



ASSOCIATED GOVERNMENTS  
OF NORTHWEST COLORADO

MINUTES

**AGNC BOARD OF DIRECTORS & MEMBER MEETING**

**May 20, 2020**

Online: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2510562431>

By Phone: +1 301 715 8592 Meeting ID: 251 056 2431

**9:00 am to 11:30 am**

**Call to order** – Ray Beck, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:04 am. Introductions were made.

**Approval of Minutes** – John Justman moved to approve the minutes from the April 2020 meeting; Chris Nichols seconded the motion, the motion passed.

**Financial report:** Bonnie Petersen provided an overview of the financials for April 2020. Revenue exceeded budget for the month and continues to exceed budget year to date. Expenses were less than budgeted for the month and continues to be less than budgeted for the year. Net income for the month was \$1,914.46 vs. budget of -\$17,354.05. A motion was made by Mike Samson to approve the financial report; motion was seconded by Tim Redmond, motion passed

**Project and Committee Reports:**

AAoA - Heather Jones Provided comparisons of services year over year for AAoA; the full can be found at the end of these minutes. She reported that the COVID-19 CARES Act funds contract was signed this week. She noted that the JBC cut \$2 million for senior services in the long bill and we are waiting to see if there will be any additional cuts. AAoA is waiting to see if the CARES Act funds will need to be used to cover services due to state cuts. Heather is working to try providing equipment for seniors to utilize tele-health services; areas with wi-fi will be targeted first. The State will extend its contract by two months. Some providers will be out of funds by June 30th Heather will work to provide COVID-19 funds to help with funding issues. State funds, if any, will not be received until September of 2020.

Dinosaur Welcome Center – Ray Beck reported that the Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) notified AGNC on May 13<sup>th</sup> that they would stop funding the Dinosaur Welcome Center and other contracted centers in the state effective two day later, May 15<sup>th</sup>. As a result, AGNC has taken steps to close the center and release the staff. Cheryl attended the board meeting and pointed out that there is a lot of traffic on Hwy 40; she had been leaving Colorado maps in the map rack and they were being taken regularly. Cheryl made some final recommendations regarding the center, particularly the need to keep the center property clean. She has heard nothing regarding funding for the next fiscal year. Cheryl expressed a heartfelt thanks for the calls and support she has received and said she appreciates everyone. Staff will have a conference call to discuss potential opportunities to open the center through identifying local support and potential grant funding. Tonya with Western Garfield Chamber stated they would like to have a welcome center there and would like to participate in the call. Ray Beck has discussed the closure with the BOCC, and the Town of Dinosaur and they will keep the internet on as well as the electricity and water, however, they will winterize the restrooms. Mayor Blakely is looking into finding someone to mow the lawn to keep the grass green. The BOCC will move forward with the installation of the charging stations to help offset the electric bill. Someone will manage the sign at the DWC to continue to provide messages there. Cheryl has called all the volunteers to let them know the situation – and said they all would come back in a heartbeat if the center ever opened again. Doug Monger noted that this discussion had been a great conversation and he suggested that AGNC refer the matter back to executive committee to determine the best way to handle the situation with the welcome center as further discussions take place.

Legislative report –Diana Orf reported on items the JBC recommended to balance the state budget. They include:

- Taking \$500 million from education but they will use COVID-19 funds to offset that reduction.
- Closing a prison in Canyon City.
- They will be able to fund another year of kindergarten –
- They took funding from tourism marketing.
- Funds from perpetual base funds for water projects were used but they left funding in place for the coming year. Senator Rankin made a motion that there be a stated intent to repay that in the future; the amount is \$44 million

The JBC needs to have the long bill drafted by time the legislature comes back in session next week on the 26th. Diana provided an overview of how business will be conducted when reconvened and the discussion about allowing legislators to participate remotely. They understand that the session will last approximately 3 weeks. Beyond the budget it is unclear what other legislative items will be on the agenda. A number of bills waiting when session adjourned will not be moving forward. It is expected that each committee have one meeting then they will consolidate two or three committees into one. Sweeping funds from FML and severance was discussed a great deal last week but the JBC was advised to not take those funds because in the past there was an opportunity refill them but that is not the case this time given the reduction of energy development activity in the state the attitude on Thursday was hands off. We will have a better idea in the next day or two of how they have moved funds. There simply is not much new drilling activity, severance tax is projected to drop dramatically over the next several years. Federal shares of royalties, rents, etc. are impacted by the low activity and there are no new bonus payments coming in. Oil price is back up, so there is some hope that might help increase activity. Richard noted that the question on whether Colorado's regulations are too stiff is brought up, but it will never be admitted to. The homestead exemption for seniors was supported by AGNC counties and members were encouraged to make a big push to write support letters to keep it intact as these are the most vulnerable in our communities. Doug Monger noted that it needs to be one of the last things to be cut. A comment was made about how local governments came out really hard regarding funding from the CARES Act money the state received. Initially, the Governor was going to take it all, but he issued an executive order that will allocate 16% of those funds' local governments. The EO was done on Monday night; it was pointed out yesterday by the JBC that the Governor had not consulted staff or JBC - there are funds going to local governments but did not provide a role for legislature in that. Senator Rankin would like to have an allocation formula if additional money comes in while legislature is not in session. Ray noted that the Governor met with the President and asked for \$1 trillion dollars, it noted that, if those funds are received, he would hope he would backfill some of the funds he took away. A 5th stimulus bill being negotiated now at the federal level. The State legislature may have to go back into session if a bill or legislation is passed and we don't have something in place to deal with new federal funding. May be back in session later in the year for a special session in September/October. Have no good fiscal or health data. Forecast was based on unemployment claims not on receipts - have no economic data on which to base the budget. Selected the smallest deficit forecast to build a budget from. A concern was raised regarding unemployment and anecdotal reports that people are making more on unemployment than they can working so they won't go back to work. Chris Oxley noted that the extra \$600 dollars being paid to unemployed workers ends at the end of June; an employee can't refuse to take an offer of employment – they can say they are afraid of work – and that requires adjudication of the claim. She noted that there are only 50 cases like that here.

**National Popular Vote** – Former Senator Ray Haynes, Commissioner Rose Pugliese and Dennis Lennox from YES on NPV made a presentation regarding the National Popular Vote (NPV). Both sides of the conversation were presented. Senator Ray Haynes with Yes on NPV shared a presentation supporting the NPV. Available for follow-up questions. Senator Haynes provided a quick overview of what NPV is, what it does and how it will benefit area. It does not get rid of electoral college and uses the language of constitution to allow implementation of what is best for the state. President Trump is reported as preferring a popular vote noting that he would have campaigned differently if that were the way the elections work. Senator Haynes noted that the NPV could help empower conservative voters that have

become convinced that their votes don't count to go the polls and vote. He noted that candidates would campaign differently and would have an influence on voters. He noted that, in today's elections, the "swing" states elect the President, not the entire country. The YES on NPV group believes that a change to an NPV structure would allow rural Colorado voters to join forces with states like Utah, Wyoming, and Montana to advance conservative candidates through the NPV compact.

Commissioner Rose Pugliese provided an overview about how the ballot initiative started in CO when in 2019 Democrats passed the compact giving CO electoral votes to the NPV compact. There was bi-partisan opposition - no republicans voted for it and 5 democrats voted against it. CO voters can repeal this through a ballot initiative and people asked Rose to get involved. When the petitions were signed, people of all parties signed them to put on the question on the ballot. The organizers got nearly twice as many signatures as was needed. The NPV gives larger states the ability to decide how our votes go. Right now, the winner of the popular vote in Colorado will get the all the electoral votes. California wants our votes - 98% of the funding to defeat the measure is coming from the large population states - they want to control Colorado's votes. It is also no secret that California wants Colorado's water - it is really important to maintain water in Colorado. There are huge public policy issues at stake with giving Colorado votes to California which could open interstate water pacts. Protecting Colorado is of the utmost importance to counties - CLUB20 came out in support of NO on NPV in Colorado. Under NPV CO would be 1.7% of population in NPV compact.

Senator Haynes spent 14 years on water committees in California and they never wanted to take Colorado water; they wanted to take northern California water.

Commissioner Samson noted that California is definitely dominated by dem legislators and Rose acknowledged that and stated that we need to keep our votes here. Senator Haynes noted that when Colorado was a battleground state, it had Republican majorities in legislature. Since the state lost battleground status, the conservative movement has been dying. When candidates started ignoring California, conservatives got hurt by the process. He warned that what happened in California will happen in Colorado within 20 years. While some members agreed on the premise, it was noted that they do not think this is solution to make that change. Dennis Lennox noted that New York adopted the compact and the conservatives there adopted the NPV. Rose pointed out that while circulating the petitions, she got lots of attention; she received calls from New York and California conservatives asking how they could repeal the NPV because they do not like their votes being given away.

Chairman Beck noted that this is not the first time we have had this conversation; the group received a lot of information on the pros and the cons of the issue and suggested that AGNC take up conversation at next AGNC meeting in May. After a short break, the members determined that they would rather vote on this issue at this meeting. Mike Samson made a motion that AGNC support the NO on NPV position; Gary Moyer seconded the motion, motion passed.

### **Federal Delegation Updates**

George Rossman from Congressman Tipton's office noted that there is not a lot going on in the House since they are not meeting. The House did pass phase four of the Coronavirus response Congressman voted no as he did not like the provision that allowed people without a social security number to get funds. The Congressman is working on the US supply chain issues and on Monday they passed a package for farmers. Crops and wool are covered, livestock, dairy then specialty ag products can apply for assistance on May 26th.

Alyssa Logan from Senator Bennet's office noted that the HEROES Act is not likely to go anywhere in Senate. Negotiations are stalled at the moment. The Senator is working on a restart bill which is an economic development bill that came out of conversations with chambers and businesses. He hopes to have a fix to the PPP program changing it to 16 weeks from 8 weeks; the restart program would provide loans to businesses for 6 months of expenses and provide immediate liquidity for businesses with a

portion of it being eligible for forgiveness - what is not forgiven can be paid back over seven years. Other items include assistance for rural hospitals - often largest employer in rural communities - assistance to stabilizing rural hospitals. State and local mitigation funds for food processing; the USDA just announced the program. Producers can apply beginning May 26th.

Betsy Bair provided an update from Senator Gardner's office. Two COVID. Related pieces of legislation also looked at the PPP repayment timeline - businesses have not been able to open fully and to have the short repayment timeline is not working. One bill provides relief to parents who have had babies born in 2020; families get \$500 for each child; the bill modifies timing to include 2020. Senator Gardner's suicide hotline number passed unanimously in the Senate last week - people can't find suicide numbers when they are in crisis so they will be using a shortened number. The Senate confirmed four District court judges and one SEC member - other nominations are being considered. The Cyber relief act is being considered in committee. Senator Gardner Space Command will be in CO for the next 6 years. Working on rehire America plan. Senate on recess next week for the holiday.

Representative Will from House District 57 provided an update on the state legislature. He noted that his Caucus has been talking about the fact that state has less money but so does every family and the need to cut tape for businesses to try to save them is a priority. There are some that want to use CARES dollars to replenish the state unemployment fund. An effort is being made to try to do something with personal property tax and eliminate it for the year so businesses do not have to pay tax on facilities they could not use. They are trying to provide opportunities for small meat processing plants. They are looking at trying to limit the Governor's powers - he is acting without working with the legislature and advocating for local control with regard to opening economies - local elected officials know their area best. Several counties with no cases of the virus should have had a different set of regulations. There are concerns that the Governor stated that the legislature had the power of the purse, but he spent the CARES Act money without legislative consultation anyway. Concerns were raised about the slow response to variance requests by the counties. Chairman Beck noted that AGNC has a letter regarding local control that we will discuss later today.

### **Administrative Update**

Bonnie Petersen provided an Administrative Update on the following topics:

- The CMU economic impact of coal study is complete; staff will work with Dr. Nathan Perry to schedule a review of the findings; hopefully before the June board meeting.
- The EDC has established a moratorium on Contribution Projects within the enterprise zones until at least July 2020.
- CTO defunding of DWC; staff will get group together to determine if we can repurpose building for local welcome center and what the operation of such a facility might be.
- During the April meeting, there was conversation regarding a letter to be written to the Governor regarding local control. The letter was provided to the board of directors for review and will be sent to the Governor as well as NW Colorado legislators.

**New Business:** *Next Meeting June 17, 2020, Town Hall, 175 E 3<sup>rd</sup> St., Palisade, CO 81526*

**Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 11:59 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
George Rossman, Congressman Tipton's Ofc.	Doug Monger, Routt County
Heather Jones, AAoA	Diana Orf, Orf & Orf, P.C.
Grady Hazelton, Town of New Castle	Alyssa Logan, Senator Bennet's Office
Chris Nichols, City of Craig	Ted Orf, Orf & Orf, P.C.
Keely Ellis, Town of Rangely	Richard Orf, Orf & Orf, P.C.

Tom Kleinschnitz, Moffat County Tourism  
Matt Nunez, City of Glenwood Springs  
Jeff Comstock, Moffat County  
Makala Barton, Rio Blanco ED  
Lisa Piering, Town of Rangely  
Christina Oxley, Colorado Workforce Cntr.  
Ray Haynes, Former Senator, CA  
Dennis Lennox, YES on NPV  
Merritt Linke, Grand County  
Kimberly Bullen, DOLA  
Perry Will, State Representative  
Tanya Doose, Rifle Chamber of Commerce

Cheryl McDonald, Dinosaur Welcome Cntr.  
Tim Redmond, Town of Hayden  
Jeannie Caldwell, Town of Rangely  
Drew Kramer, Tri-State  
Linda Hedge, DWC  
Jon Bristol, Routt Chamber ED  
Brad McCloud, EIS Solutions  
Bill Endriss  
Paula Stepp, City of Glenwood Springs  
Jenn Ooten, City of Glenwood Springs  
Rose Pugliese, Mesa County  
Gavin Baird, Observer

## EXHIBIT A

AGNC REPORT  
May 2020

There is a lot of traffic coming thru on Hwy 40. Our picnic area is busy.

I have an outside Holder for Colorado maps. I have had to restock it every day.

The Dinosaur National Monument is doing a soft reopening. Their roads are all open for travel. Remaining closed are the visitor's centers and the Quarry exhibit hall. There is no camping, back country hiking allowed, and no water is turned on. Visitors should plan on being self-sufficient.

Colorado State Parks are open, and campsites are reservation only. All their guidelines can be found on their website.

As for Center operations: As of May 15<sup>th</sup>, all contracted Welcome Centers are no longer funded.

PLEASE STAY SAFE AND HEALTH  
Cheryl McDonald

## EXHIBIT B

### AAoA Update for May 2020 AGNC Board

#### Comparing March-April 2019 vs March-April 2020

- 11% increase in our meals at dining sites, which are operating as “grab n’ go” or “drive thru”
- 34% increase in home delivered meals
- 188% increase in information and assistance calls

#### Updates on AAA Funding:

- \$634,875 COVID-19 CARES ACT Funds contract signed this week
  - These funds have not been allocated
- \$50,955.18 COVID-19 ADRC Funds pending
- State Funds for Senior Services (SFSS)
  - The JBC voted to transfer the remaining \$13 million of the unspent homestead funds to the General Fund and confirmed their previous decision to have a bill drafted to eliminate the homestead transfer altogether.
  - Cut \$2 million from the state's funding for senior services for FY 2020-21 (the Long Bill)
- The AAA will extend our contract with providers by two months to align with the State Unit on Aging extending AAA contracts by 2 months
  - A good majority of providers will have enough Federal funds for those two months
  - Providers who will be out of funds by June 30, 2020, the AAA will work to help allocate additional federal and/or COVID-19 CARES ACT Funding