



**MINUTES**  
**AGNC BOARD OF DIRECTORS & MEMBER MEETING**  
**November 15, 2023**  
**9:00 am to 1:30 pm**  
**Garfield County Admin Bldg, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Meeting Room,**  
**195 W. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Rifle, CO 81650**

**ZOOM:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2510562431> **Password:** 2462  
**PHONE:** +1 (669) 900-6833 **Meeting ID:** 251 056 2431 **Password:** 2462

Pledge of allegiance

**Call to order** – Chairman Cody Davis called the meeting to order at 9:07am. Introductions were made.

**Approval of minutes** – Mike Samson made a motion to approve the October 25, 2023, meeting minutes; Bill Carlson seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

**Financial report** – Tiffany Dickenson presented the October 2023 financials. She presented the Profit and Loss reports and noted that we are still ahead in income; income included a reimbursement request for the EDS partnership planning grant; expenses included marketing over budget however we are under budget overall. She reported that we are well ahead of budget for the year, due in part to contribution project admin fees. The Balance Sheet was presented, including the AAA pass through amounts. Accounts Receivable was discussed including the amount billed to EDA for the Partnership Planning grant, and the amount due from Mesa County. Tiffany reported on the check register and reported that all payments are normal. A motion to approve the financial report was made by Chris Nichols, seconded by Bill Carlson, and the motion passed unanimously.

**2024 Proposed Budget** – Tiffany Dickenson presented the adjustments that were made since last month's presentation. Increases and decreases to income and expense items were discussed, including increasing the Contribution Project admin fees, contra accounts that offset the payroll expenses which now include EZ grant, decreases to marketing items, and professional development. This gives our budget a positive outlook, with a net income of about \$14K. A motion to approve the 2024 budget was made by Bill Carlson, seconded by Grady Hazelton, and the motion passed unanimously.

**CD investments** were discussed. Tiffany Dickenson reported that Edward Jones cannot hold government funds, so we obtained a rate sheet from ANB, and Tiffany recommended that we invest in CDs with ANB at the same proposed amounts agreed upon at the last meeting. The ANB rates were presented to the board. Bill Carlson commented that local bank rates are going to be lower than Edward Jones. Bonnie Petersen suggested that we check rates with credit unions. Tiffany said she can investigate the rates and communicate with the board through email. Tiffany asked for a vote to apply for mini grants from DOLA for 2024. A motion was made to approve AGNC applying for the 2024 mini grants from DOLA by Mike Samson, seconded by Doug Overton, and the motion passed unanimously.

**2024 AGNC Meeting Schedule** - Tiffany presented the proposed AGNC Schedule for 2024. Dates and locations were discussed. She reported that the June 26<sup>th</sup> meeting was scheduled for Montrose to coordinate with the JOLT energy summit during the next 2 days. She noted that a couple of locations may change, but the dates should be set. We are working on finalizing locations in Collbran and Meeker. Ray Beck commented that he is grateful for our support to JOLT and thinking outside the box to hold the meeting in June and suggested a possible meet and greet the evening after the AGNC meeting. A motion was made to approve the 2024 AGNC meeting schedule by Chris Nichols, seconded by Bill Carlson, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Project and Committee Reports:**

**Area Agency on Aging – Heather Jones**, NW CO AAoA Director provided an overview of AAA efforts. Heather apologized for not being in person due to not feeling well. She said that AAA received the fiscal year report, with one compliance issue and they submitted a correction plan. She said that AAA sat on an Intergeneration Housing Project in Mesa County with Child Welfare, and they were awarded a \$100K grant to do a feasibility study and predevelopment planning; they are looking to rehab a current structure or build a new one. She reported that she did an interview with public radio regarding a letter to Gov. Polis about current the financial state of AAA across the state and how AAA services keep individuals in the home, and that underfunded services are not keeping pace. She reported that Gov. Polis’ budget does not increase any funding to AAA. She said they will continue to advocate for more funding. She spoke about the decrease in the workforce due to aging, as well. She also spoke about the financial contributions that older adults make to the state. She said they are reaching out to the joint budget committee to see if they can get an increase. She reported that they received the federal carryover funds from fiscal year 2023; they have reached out to their providers to see where they can put these funds; the budget sheets are attached to the AAA report. She asked for approval from the board for the distribution of the carryover funds. Bonnie Petersen commented that she finds the lack of funding from the state of Colorado is very disturbing, and that we are losing a working population. A motion to approve the carryover funds was made by Chris Nichols, seconded by Bill Carlson, and the motion passed unanimously. Bill Carlson commented that he heard the radio interview, and he was impressed. Heather’s report is attached as Appendix A.

**CDLE Workforce Update – Carolyn Tucker** reported and shared a PowerPoint which can be found here: [https://agnc.org/wp-content/uploads/Workforce-Presentation-AGNC\\_10.25.23.pdf](https://agnc.org/wp-content/uploads/Workforce-Presentation-AGNC_10.25.23.pdf). Carolyn reported on unemployment rates for the region, which are all around 3%. She spoke about stresses on the workforce including housing, childcare, transportation, job choices, skills deficit, inflation, and the “great reckoning”. She reported on the long-term demographic trends affecting the work force that are still with us: increased retirements, decreased birth rates, aging population, population growth, future growth concentrated in metro areas, skills deficit, and that Colorado is no longer as competitive as in the past. She said the bottom line is that not as many workers are available to work and they have more choice. She said these trends will likely continue for some time. She reported on workforce development activities including counseling employers on recruitment and retention strategies, and upskilling current employees. She spoke about the economic development activities including Just Transitions, Routt County EDP, NWCDC, CRVEDC, Prosper Glenwood, and GJEP. She reported on program updates including IDEA Grant, WBL grants available, Employer Hiring Toolkit at [nwcworkforce.cdle.co](http://nwcworkforce.cdle.co), and that Colorado was named U.S. Tech Hub for quantum computing. Tiffany Dickenson asked if Carolyn knew who is heading up the quantum computing group so she can have them present to us. Carolyn said that she has a contact and will send it to Tiffany. Tiffany said she is thankful for Carolyn and the work she does.

**Broadband Update – Corey Bryndal** reported an update with a slide presentation. He showed the fiber map to improve service in Western Colorado. He reported that in the AGNC region they have added towns from Fruita to Glenwood Springs. He talked about how Region 10’s efforts include the areas in AGNC. He said that most of the lateral lines into the towns are under construction. He said that Grand Junction is a corner of the ring, and is very important. He spoke about MOUs and leases for the CNL’s in each location. He said they have placed orders for

equipment, have received routers, and are awaiting approval of funding from EDA for backbone fiber. He said they are targeting activation for the networks for the end of Q2 2024. Mistalynn Meyeraan asked about internet access beyond Collbran up to Mesa and Powderhorn. Corey said he thinks that is planned in later stages and would be a future project. Bonnie Petersen asked about additional federal funding to extend broadband and if he knows how we can access those dollars. She asked who the providers are for the small communities. Corey said most of the funding requires that the infrastructure is in place first, including middle mile. He said the CDF money is going through right now and is in the review process. He said the next and larger amount of money coming to Colorado is the BEAD funding, focusing on last mile. He said they were hoping to find a way to apply for this funding for these middle mile programs. He said that the vendors are all very interested in getting into the facilities in the towns. He said that one of his administrative challenges is getting these leases and MOUs in order. He said he could use about 4 more people to help with the administration of the program. He said if he had the funding, he thinks they could find the people to fill these needs. He also spoke about the additional funding to complete the ring, especially in the southern part of the state. Bill Carlson said that he has some concerns about permitting and NEPA regarding putting the fiber under the canal into Palisade, and he wonders if Clearnet understands the process to obtain the permit. Corey said he can check with Clearnet to see where they stand in the process, but that he does not have a lot of information on it. Mike Samson said he is thankful on behalf of Garfield County for the work that Corey has done on their behalf, as well as AGNC. Corey said he enjoys working with all the communities. Cody Davis commented that he is also very grateful.

**Legislative Update – Richard, Ted and Dianna Orf.** Richard talked about Proposition HH and that it failed at the poles by a wide margin of 60/40. He reported that the governor called a special session to begin on Friday, November 17. He said that are 2 to 4 competing ideas: they can change the statewide assessment rate, and they can change the exemptions of value of property, but they need to figure out how to backfill local governments. He spoke about the importance of the local government budget cycles and having answers so that local governments can budget appropriately. He said that any solution will only be for one or two years. He said the legislature is also looking at leveling Tabor refunds as well. Ted Orf commented that the proposed \$75K property exemption will impact the rural areas more than the cities, due to the differences in property values. He also said there is not a lot of money in the budget available for backfill. He said they need feedback so they can lobby on Friday. Tiffany Dickenson said that she sent an email out last night with the questions that the Orfs need answers to for Friday, and she asked that they have these answers by end of day on Thursday. Dianna commented that they may go to severance taxes for the backfill needs. She said there are several different cash funds they may look at using. Bonnie Petersen asked if they can use Tabor funds using fungibility, and Richard said they are required to refund to the people. Ray Beck commented that they need to leave it alone. Mike Samson commented that he believes they will take severance monies. He said that one of the major ways to help the state is to help and encourage the extraction industries. He asked if the democratic party could see that they need to rethink how to help the rural communities, and in turn help the state. Perry Will said that the majority party is not interested in this. Dianna commented that we do have a couple of democratic leaders on the western slope that have been helpful. She also said they have reshuffled committees, in some ways making this even harder for the western slope. Dianna said they are very concerned about climate issues and may not be thinking through all the ramifications of the bills being brought forth. Richard commented about applying statewide standards for air quality and that this is hurting the western slope. Ray Beck spoke about inviting the legislators to come together to talk about the western slope needs. Tiffany said she would like to put together a meeting towards the end of December. Due to lack of time, Diana quickly reviewed the attached report with more information. Richard said the theme for the session with most likely be affordable housing. The Orfs' Legislative Update is attached as Appendix B.

Meeting adjourned at 10:32 am for EDD Meeting

Meeting reconvened at 11:12 am

**AGNC Rebranding – Teri Cavanaugh with SYNC, LLC** presented the rebranding work that has been done for AGNC. She gave some background on the marketing work she has done in the past. She spoke about the brand experience, including character, values, behavior, actions, interactions, product/service offerings. She said the pieces

of the brand include story, logo, visuals, press, communications, and marketing. She said that brands have tangible value, top brands share important cap valuation qualities, and hard assets are not generally one of them. She said that AGNC is a collective with trust, credibility, access, differentiation, voice, and impact. She said that this whole exercise started with the ad that we purchased for site selector magazine. She shared the ad and spoke about how we identified characteristics of our region with a distinctive story. She talked about the [gowest.life](http://gowest.life) new website link, the new map, etc. She then spoke about the need for our website to communicate our story and be more user friendly. She talked about the website assessment including purpose alignment, navigation, easy access to content, conversion, ease of use, featured projects, online registration, engagement, search optimization, branding, story, and ease of content update. She spoke about our brand expression: fierce, loyal, pioneering. She spoke about a soundbite, "It's a new frontier, we champion pioneers." She spoke about tightening and clarifying the story, including our mission statement. She spoke about our value statement and position statement. She said the brand pillars that came from that are advocacy, growth, navigation, and collaboration. She said that AGNC is about service to members, not to the market. She spoke about the work AGNC did on the CSBR road trip and the Trapper Mine brochure and website, as a result of our marketing strategy. Bonnie Petersen asked about the cost for the website, and Teri said we have gotten some good bids between \$15K and \$30K. Tiffany Dickenson said we are planning to use the CEDS grant to fund this. Tiffany commented that Routt County asked for a different EDD logo to differentiate AGNC from the AGNC EDD, and that we are working on the logo and will have that ready for presentation later. Tiffany said that we have extra copies of the magazine with the ad and will bring those up at lunchtime for everyone.

**DNR Wolverines Presentation – Daphne Gervais** joined via zoom. She presented that DNR and CPW are interested in reintroducing wolverines, and it is going to be a legislative priority. She introduced the CPP team of experts with her: Brian Dreher, Jake Ivan, Dave Klute, Jonathan Boydston, Sarah Hamming, and Tim Brass. She said they wanted to start with a brief presentation and then open it to questions. Jake Ivan gave a slide presentation on Wolverine Restoration, including history and background information on the species. He said that Wolverines are the world's largest terrestrial weasel, solitary, and maintain a large territory. He shared a map of the wolverine range. He said that they are well adapted to cold snowy environments because of food storage and denning. He said the bulk of what they eat is already dead, however they do hunt live prey like marmots and squirrels. He said they breed during the summer with delayed implantation and birth occurs in February and March. He said the litters are 2-4 every other year, and females establish territory next to their mothers, while young males disperse hundreds of miles away. He spoke about the differences between wolverines and wolves including size, territory, feeding patterns, and the numbers in the lower 48 states. He spoke about the history of wolverines in Colorado. He presented a map of historical locations from 1827-1960, with several locations in Colorado. He said they were extirpated around 1919 due to trapping and poisoning and were state endangered in 1973. He said there is no confirmed presence from surveys that were done from 1979-1996. He presented a map of wolverine habitat and indicated that there are a lot of good habitats within the state. He said that Colorado represents the largest block of remaining unoccupied habitat, with 20% of estimated capacity of the western U.S. and is isolated from other blocks of occupied habitat. He said that they think Colorado could hold a range of 100-180 wolverines. He spoke about the benefits of wolverines to Colorado including restoring a native species to its historical range, increase population size in the lower 48, potentially by 33% or more, improving redundancy resilience, and representation, improving genetic diversity, and establishing a population in a potential climate refugium as Colorado is high country projected to weather climate change better than other parts of country. Ray Beck asked if this is a CPW initiative that will go to the ballot and what it will cost the taxpayers. Daphne said that this legislation is a way to get away from ballot box biology. She said the bill would look to give CPW the authority to look at the process, but it is the first step in the legislative process. Dianna Orf asked why legislative authority is required. Daphne said it is a state statute because of the way wolverines are listed. She said that much of the legwork has already been done and they are looking at gathering more feedback like the conversations from today's meeting. Keith Caddy asked about the range and food sources available. Jake Ivan said the average range is 300 kilometers, and that Colorado has the food sources discussed in the slides available. Brian Dreher said that they generally live at high elevation, and most will be on federal lands including forest service lands. Keith asked about livestock running in high elevations and if wolverines would take a sheep or lamb. Brian said they have reached out to the states north of us and they only know of a couple of instances where a larger animal was killed by wolverines, and they have not found it to be

common. He said they still need to investigate grazing allotments to better understand this piece of the reintroduction. Mike Samson asked about their aggressive nature to animals and humans, and asked that they consider the cost of money, time, and effort to implement the reintroduction. He said he is concerned with the decimation of the deer and elk herds in Colorado and asked that they concentrate on these deer and elk herds instead of bringing in another species. Bonnie Petersen asked where the Wolverines will be sourced from and how many would be introduced to reach the target number. Jake said they have source populations from several locations in North America and they anticipate between 40 and 45 individuals to release that can grow to the target population. Bonnie asked what the population number is outside of the lower 48, and Jake said he thinks it's around 10K. Dianna Orf asked if the state reintroduces them, will there be restrictions on land-based uses because of their listing. Brian said that they will work with Fish and Wildlife because of the species listing, and they are waiting on a new species listing to determine a path forward. Dianna said she thought about mining, sheep grazing, and that there would be a concern on these land use activities. Brian said they plan to have meetings to get more feedback from local communities, but that they need more clarity about the listing decision. Richard Orf said thank you for the presentation, and asked what the general feeling is, if all goes well, about when this will take place. Brian said there are still a lot of unknowns including NEPA for federal lands use, and this will dictate the timeline. Bonnie asked them to also look strongly at the impact on hunting, especially for the economies in Northwest Colorado. Brian said the hunting conservation partners will be engaged, as well. Tom Rugaard asked how this improves the quality of Colorado and what are the benefits for the taxpayers. Brian said this aligns with their mission to restore the species to the state. He said they are very mindful of the source of funds and costs to taxpayers. Perry Will spoke about how he is tired of ballot box biology and his reason for supporting this legislation is to show people the proper way to reintroduce a species. He said that they wanted to reintroduce wolverines when they reintroduced the lynx in the 1990's. He said they will do it the right way with legislation. He said he understands the concerns and knows that CPW will address them. He said it is important to do the process the correct way and not through a ballot initiative. Brian Condie commented that he is concerned about the cost of wolverine reintroduction. Richard said that if it comes from the legislation instead of the ballot box, they have the choice to appropriate the funding. Keith Caddy asked where the money will come from and asked if it's from CPW licenses and fees. Daphne said that the impact to CPW staff will be much less for wolverines than it is for wolves. Brian said they are still in the process of developing all the numbers that contribute to the cost, including NEPA and trapping for reintroduction, but it will still not be at the same level of expense as wolves. Sen. Will commented that funding would be very different from the wolves reintroduction. Mike commented that he thinks reintroducing wolves is a big mistake and is a waste of money. Keith Caddy asked if CPW is looking at increasing fees. Brian said they aren't looking at that yet and commented that they do get a lot of their funding other ways than fishing and hunting licenses. Daphne commented that CPW worked hard to lead the effort to accomplish wolves reintroduction in a strong way. Mistalynn Meyeraan commented as an outfitter that she has to answer to hunters and said that she is concerned about the taking of fawns and calves. Jake Ivan said that it does happen, but it is not common. Brian said they don't anticipate a large impact on deer and elk herds. Perry Will said it would be very low compared to bear takes on fawns and calves. Daphne put her contact information in the chat: "Please feel free to contact me with any questions or feedback: daphne.gervais@state.co.us 720-635-4705."

## **Federal Delegate Update –**

Hillary Henry with Sen. Bennet reported they have been very busy, and she is glad to be able to attend again. She said that they are seeing the BIL and IJA get on the ground. She said there is a monthly newsletter and if you need to be added to that email list please let her know. She said they would like to support getting the most money to Colorado. She said there are 8 projects in Colorado getting funding for water. She said that the broadband money had a requirement for a letter of credit, and they have heard this is a hurdle and wrote a letter and it has been announced that there will be a waiver for that requirement. She said if there are things like that they can help, and would like to hear from people. She said that Wildland Firefighters got a pay raise as part of the BIL. She said that funding is running out, so Sen. Bennet has been working hard to make sure we get a permanent fix. She said they are glad that 10J came out on time. She spoke about the farm bill and that it looks like it will not pass in 2023 and both sides of the isle are agreeing to a one-year extension while the final bill gets negotiated. Bonnie Petersen asked about the water projects and asked if Wolf Creek Reservoir was included, and Hilary said it was not. Bill Carlson

asked about irrigation ditches being updated with concrete, saving a tremendous amount of water, and asked about funding sources for these projects. Hilary said she would like to speak with him more about the projects. Ray Beck commented that money is needed for leaking spurs and invasive species. Bill commented about Tamarisk and Russian Olive and the amount of water they take, and he would like to see more education around it.

Cody Davis reported that he talked with Brad McCloud with Xcel Energy about opposition they are receiving in turning the Hayden plant into a biomass plant. He said that they are asking for a letter of support from AGNC. Cody asked if there was any opposition to the letter, and there was none. A motion to write a letter of support was made by Chris Nichols, seconded by Doug Overton, and the motion passed unanimously.

Bonnie Petersen commented that she is also tired of ballot box biology. She asked if we could introduce an initiative to stop bringing wildlife reintroductions to the ballot. Dianna Orf said you would have to change the constitution. Ted Orf said you would have to start raising money for collection of signatures. Ray Beck said he would like to see the legislators collectively come together. Richard Orf said other organizations have similar concerns. He said it may be worthwhile to meet with these other organizations to discuss it.

Tom Rugaard encouraged everyone to attend the Eco Dwellings tour, and that it is a good alternative to attainable housing.

Cody recognized Ted Orf's birthday at the meeting.

**Administrative Update – Tiffany Dickenson** reported there is an event on Nov 30<sup>th</sup> at 4pm at the BIC in Grand Junction and encouraged everyone to attend. Richard Orf noted that January 10 is the first day of the next session. Tiffany said that the weekly calls with the Orfs will be on Thursdays once the session begins and to watch for the email invitations.

**New Business –**

*Next meeting February 21, 2024, Garfield County Administration Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Meeting Room, 195 W. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Rifle, CO 81650*

**Adjournment – meeting was adjourned at 1:23pm.**

**Attendance:**

<b>IN PERSON</b>	<b>VIA ZOOM</b>
Jeannie Caldwell	Heather Jones-Region 11 AAA
Marybel Cox	Jeff Engell - CSU Extension
Keith Caddy	Shannon Scott
Chris Nichols	13039562574 (Battlement Mesa)
Ray Beck	Margie Joy CHFA-Colorado
Bill Carlson	13039562574
Grady Hazelton	Jeff Comstock
Mike Samson	13039562574
Bonnie Peterson	Bobbie Daniel
Dianna Orf	Corey Bryndal
Ted Orf	Brandon Bainer-Colorado Farm Bureau (Brandon Bainer)
Richard Orf	Drew Kramer
Perry Will	Christina Oxley, CDLE
Brian Condie	Jonathan Boydston - DNR/CPW
Lori Malsbury	Tim Brass - DNR
Cody Davis	Brian Dreher - CPW (Brian Dreher - DNR/CPW)
Tom Rugaard	Jake Ivan
Doug Overton	Daphne Gervais - DNR
Tiffany Dickenson	Sarah Hamming
Mistalynn Meyeraan	13039157869 (CPW)
Toni Barrett	



## APPENDIX A



# AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF NORTHWEST COLORADO

### Updates from AAA 11/15/2023:

- The AAA did receive our SFY24 State Unit on Aging (SUA) evaluation summary report. We had one compliance issue. One of our contracted transportation providers was completing daily inspections of their vans, and the SUA also wanted an annual inspection as well. I have already met with the provider and discussed the issue. I will work with the provider to provide a response to the SUA for the compliance issue.
- The AAA was asked to sit on an Intergenerational Housing Project in Mesa County with Child Welfare, Housing Resources of Western Colorado, The Joseph Center and Commissioner Janet Rowland. The group applied for a grant from the Next50 Foundation a couple months ago. We just heard back that we were awarded a \$100,000 grant to potentially do a feasibility study and predevelopment planning. Private real estate individuals have been approaching the group about housing options. The group is unsure if we should rehab a current structure or build a new one. This idea came about after a project started in Montrose, CO.
- At the beginning of the month, the AAA interviewed Colorado Public Radio regarding the Mesa County Commissioners letter to Governor Polis. We talked about the current financial state of AAAs across the state and how AAA contracted services keep individuals in their home and delay or prevent them from going onto Medicaid.
- Governor Polis' budget was released and there were no increases for the AAAs. "Demographic Trends and an Aging Population: While the State Demography Office indicates that Colorado's population growth will continue at a rate faster than the nation as a whole, Colorado faces a more challenging outlook related to the size of its working age population. Namely, the 65+ population is expected to grow from 16% to 21% of the State's total population by 2050 while the share of 25-54 (prime working age population) is expected to decline from 41% to 40%. As the population grows and ages, the State faces two compounding risks: (1) revenue growth will face constraints from a higher share of non-working age adults, who contribute less revenue to the State, especially as it pertains to individual income and sales taxes; (2) demand for public benefits and services will increase faster than the rate of overall population growth as older adults tend to demand higher and more expensive state services."
- We did receive our Federal Carryover funds from State Fiscal Year 2023. This is the earliest that we have ever received since the carryover since I started. I have reached out to providers to figure out how to allocate the carryover funds.



## APPENDIX B



### Associated Governments of Northwest Colorado (AGNC) Government

#### Affairs Report

November 15, 2023

#### Special Session News

With the failure of Prop HH at the polls (approximately 40/60) the Governor has called a special session dealing with limited topics. This session will meet Friday November 17 to Sunday Nov 19, unless they somehow spill over into additional days (unlikely). Rumors abound on what action the legislature may take, but their actions are somewhat limited to certain powers, such as lowering the Assessment rate (even for a single year) and extending the Assessors deadlines based on any changes they could take. They will have a window to find backfill money for whatever local and special district (K12, fire, health, etc. impacts may happen. There will not be much time for them to assess specific localized impacts, and assessment rates are dealt with a broad brush. We anticipate any policy adoption this weekend will be for one to two years maximum. This short-term approach reflects the Governor's amended Executive Order that states that certain relief provisions address only 2023. There will be a policy panel convened in 2024 to address longer term property taxes, and that will become a much broader discussion.

They will need to find money to backfill K-12 education and least certain (although not all) local governments. There are cash funds created throughout state agencies that could be tapped such as the Recycling Resources fund, the Severance Tax cash fund (which was already designated to be swept for \$50 million in the Governor's Budget). A relevant question is, what will sweeping cash funds do to the proposals for new programs? The Governor and Majority party had not contemplated the possibility of Proposition HH being defeated, so the Governor's budget request was submitted November 1 (six days before the election) based on the anticipation of the state retaining a larger portion of the TABOR funds than will now be allowed.

Bill concepts and draft bills are starting to circulate as Republicans and Democrats are negotiating approaches that are acceptable to their constituencies.

Here is what we are hearing about potential property tax legislation from our colleagues at CCI and various media sources:

#### Concepts advanced by the Democrat Majority:

- Property taxes for residential single family would keep the current assessment rate but decrease the value exemption of a home by \$75,000. (Currently, the reduction is \$15,000). Property taxes are then calculated on that reduced value.
- For multi-family residential homes, such as condos and townhomes, the value exemption would remain the same but assessment rates would be lowered from 6.765% to 6.7%.
- Commercial properties, including hotels, motels, lodging, and industry, would keep the same assessment rate but the value exemption would be increased from \$30,000 to \$50,000.
- The so-called "backfill" to protect local governments from revenue losses would use the \$200 million set aside in Senate Bill 22-238 for counties with less than 300,000 in population. That excludes the top nine largest counties by population.
- An equalized TABOR refund for 2023;
- The Earned Income Tax Credit would provide a 100% match to the Federal EITC

- Rental assistance (part of the Governor’s list) could be handled through DOLA emergency assistance (potentially \$10 - \$30 million)
- The bill would authorize Colorado to participate in a summer EBT program for qualifying families during the summer months (like benefits provided to kids during COVID) This could leverage \$35 million in federal funds. This is included because of a deadline.
- The Democrats do not yet address formation of a task force to discuss longer-term solutions (as encouraged by the Governor).

The Republicans have offered two draft bills, nearly identical. One by Sen. Barbara Kirkmeyer and Rep. Rose Pugliese would reduce the assessment rate for multi-family residential real property and residential real property to 6.5% (down from 6.765% for residential and 7.15% for multi-family residential). It would also pay for any lost revenue to public schools using general fund, and use the SB

238 money to cover local governments' revenue losses. The draft bill provided by our friends at CCI can be found at [23B-0014-11-12-23-draft.pdf \(ccionline.org\)](https://ccionline.org/23B-0014-11-12-23-draft.pdf). The Republicans do not want to use TABOR money for backfilling local governments but want to take it from the General Fund. The Governor’s budget had set \$200 million to be used if Prop HH had passed for local government relief. What was to be the source of that money?

The Republican bill establishes a committee to consider long-term solutions for property tax the 23- member group would draw on the following people: House and Senate lawmakers with local government experience; the state's property tax administrator; a local government expert appointed by one of the organizations that represents local government; a county assessor; someone with experience with special districts; county commissioners; school board representatives; and, five non-voting individuals representing several nonprofits, such as Colorado Concern, the Colorado Chamber of Commerce, realtors and building owners.

Bills for the 2024 Session. Interim committees have largely finalized their recommended bills for the upcoming session. We know there will be major moves on tax credits, Oil and gas, and housing. Legislative leadership meets today to approve bills presented by the Interim committees which is usually a simple formality. Following is a list of bills from the various committees:

**Water and Agricultural Resources**

<a href="#">Bill A</a>	Veterinary Technician Scope of Practice
<a href="#">Bill B</a>	Authorize Conservancy District Water Management
<a href="#">Bill C</a>	Agriculture & Natural Resources Public Engagement Requirement
<a href="#">Bill D</a>	Prohibit Landscaping Practices for Water Conservation
<a href="#">Bill E</a>	Providing Veterinary Services Through Telehealth
<a href="#">Bill F</a>	Study Green Infrastructure for Water Quality Management
<a href="#">Bill G</a>	Local Authority Enforce Violation of Noxious Weed Act
<a href="#">Bill H</a>	Authorizing Direct-to-consumer Sales of Raw Milk
<a href="#">Bill I</a>	Extend Wild Horse Project Appropriated Timeline

**Transportation Legislation Review Committee**

<a href="#">Bill A</a>	Vulnerable Road User Protection Enterprise
<a href="#">Bill B</a>	Child Passenger Safety and Education
<a href="#">Bill C</a>	Railroad Safety Requirements
<a href="#">Bill D</a>	Towing Carrier Regulation
<a href="#">Bill E</a>	Methods to Increase the Use of Transit

## Wildfire Matters Review

Bill 1	<a href="#">Study Biochar in Wildfire Mitigation Efforts</a>
Bill 2	<a href="#">Emergency Management Plan Individuals with Animals</a>
Bill 5	<a href="#">Assist Rural Community Wildfire-related Grant App</a>
Bill 6	<a href="#">Local Government Disaster-related Programs</a>
Bill 9	<a href="#">Extend Outreach Campaigns Wildfire Risk Mitigation</a>

## Tax Policy

<a href="#">Bill A</a>	Adjusting Certain Tax Expenditures
<a href="#">Bill B</a>	Issuance of Treasurer's Deeds
<a href="#">Bill C</a>	Lodging Property Tax Treatment
<a href="#">Bill D</a>	Tax Policy Analysis by the Legislative Branch
<a href="#">Bill E</a>	Senior Housing Income Tax Credit

## Ozone Air Quality

This committee was not authorized to draft recommendations for legislation in the 2024 session. However, the twelve member committee have heard concerns and recommendations from advocacy groups to change statutes and regulations addressing not only ozone, but air permitting processes generally to require modeling for minor stationary sources of air pollution, require greater reporting and coordination for permitting agencies, and require more extensive analysis of impacts of air pollution on disproportionately impacted communities. These recommendations are likely to be bills sponsored by individual committee members.

Minor source permitting, analyses of cumulative impacts, and impacts of mobile sources (light and medium duty vehicles and construction equipment have also been the target of concerns expressed by the committee. The committee was not granted legislative drafting authority, but individual members are almost certain to propose additional legislation for 2024 to require more stringent permitting requirements.

The Governor issued an Executive Order directing state agencies that conduct groundskeeping equipment to move away from gasoline powered equipment. Environmental group COPirg is hosting briefing session for legislators in November on the air impacts of these small engines, so it would not be surprising to see a more far-reaching legislative effort directed at the private sector in addition to the Governor's Order and Regulation 29.

## Colorado River Drought Task Force

This Task Force was established to make legislative recommendations to the General Assembly on measures to address drought impacts. The group has met across the state and will finalize a report on December 15, following final meetings on November 16 and December 7 at which time they will vote on a wide range of concepts presented and draft the report.

## Expansion of Grey Water Use

In 2013, Colorado authorized local governments to adopt ordinances and resolutions to allow the use of grey water (water from sinks) to be used for purposes such as allowed by CDPHE regulation. Local governments who wished to do so (approximately six have done so) opted into the program. Proposed legislation to be sponsored by House Speaker Julie McCluskie would change that to an "opt out" if a local government chooses

not to participate. The purpose is to incentivize the installation of grey water systems and encourage their expanded use.

#### Authority of State Architect.

FEMA requires that state construction on flood plains be insured; to be insurable that construction must hold a state or local permit approved by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The State Architect does not currently have authority to issue such permits and the purpose of the legislation (not yet drafted) is to provide that authority for a permit program and process. Unanswered are details of maintaining exemptions for certain agencies from other requirements of the State Architects' Office while covering the review and approval for insurance purposes.

#### Stripper Wells

Rep. Cathy Kipp (Fort Collins) and Sen. Faith Wintner (Westminster) plan to introduce a bill to repeal the severance tax exemption for stripper wells (oil wells that produce 15 barrels per day or less and gas wells that produce 90,000 cu feet or less per day). Their rationale is two-fold: all oil/gas producers should pay severance tax, and stripper wells may produce more air pollution than other sources. This would encourage non-economic wells to shut down - plug and abandon. We were included with representatives of other local governments to participate in a zoom on Monday to gauge our reaction to the bill which has been distributed to AGNC members. We emphasized that stripper wells are usually operated by small businesses and that any additional tax burden may result in economic consequences to local communities such as NW Colorado. We did not have information at the time on how many stripper wells exist in the AGNC region (there are likely many since these tend to be older wells), who operates them, and how much revenue they produce. Discussions are continuing.