



ASSOCIATED GOVERNMENTS
OF NORTHWEST COLORADO

MINUTES

AGNC BOARD OF DIRECTORS & MEMBER MEETING

July 21, 2021

9:00 am to 1:30 pm

ZOOM: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2510562431> **Password:** 2462

PHONE: +1 (669) 900-6833 **Meeting ID:** 251 056 2431 **Password:** 2462

Call to order – Mike Samson, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:10 am. Mike introduced himself and asked everyone on the Zoom call and in the room to do the same.

Approval of Minutes – Chris Nichols made a motion to approve the June minutes. Cody Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Financial report: Bonnie Petersen provided an overview of the financials for June. Revenues exceeded budget for June largely due to invoicing in June for non-member EZ administration fees. Expenses were below budget as some anticipated expenses related to the CARES Act grant were not incurred. Net income, while still negative, was better than budget largely as a result of items mentioned above. The balance sheet reflects total assets of \$525,841.09 and, as of July 20th, accounts receivable total \$75,704.63. It was noted that the reimbursement from EDA may need to be revised as the amount due has increased. The other large outstanding invoice is to Routt County for administration fees; staff has not received any communication from Routt County regarding the invoice to date.

There was discussion about how to handle the collection of the Routt County invoice. Chris Nichols asked at what point do we stop providing service. Gary Moyer said it was important that we not start the process over. Cody Davis volunteered to reach out to one of the Routt County Commissioners that he has a good relationship with. Staff and the board will follow Cody's lead on the effort.

Cody Davis moved to approve the financial report; Ken Kreie seconded the motion; the motion passed.

Project and Committee Reports:

Area Agency on Aging -- Heather Jones

Heather provided an update for AAoA which can be found as Attachment A to this document. Garfield County is opening some dining sites at the beginning of August. A Senior Law Day is planned for October 15th at the El Jebel Community Center; registration begins September 1. Heather is working with the State Unit on Aging to draft policy/guidelines funding provided through SB290. \$15 million was allocated through that bill and the funds have to be spent by 2022. The House Appropriations Committee approved a FY2022 Funding bill that will increase supportive services, nutrition, caregiver, evidence-based disease prevention and promotion, ombudsman, ADRC and SHIP. They are working on training new providers on the reimbursement system and the State Unit on Aging database. Garfield County will be having a caregiver conference on September 17. They participated in the Colorado Access to Justice Listening Tour. They are trying to identify barriers for older adults and how to address them. Aging and Disability Resource Colorado met their goals for the year so AAoA earned their incentive funds. Christina Oxley is doing a webinar on age-friendly workplaces on August 24 – seminar will encourage businesses to make their workplace friendly for older workers.

Legislative Update – Richard Orf, Orf & Orf

Richard provided an update on the latest going on with the legislature. Interim committees are scheduled to meet in the August/September timeframe. Federal funding to the state is being addressed on a ballot initiative to make sure the funds go through the legislature and not just the Governor. There's also a ballot initiative to address property tax changes. There is still a lot of discussion about cruelty to animals. The issue may go before a title board in 2022. There is going to be a Water Congress in Steamboat in August to discuss water resources. The Dredge and Fill issue has been temporarily put aside. It will be discussed at the Water Congress. The Reintroduction of the Wolves is still being discussed. CPW is moving forward with the meetings to discuss. There is an effort to get businesses to encourage employee trip reduction – carpools, buses, work from home. Was intended for metro area but now moving to rest of state. AQCC staff in last 48 hours produced a program to make program voluntary – which will anger advocates - but is the staff recommendation; they may not stick with it. There are a lot of questions about how such a program would be enforced if made mandatory.

Mike Samson asked if Richard had heard anything about the legislative change regarding Spring Born Lettuce Company in Silt. Proponents want to pursue that in some form. Richard said there is a water issue between Florida and Georgia in the federal courts that could set a precedent for the west. We should keep our group intact regarding this legislative issue.

There was also a question about the business personal property tax status. He said it is an intricate code and the Governor is trying to reduce personal and business property tax rates by eliminating credits and exemptions. The business personal property tax is out of local control hands now, and we should be sure to talk to assessors to be sure backfill is appropriate.

Jeff Comstock asked about the status of the wolf issue. Richard said that CPW is doing outreach now. He also said that the Stakeholder groups are saying that the full timeframe will be used. Legally they cannot take longer than was stated on the ballot, and the ballot initiative cannot be undone. They're looking at where on the Western Slope the wolves would be reintroduced. He said that the legislature understands that there is a lot of trepidation regarding this in our part of the state. There is a strategy to make sure there is funding for stock losses to protect the livestock producers.

Resolution Supporting COFWA Principles – Nancy Fishing

Bonnie Petersen presented a Resolution to the membership adopting the COFWA principles. Nancy discussed how important drinking water is and how we need to include engineers in conversations about forest health. Nancy said they have separate resolutions that address mitigation. She is working to connect the dots between healthy forests and the water from our faucets.

Chris Nichols made a motion to approve the resolution and Cody Davis seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

State Treasurer & CLIMBER Loan Fund Update – State Treasurer Dave Young

Treasurer Young provided an overview of the State Treasury and what the treasurer and his office does. He said they focus on cash management. They track transactions to make sure expenditures are covered. They also have an investment team to get the best returns. They are discussing topics that came up during the statewide listening tour.

Treasurer Young shared that he is very involved in unclaimed property and recommended that everyone check to see if they have any unclaimed property both in the state and nationwide.

He is also concerned about the unmet needs for school repair and construction.

Treasurer Young highlighted the CLIMBER Load Fund which is a \$250M small business recovery loan program. It was developed to address pandemic recovery. He encouraged small businesses to take a look to see if it would work for them. It is focused on businesses that were financially stable before the pandemic but now need help to survive or to expand. There are both loans and lines of credit available. They are offering below market interest rates. Businesses should reach out to lenders, and they will evaluate and categorize loans. The state is trying to help businesses which will then pay taxes. CHFA is the loan program manager. A new website was just launched. They will pay special attention to distressed areas. If there are underserved areas, they will reach out to them. They will also provide technical assistance.

AGNC Member Discussion

Anna Stout, Grand Junction Mayor Pro-Tem, said they are creating regulations for marijuana sales within the city limits. They are not wanting to undercut Palisade rates. They will probably allow 10 stores. There will be a qualification system and lottery. Grand Junction is also working on a housing needs strategy. They have been having broadband conversations but there is no update. They are working with Fruita and Mesa County.

The State Senatorial Redistricting map was the next topic of conversation. There is concern that there are many divided counties and communities. This doesn't keep communities of interest together. There is concern that counties will be pitted against one another. Staff will provide members with talking points for the upcoming public hearings with the redistricting commissions.

The Federal Senate Redistricting map puts the resort interests together. Urban areas will put 2 incumbents together. West Slope Counties remain intact for the most part.

A discussion about broadband pointed out that Region 10 is talking with a number of communities in Garfield and Mesa County about developing a fiber network to provide middle mile connectivity. Region 10 is happy to assist any local governments that need assistance. Michelle Haynes, Region 10 Director, mentioned the need for continued funding for middle mile networks. Virgil Turner mentioned that there is \$5M of ARPA going to DOLA but these funds have to be matched. They asked that AGNC help identify the differences in Broadband between communities. Senator Rankin mentioned that there were 5 bills published regarding Broadband and there is an Advisory Board Report available. They moved the Advisory Board from PUC to the Broadband Office. He said the state is going to be more aggressive in supporting broadband in rural areas. Rather than attempting to create another broadband entity, AGNC staff will work with Region10 to aide in and facilitate broadband efforts addressing gaps in that service within the region.

Senator Rankin Update

Senator Rankin gave a debriefing on the legislative session. He said it was a one-sided legislature, very bipartisan. This year things went progressive. 623 bills were introduced through committee. He sponsored 42. He said the budget was the worst until federal funding started. He confirmed that the war on rural Colorado does exist. Senator Rankin is now the Co-chair of the Education Leadership Council and is tasked with putting together the vision for the future of education. He said that there are plans to set up a state-run health insurance program to compete with private insurance. He also said that there is no plan to replace the severance taxes that will go away as oil and gas production declines. The Senator said that ARPA will bring \$27B to Colorado, with \$3.8B going directly to the state. There are 3 committees working on disbursement of the funds: Housing, Health, and Economic Development. He is concerned with the forest fires and is meeting with fire chiefs on approach to take. He said air quality and water are both negatively impacted by the fires.

Federal Delegation Updates

Hogan Peterson, with Representative Boebert's office, said the Congresswoman introduced a bill for comprehensive forest and fire management legislation. The fires happening now are larger and emitting more carbon than vehicles. The bill will mandate tree thinning and management. Hogan said that Secretary Haaland is going to be in Grand Junction on Friday to discuss whether the BLM HQ will stay in Grand Junction.

New Business: *Next Meeting August 18, 2021, Fruita Community Center, 324 N. Coulson St., Fruita, CO, 81521*

Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 1:39 pm.

Attendance:

Betsy Bair, Community Hospital
Ray Beck, Moffat County
John Bristol, Steamboat Springs Chamber
of Commerce

Cory Bryndal, Region 10 Broadband
Coordinator

Bill Carlson, Town of Palisade

Jeff Comstock, Moffat County

Cody Davis, Mesa County

Keely Ellis, Town of Rangely

Mandi Etheridge, Town of Meeker

Nancy Fishing, COFWA

Scott Hahn, City of Rifle

Michelle Haynes, Region 10 Director

Grady Hazelton, Town of New Castle

Laura Kay Houser, AGNC

Heather Jones, AAoA

Margie Joy, CHFA

Ken Kreie, City of Fruita

Melanie Matarozzo, Town of Collbran

Gary Moyer, Rio Blanco County

Chris Nichols, City of Craig

Richard Orf, Orf & Orf, P.C.

Christina Oxley, Colorado Workforce
Commission

Karl Paulsen, CWF

Tiffany Pehl, AGNC

Bonnie Petersen, AGNC

Hogan Peterson, Rep. Boebert's office

Joyce Rankin, Senator's wife

Bob Rankin, Senator

Mike Samson, Garfield County

Eddie Smercina, Rio Blanco County

Anna Stout, City of Grand Junction

Carolyn Tucker, Colorado Workforce
Commission

Virgil Turner, Region 10 Director of
Broadband

Melody Villard, Moffat County

Dave Young, Colorado State Treasurer

ATTACHMENT A



Updates from AAA 7/19/2021:

- Garfield County opening some dining sites at the beginning of August
- We will be having a Senior Law Day October 15th
- Working with SUA to draft policy/guidelines for SB290 \$15 million
- House Appropriations Committee approved FY2022 funding Bill
 - Increases in Supportive Services, Nutrition, Caregiver, Evidence-Based Disease Prevention & Promotion, Ombudsman, ADRC, SHIP
 - The Senate has begun its own appropriations.
- We had our first in-person meeting again for the Regional Council on Aging two weeks ago in Rifle
- We will be training new providers on reimbursement system & SUA database
- Garfield County will be having a Caregiver Conference September 17th, 9am-4pm
- AAA participated in the Colorado Access to Justice Listening Tour 21st JD
- Our ADRCs earned their incentive funds for CCT/MFTP