires.

FirstNet Colorado – the state is trying to get ready for the implementation of this public safety network and the looming question is whether the state should opt-in to the program, take no action or opt-out of the program and create their own network. The Governor needs to make a decision by December 28, 2017. There are several concerns that the network being proposed will not adequately address rural areas and the federal government wants to exclude public lands from being used for network placement. Local governments are concerned that this will become another unfunded mandate and will create financial hardships. The US Department of Commerce has brought the FirstNet proposal forward – AGNC members need to understand the project more completely; staff will try to convene a meeting with the appropriate entities as quickly as possible.

The Governor's budget was released in November, there are no big surprises; it does include \$4 million for AAoA. There is no funding for transportation, any available funds were put toward education. There is a \$1.5 million offset to address the impacts of the civil forfeiture bill from last session – the funds will be managed through a grant program. AQCC considered regulations last month to address non-attainment areas and there was concern the regulations would be issued with a statewide focus, however, they were issued with a focus on the Front Range. The regulations directed that a non-attainment meeting be convened with stakeholders to determine what can be done statewide. Consideration is being made to have the state adopt California emissions standards. The PUC is on the path to consider the early retirement of two coal fired power plants in Pueblo; while it does not impact coal mined in Colorado, the early closure could have negative ramifications for coal plants in NW Colorado. July 18, 2018, is the projected timeframe for the PUC to have a decision. Utah is considering regulations to address methane emissions in that state – the emissions in NE Utah have long been considered the source for non-attainment issues in Rio Blanco county; the EPA has recognized that out of state non-attainment issues have impacted NW Colorado and are not enforcing ozone standards as of now.

### **2018 Meeting Schedule:**

Two potential 2018 AGNC Board meeting schedules were presented for consideration; one maintains the meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month, the second would change the meetings to the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month. The conflict that resulted in consideration of the alternate Thursday schedule has been resolved and is no longer an issue. The group agreed to continue the meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month with an adjustment in the April and June dates due to conflicts with other events on those months. It was also decided that the July meeting would be held in New Castle. A discussion was held regarding the scheduling of the weekly legislative calls during the session; the members agreed that 8:30 a.m. Thursday morning is still the best time for the weekly legislative calls so that will be the schedule for the 2018 legislative session.

### **EDA/CEDS Update:**

Pattie Snidow with USDA and Tiffany Pehl, AGNC Program Administrator discussed the status of the planning project for the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Patti reviewed the presentation she shares with groups when discussing economic development and doing planning work. The presentation recapped:

- Why communities engage in economic development and the fiscal impacts of doing so;
- The key components businesses use when choosing a site for development;
- What businesses need in a successful business and marketing climate;
- The need in communities for a robust innovation and entrepreneurship infrastructure.

Tiffany reviewed the outline for the development of the regional CEDS. A CEDS Core Committee will be identified to aid in developing various sectors of the strategy. Three regional meetings will be held to 1) create a regional SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats), 2) review regional interconnectivity with existing economic development plans and potential regional goals and objectives, identify gaps in existing plans and 3) final review of the CEDS document. Between the first and second regional meetings, individual county meetings will be hosted to review and discuss local economic development topics in relation to potential regional efforts. The process needs to be a robust effort with significant public input from around the region and will need to include a broad base of stakeholders. The CEDS plan must undergo a 30-day public comment period prior to submission which may lead to an extension request from EDA since the funding for this project was made available three months after the approval was received.

### **4R (Rural Response, Recovery & Resiliency):**

Trish Thibido is the Manager of the 4R program at the Department of Local Affairs. Trish introduced herself, shared her background and reviewed the history and development of the 4R program. The program is managed through DOLA and is being piloted in eight (8) rural counties – Moffat, Rio Blanco, Routt, Grand, Clear Creek, Montrose, Delta, Gunnison. The counties were identified based on industry distress; the lead partners in the pilot are DOLA, OEDIT, CDLE, and DNR. The goal of the project is to determine priorities for the communities in the 8 counties for the next two to three years and where more resources are needed. Trish will also take over management of the REDI process which is a statewide program. Trish would like to get to know the NW Colorado region better and this meeting is a first step in that process.

### **Federal Delegation Updates:**

George Rossman provided an update for Congressman Tipton's office regarding the vote on tax reform and the Omnibus appropriation package – the package will hopefully pass by December 8. DACA legislation may be attached to the Omnibus package. Staff had very good input during the office hours held across the region. Health care has been on the back burner, although, new premiums have gone out and there are many calls coming in due to significant price escalation – there is no timeline on an Obamacare repeal.

Betsy Bair provided an update for Senator Gardner's office. Issues include the continued concerns related to North Korea; there is a link on the Senator's website to allow for input on the tax reforms being considered; two new FERC appointees are going through the process; and the BLM headquarters office move.

### **Colorado Broadband Office Update:**

Director, Anthony Neal-Graves, with OIT made a presentation regarding his goals for the Broadband Office which includes:

- Greater collaboration across agencies and partnerships with local government and private industry;
- Increase the percentage of **rural households** with access to broadband to 85% by 2018; 100% by 2020 (current penetration is 77%);
- Identify and support legislative solutions in the 2018 session;
- Develop a state fiber plan;
- Support local access to grants and other programs to fund infrastructure.

### **Administrative Update**

Bonnie Petersen noted the recent trip to Washington, D.C. and asked Commissioner Samson to provide an update on the trip. The AGNC group included Commissioners Samson from Garfield County, Bolton from Rio Blanco County, Cook from Moffat County, Pugliese from Mesa County and Executive Director, Bonnie Petersen. The group met with Deputy Secretary of Interior, David Bernhardt, who indicated that there may be a way for the Anvil Points funds to be distributed administratively under the Federal Mineral Lease Act. They are working toward that end. The amount of a potential distribution was not available at the time of the meeting, although the Deputy Secretary indicated it would be the amount remaining from the dollars collected after payment was made for the cleanup of Anvil Points, the payment to Department of Energy and any rescissions withheld. Commissioner Samson noted that this was the most productive meeting he has experienced in D.C. He noted that the Deputy Secretary said that they don't want to keep other people's money in reference to the Anvil Points funds. He noted that we also discussed sage grouse and the efforts underway regarding plans for management of the species, Jordan Cove, the BLM headquarters move and more. The group also met with Department of Energy representatives regarding assistance with marketing the natural gas resources available in the region. The contingent also met with Rosalyn Leighton and William Kirkland, White House political affairs and local government liaisons to discuss the items of concern. These representatives expressed support for the issues being addressed with DOI and DOE and offered their assistance.

### **New Business:**

*Next Meeting will be February 21 in Rifle, CO Venue TBD*

Meeting was adjourned at 1:34 pm.

**Attendance:**

Mike Samson, Garfield County  
Tim Redmond, Town of Hayden  
Pattie Snidow, USDA Rural Dev.  
Dianna Orf, Orf & Orf, PC  
Richard Orf, Orf & Orf, PC  
Betsy Bair, U.S. Senator Gardner  
Peter Brixius, Town of Rangely  
Trish Thibodo, DOLA  
Andy Key, Town of Rangely  
Duncan McArthur, City of Grand Junction  
Michael Hawley, Jones & Demille Eng.  
Si Woodruff, Rio Blanco County  
Jeff Rector, Rio Blanco County  
Jeff Comstock, Moffat County  
Katelin Cook, Rio Blanco County  
Amy Provstgaard, Battlement Mesa Svc. Assoc.  
Don Cook, Moffat County  
George Rossman, Congressmen Tipton  
Konnie Billgren, Rangely Chamber  
Ray Beck, Moffat County  
Cheryl McDonald, Colorado Welcome Center  
Dave Norman, AAoA of NWCO  
Kim Herwick, AGNC  
Tiffany Pehl, AGNC  
Grady Hazelton, Town of New Castle  
Mike Foreman, City of Craig  
John Justman, Mesa County  
Kimberly Bullen, DOLA  
Brandon, Congressman Tipton