



ASSOCIATED GOVERNMENTS
OF NORTHWEST COLORADO

MINUTES

AGNC BOARD OF DIRECTORS & MEMBER MEETING

March 18, 2020

Conducted via Zoom Link, Conference Call

9:00 am to 1:30 pm

Call to order – Ray Beck, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:08 am. Introductions were made.

Approval of Minutes – There was no quorum for the board, so approval of the minutes was tabled until the April meeting.

Financial report: Bonnie Petersen reviewed financials for end February 2020. Income for the month was ahead of budget for the month as well as year to date; total expenses are less than budgeted for the month as well as year to date and net income for the month came in at a negative \$1,685.33 versus the budgeted amount of negative \$16,954.05. Net income is ahead of budget year to date as well.

As there was not a quorum, the board postponed approval of the financial report until the April 2020 meeting.

Project and Committee Reports:

AAoA - Heather Jones Heather noted that things are changing rapidly. Most dining sites are closed and AAoA is providing alternatives. Providers have reached out to food banks for help and have had a good outpouring of assistance from other organizations to help at risk adults. The State has provided flexibility for use of funds. Doug noted that the local site is closed for walk in traffic and is very concerned about keeping vulnerable people fed. The Routt County agency on aging is providing grab and go opportunities and increasing delivery of meals. The transportation providers have flexibility to help the elderly if they need medications, groceries, etc. Obviously, everyone is trying to limit exposure; providers are dropping items off and not entering the house or apartment of the vulnerable people.

Dinosaur Welcome Center - Cheryl McDonald provided a written report included at the end of this document as exhibit A. The DWC is closed due to the COVID-19 issue until further notice. When it reopens, it will open for limited hours and without volunteers until it is safe. Cheryl will identify projects for Linda to work on so she can continue to be paid. Ray added info regarding the charging station at the center. Moffat County Commissioners signed a contract to move forward with ChargePoint to install and maintain the charging station for 6 years - at the end of that time Moffat County will assess what to do with it. The County received \$20,000 from the LMD to help offset the cost of operations for the station. Hopefully installation will start in the spring. The Dinosaur Monument welcome center will be closed due to COVID-19, but trails will be open.

Legislative report –Diana Orf Legislative Update – the budget forecast was presented on Monday afternoon; the legislature adjourned until March 30th, but nobody believes they will reconvene on that date. The legislature has asked for clarification from the Supreme Court regarding whether they can consider individual working days to meet the 120-day session mandate or if they must be consecutive.

The JBC is meeting sporadically and they met to hear the legislative council budget projections. It is clear that the state will end the year with much less revenue than originally thought. Previously, it was thought the state would have a surplus of \$800 million but will be more like \$700 million. The projection anticipates no TABOR refund in the next two years. It could be expected that the legislature will increase fees and remove exemptions - severance tax is probably at risk. Senior homestead exemptions will have to come out of general fund, they will have to fund schools so they will be looking for ways to generate cash. Economists don't know what's going to happen, they have tried to determine how other recessions have impacted revenues, but this time provides huge uncertainties. Things are worse than the forecast predicted. The downside is, that if we go into recession (the forecast does not project that) then we will be \$1.2 to \$1.8 billion in the hole. The legislature has already committed \$68 million through bills this year; they will have to look at everything they did so far to reassess what has been done given the new constraints. The team is going to maintain close electronic communication with Senator Rankin, so the legislature leaves local government severance tax alone - rural counties are being hurt significantly. Federal relief has substantial funding for the state; some things are on the upside and may provide some positive aspects. The CO health department and Governor have said there are sufficient emergency backup funds available to fight the virus. The CDC funds and stimulus through the virus relief package should provide additional help. Diana attached presentations as given to JBC in the previous email sent. O&G tax revenues are much lower with prices so low. State regulation raises cost which puts break even at a higher price per barrel in the state which could impact production with oil prices so low. HB1349 had two amendments added, they did not push it through on second reading – it has a long way to go. The Hospital system will be under extreme duress during this virus outbreak. Initial read is that some amendments are going to help provide assurance to rural hospitals. There is major cost shifting to metro hospitals - hard to know if that will be sustainable - question about how impacts will be to St. Mary's. SB168 had a fight on Thursday, it passed out of committee - finance pointing out how the bill would impact counties and programs. Because of the swift turn around, it is not anticipated that SB168 will be much of an issue when we go back - solar gardens won't be issue when we go back. The bill requires the general fund to cover anything not covered by the exemption repeal which will add additional burden to the general fund. The legislators are supposed to be rearranging priorities while they are out. HB1349 is a really strange bill as it is opposed by all organizations; the only proponents are activists. This virus issue will push more interest in a family and medical bill leave; the Federal bill passed by the house covered things like FML. This is not the same world we lived in 10 days ago.

Discussion

Contribution Project for Business Support –Tiffany outlined a contribution project concept presented by OEDIT for enterprise zones. The concept is that enterprise zones would apply to be designated as a contribution project so that donors who would like to help businesses can get tax credits by donating to the EZ. These funds could be provided directly to businesses, the funds would be tracked so that they would be spent in the community they were collected from. There are many details to be worked out the group was asked if they would support AGNC's application for this designation. Four board members were in attendance on the call Doug Monger, John Justman, Mike Samson and Ray Beck – all said they would support AGNC moving forward but as it is not a quorum this would need to be ratified at the next meeting.

Update on 2020 Census – Brian Meinhart provided an update on the 2020 Census in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. A modified operations plan has been put in place for the 2020 census. He touched on the modifications to operations; there are two goals – 1) make sure the public is safe and healthy by following health professional recommendations at local, state, federal levels, 2) still trying to complete the census by July 31st. Invitations to complete the census started going out March 12th. They are encouraging group entities like dorms to respond electronically to minimize contact. The original plan for hand delivery was to have the census enumerators knock on doors; they will no longer

be knocking on doors – they will verify the address, leave the packet and be on their way. Census response options beyond that have not changed - they are getting a good response so far. There is not a lot change although there is a higher risk of missing students since so many are finishing classes on-line. Will have institution provide information and send email to students with invitation to complete. One of big operations was to provide questionnaire assistance by having a computer in a public place to help with completion of the questionnaire. That has been pushed back to April right now. The Census is looking at creative options to help with questionnaire completion things like, FaceTime, etc.

Federal Delegation Updates

Alyssa with Senator Bennet's office noted that a lot is happening at Capitol and legislation is moving. The Coronavirus package passed signed by the President contained about \$9 million for Colorado for response to the crisis. The second piece of legislation is the Family First Coronavirus response, it passed the house Saturday and has moved to Senate who will likely vote today. The bill provides for food assistance as well as unemployment insurance. Another package being drafted right now with Senator Bennet leading the effort would be to authorize direct payments to individuals to address economic stress – it continues to evolve. The Senator is leading an effort to draft a letter to FEMA, and USDA asking for federal agency staff to assist with response to the virus in most rural communities. He is trying to keep up the response to the most vulnerable population.

Brandon Bainer from Congressman Tipton's office said he would not repeat what had just been reported; some of the Congressman's staff are working from home. There are a number of bills going through that Congressman has supported and will support. Small businesses are something he is definitely concerned about. Farmers are concerned about closures of embassies for migrant workers (H2A). Commissioner Monger noted that he hopes that our delegates understand we are desperate for test kits and some way to determine if people are testing positive or not; they are going to have 100 person testing at the ski hill but that's not adequate. We may need help from the feds.

John Whitney from Senator Bennet's staff joined the call and noted that the first bill passed has provisions for state funding for testing; he said the money arrived this week. The bill also allows for reimbursement of testing done. He said they are hoping that county testing will be reimbursed. Some hospitals have their own testing procedures; they may work with local governments to deal with the backlog as well.

Betsy Bair with Senator Gardner's office noted she had stepped out for a health department press conference and release noting that they are looking into options - counties are not able to do testing. Mesa county just made an announcement that all hospitals are moving away from elective surgery for the next two weeks. Senator Gardner was exposed to the virus in his DC office and is now self-quarantined for the next 14 days. The staff is available for questions about working with SBA to get information out for loans, etc.

Administrative Update

Bonnie Petersen provided an Administrative Update on the following topics:

- AGNC is working with all the entities putting together resource materials for businesses related to assistance with COVID-19 closures. They are being sent via email to members as well as being placed on the AGNC website at www.agnc.org for easy access.
- AGNC will continue to host the legislative calls at 8:30 am on Thursdays while the legislature is in recess to provide updates on things taking place at the state level as well as provide members the opportunity to discuss any other items they feel should be shared.
- Items shared by Heather Jones were also shared with the board, they included:

- Heather has been communicating with the State Unit on Aging as well as AAA providers regarding COVID-19 and its effect on being able to provide services to the region.
- Most of the nutrition programs have gone to grab and go or drive thru with their dining sites. If consumers aren't able to get to the dining sites, they are offering temporary delivered meals.
- AAA transportation providers have been given the flexibility to pick-up groceries and medications if riders are not wanting to go out in public.
- AAoA Long Term Care Ombudsman are not allowed to enter facilities at this time and must conduct monitoring visits and complaints by phone. There are concerns that ombudsman will not be able to visually observe facilities and residents.
- The State Unit on Aging continues to increase flexibility with our AAA funds in order to meet the unexpected cost increases with delivery essential services during COVID-19. We have been given permission to utilize administrative funds for service delivery.
- The RFP for AAA funds for FY20-21 closed March 6, 2020. The grant review committee will meet via phone or webinar in April; the date is TBD.

New Business: *Next Meeting April 29, 2020; Fairfield Community Center, 200 Main Street, Meeker, CO 81641*

Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 10:45 am.

Attendance all via Conference Call due to COVID-19 Pandemic:

Ray Beck, Moffat County	Bonnie Petersen, AGNC
Mike Samson, Garfield County	Betsy Bair, Senator Gardner's Office
Tiffany Pehl, AGNC	John Justman, Mesa County
Brandon Bainer, Congressman Tipton's Ofc.	Doug Monger, Routt County
Heather Jones, AAoA	Diana Orf, Orf & Orf, P.C.
Jeff Comstock, Moffat County	Alyssa Logan, Senator Bennet's Office
Brian Meinhart, Census 2020	Ted Orf, Orf & Orf, P.C.
Drew Kramer, Tri-State G&T	Richard Orf, Orf & Orf, P.C.
John Whitney, Senator Bennet's Office	

EXHIBIT A

AGNC REPORT

March 2020

Center is open and we are seeing moderate traffic. Most visitors are skiers with the Epic or Icon passes. We are taking extra precautions on cleaning the bathrooms because of covid-19. We expect to have more travelers stopping in because of our clean bathrooms.

Center projects for this year are electric hand dryers. These are already installed. This will help save the center money as paper towels will no longer be purchased. The outside entrance overhang will be scraped down and repainted.

I will be attending our annual spring managers meeting in Silverthorne April 14 thru 16. Looking forward to a busier year with better numbers.

All our volunteers will be taking the course to be a certified Colorado Concierge. The next part of this new project will be offering this program to local town Visitor's Centers and Chambers of Commerce.

Cheryl McDonald