

EAST CENTRAL COUNCIL OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

COLORADO'S CENTRAL PLAINS



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EAST CENTRAL COUNCIL OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES SEPTEMBER 1, 2021

Call to Order

Chairman Valerie Rhoades called the September 1, 2021, meeting of the ECCOG Board of Directors to order at 7:00 PM held as a teleconference to ensure a quorum was reached. The office was open with Executive Director Candace Payne on site for public audience. Attendees included: Rhonda Brown, Steve Burgess, Ryan Fulmer, Marc Dettenrieder, Dave Hornung, Melody McKinsey, Chris Richardson, Troy Schultz, Ron Smith, and Scott Wills. ECCOG Executive Director Candace Payne, Senior & Transit Services (STS) Director Blake Sigler and Senior & Transit Services (STS) Assistant Director Sean Vanous were on the call. Ben Ferree was absent. Cheyenne County's municipal position is vacant currently.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge was dispensed with due to the nature of the meeting.

Introductions of Guests and Roll Call

There were no guests on the call and roll was taken by Executive Director Candace Payne. A quorum was declared.

Approval of June 29 and July 7, 2021, Meeting Minutes

The Minutes of the June 29th Special meeting and July 7th regular meeting were sent in the board packet. Steve Burgess made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented. Chris Richardson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Financial Report of Sept 1, 2021

The Financial Report for August was approved through mail ballot. The September 1, 2021, Financial Report was emailed before the meeting. Executive Director Candace Payne drew attention to August receipts and expenses at the bottom where the Payroll entry did not have parentheses around the numbers to show it is a withdrawal of funds. This has been brought to the bookkeeper's attention to correct on the file copy. A recap of the funds, payments, and receipts was conducted noting any large payments or unusual items. Chris Richardson made a motion to accept the financial report with the correction noted. Ryan Fulmer seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Bills & Payroll

July payroll and bills were approved by mail ballot. Payroll for August 31, 2021, totaled \$35,571.61 for the office and field staff. Debit card transactions were \$896.84 which included T3 equipment, registration for conferences, carousel web hosting, background checks, raw food, and SMILE meals. Monthly expenses were shown to be \$63,201.72 which included HelpMATE vendor payments, consultant fees, raw food, staff reimbursements, rent, utilities, and marketing. Chris Richardson made a motion to ratify the payment of payroll and Accounts Payables. Ryan Fulmer seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

FTA Update

Senior & Transit Services (STS) Assistant Director Sean Vanous reported on the availability and ordering of vehicles. ECCOG's AAA staff have applied for vehicles through CDOT's Division of Transit and Rail 2022 funding. On behalf of Kit Carson County, two ADA-compliant vans were ordered. For Elbert County, one ADA-compliant Cutaway Bus was ordered. Lastly, on behalf of the City of Burlington an ADA-compliant Cutaway Bus was ordered. Applications were due on September 3rd and were submitted ahead of schedule on September 2nd. We now wait to hear back from CDOT on which projects/applications are approved and funded.

Staff Update

Senior & Transit Services (STS) Director Blake Sigler reported 4 individuals have been hired in various aspects of the AAA. Bill Mock was hired as the Elizabeth coordinator in Elbert County. Louise Grimes is the assistant cook in Hugo for Lincoln County. Loretta Rolston is the head cook in Cheyenne Wells. Charles Rolston is the assistant cook in Cheyenne Wells. Open positions include Bus Driver in Elbert County (Simla/Matheson), Driver in Lincoln County, Coordinator/Driver in Cheyenne Wells, and Coordinator in Stratton.

TravelStorys

Executive Director Candace Payne discussed TravelStorys' second quarter report showing travelers who consider travel safe in the current post-pandemic time. The report also demonstrated downloads of the application to cell phones, live tours, and number of locations across the United States and world. Colorado Central Plains' tour has received 208 pre-views or visits and 384 downloads or engagement methods with Wednesday being the most active weekday. The reporting period included April through June of 2021. The northeast counties are working to complete their tour this year so the entire northeast and central counties will have stories to share using this application.

NEW BUSINESS:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Executive Director Candace Payne explained the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was shared on email in advance of the meeting. The 30-day comment period for the CEDS ended on August 25th with six responses for grammar corrections or inclusion/removal of items. The CEDS has been posted online, shared via email and a copy offered at the office for review. Chris Richardson expressed gratitude for including Elbert County requests in the CEDS. Chairman Valerie Rhoades encouraged attendees to read the CEDS if they had not already as it was interesting and contained valuable insight of the region. Marc Dettenrieder asked if the Foreign Trade Zone company should be added to page 19 to replace the interested two companies note. Notice was also received by Marc and the Executive Director that Intermountain Rural Electric has a name change on page 31. After a brief discussion on the FTZ, it was suggested we change the wording to state a company has been approved once it had been verified. Steve Burgess made a motion to adopt the CEDS with the modification to include the FTZ appropriate wording once verified, and the name change of Intermountain Rural Electric to CORE. Chris Richardson seconded the motion to adopt. Motion passed. Executive Director Candace Payne will verify this detail and modify the CEDS as necessary. The CEDS will be submitted to EDA prior to September 30, 2021, which is the deadline.

State Coronavirus Vaccine Funding

Senior & Transit Services (STS) Director Blake Sigler explained the allocation of vaccine outreach funds to Region 5 provided by the state. Our portion of the funding equals \$10,051 to be used for vaccine marketing and transportation to receive a vaccine. The funds may be de-obligated by each region to be contributed to a state-wide effort. Discussion on options and need of funding ensued to consider the option best suited for the region's needs. Accepting the funds would mean additional reporting responsibilities for the ECCOG staff and funds could benefit the local businesses like newspapers and printers as the outreach is performed by local companies. If the funds were turned back to the state, the outreach may be performed by urban companies with little benefit to our region. Based on this additional consideration, the board asked for more information before direction was given to staff. This item is tabled until October.

2022 Dues

The next discussion item involved the 2022 ECCOG Contributions chart. The population totals came from the 2020 Census and showed overall decline in population of 78 across the four counties. The county populations showed an overall total decrease while Limon and Elizabeth as municipalities showed good growth. Overall, the contributions to ECCOG used as matching funds will be decreased \$78. A motion to adopt the 2022 Contributions chart as presented was made by Steve Burgess. Chris Richardson seconded the motion. Motion passed. This information will be provided for budget purposes to the counties and municipalities this month.

Senate Bill 290 Security for Colorado Seniors

Senate Bill 290 supports Area Agency on Aging projects that promote health, well-being, and security of older Coloradans. Funding priorities include projects that address infrastructure needs such as energy efficiency, structural repairs and purchases to improve or add services. Senior & Transit Services (STS) Director Blake Sigler explained staff is working with our senior centers on proposals that qualify to apply. This could be a great source of funding in our communities and help bring more services to the area. Each senior center is compiling their specific lists for consideration.

Economic Development Administration ARPA

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Notice of Funding Opportunities are available now. Many types of funding may be pursued by counties, regions or states as part of the stimulus plan offered by President Biden. Executive Director Candace Payne sought

input from the directors on what they felt was appropriate to pursue as a region or as a larger project. Marc Dettenrieder stated Build Back Better might be great for a cluster effort like manufacturing or a rail line with the Foreign Trade Zone or maybe broadband or a water project. Chairman Valerie Rhoades agreed the broadband effort could be wide reaching.

Steve Burgess shared Lincoln County is working on a drainage need at the courthouse and the Hugo Roundhouse renovation. Ron Smith reported Cheyenne County has courthouse repairs and a fairgrounds project in process. Dave Hornung stated Kit Carson County has a road project. Troy Schultz stated police and fire department training was needed in Burlington and he supports efforts on technology and broadband improvements.

Other

Executive Director Candace Payne shared news that Kit Carson received \$209,715 from the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) program to help with their business hub. Hugo's co-working space called The Garage received \$271,090 from REDI also.

Steve Burgess - Limon looks forward to four homes to be built by Denver Cutlery of which three will be sold and the fourth is for staff, Big Boy (train) is coming through Cheyenne and Lincoln Counties in Sept, and Arriba Wind is slated for buildout.

Dave Hornung - Discussion on solar development is occurring in Kit Carson County.

Ron Smith - The courthouse is being remodeled or improved while the northwest corner of Cheyenne County looks to solar development.

Chris Richardson - Rush Creek Wind is expanding and Elizabeth proper is getting Dairy Queen and McDonald's near Walmart.

Troy Schultz – CARES monies is being used for fire and police training as a new veterinary service comes to town. Safeway construction is beginning.

Ryan Fulmer – Simla will host Simla Days on Sept 6th and Elbert County is providing \$200,000 of grant funds for businesses again.

Melody McKinsey – Excited to open her first Airbnb at the Holiday Place and is already getting bookings.

Marc Dettenrieder – Elizabeth will see Ziggy's Coffee open near the Taco Bell.

Valerie Rhoades – Morgan Community College is looking for a Limon building to be a hub for welding, electrical and HVAC training center. MCC will host their annual gala simultaneously on one night in five locations which is new for them. MCC's wine program includes two certification programs and is getting good participation.

Scott Wills and Rhonda Brown echoed the excitement for their county's development and improvement.

Next Meeting Dates/Locations (1st Wed of each month)

Oct 6 – In person in Limon

Nov 10 – In person at Stratton Claremont Inn (Note: Nov 3 is a conflict for Candace's tourism conference)

Dec 1 – Mail Ballot

Adjournment

Chairman Valerie Rhoades declared the meeting adjourned as there were no more items to bring to the board. Meeting adjourned at 8:21PM.

All handouts and reports are retained in the permanent file of ECCOG Board meetings.