

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 MARCH 2, 2022

Call to Order

Chairman Chris Richardson called the March 2, 2022, meeting of the ECCOG Board of Directors to order at 7:09 PM at the Hub City Senior Center in Limon. Attendees included: Chris Richardson, Steve Burgess, Marc Dettenrieder, Ben Ferree, Dave Hornung, Derek Isom, Valerie Rhoades, Troy Schultz, and Ron Smith as directors. ECCOG Executive Director Candace Payne, Senior & Transit Services (STS) Director Blake Sigler and Senior & Transit Services (STS) Assistant Director Sean Vanous were present. Rhonda Brown, Ryan Fulmer, and Megan Vasquez were unable to attend. One vacancy remains for Cheyenne County's municipal position. New executive officers were elected during the re-organization meeting held prior to this meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the attendees.

Introductions of Guests and Roll Call

A quorum was declared with nine directors present. There were no guests in attendance.

Approval of January 5, 2022, Meeting Minutes

The Minutes of the January 5, 2022, regular meeting were provided in the board packet. Director Dave Hornung made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented. Director Valerie Rhoades seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Financial Report of March 2, 2022

The Financial Report for February 2, 2022 was approved via mail ballot. The March 2, 2022, Financial Report was provided at the meeting. Executive Director Candace Payne recapped the fund balances, payments, and receipts noting large payments or unusual items with input from Senior & Transit Services Director Blake Sigler. Check #28466 was not included in the Check Register as it was posted after the report explained Executive Director Candace Payne. One Enterprise Zone contribution was received in March. Director Valerie Rhoades made a motion to accept the financial report as provided. Director Dave Hornung seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Bills & Payroll

Payroll and bills for February 28, 2022 were approved by mail ballot. The March payroll totaled \$38,083.43 for the office and field staff. Debit card transactions were \$564.06 which included Canva subscription, SSTB board meeting meals, Carousel web hosting, and Mountain Connect registration. Monthly expenses were shown to be \$50,978.02 which included HelpMATE vendor payments, EZ contributions, consultant fees, raw food, staff reimbursements, rent, utilities, and marketing. Director Valerie Rhoades made a motion to ratify the payment of payroll and Accounts Payables. Director Dave Hornung seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Board Members

Chairman Chris Richardson welcomed Director Derek Isom to the board. Director Isom shared his willingness to serve on the board and thanked the group for welcoming him. Director Megan Vasquez who represents Elbert County private businesses was unable to attend due to a work schedule conflict.

COG Staffing Update

An update on AAA field staff was provided by Senior and Transit Services Assistant Director Sean Vanous. A Senior Services Program Coordinator position is open in the Stratton office. Elbert County has one bus driver position available for the Hwy 24

Simla/Matheson bus route. In Kit Carson County, three positions are vacant: Flagler bus driver which is not being advertised as there is no vehicle available for trips due to repairs. Flagler needs an Assistant Cook with some interest by a local person, but no hires were made as of this meeting. Burlington is looking for another Outback Express driver. Cheyenne County has 5 positions open including Kit Carson's Outback Express bus driver, which is not advertised now as the demand has not been high enough to deem two vehicles operating. The Cheyenne Wells' Outback Express Driver/Food Transporter position is open. Then the Cheyenne Wells Site Coordinator, Head and Assistant Cook positions are all vacant as of this week. The cook and assistant cook sold their house and their last day will be March 4th. Lastly, Lincoln County has an Outback Express driver position available, but without demand at the moment, this is not advertised either. Discussion on the STS Director position was held later in the evening.

2022 Title III ARPA Contract

Senior and Transit Services Director Blake Sigler reported the final details of the Title III ARPA contract. The total amount of the contract is \$264,563.52. Contract start date is February 2nd, 2022 and ends on September 30th, 2024. Local match dollars are required for the use of this contract with Administration match at 25%, Parts B and C match at 10%, and Part E match at 25%. These funds will ensure senior services continue for the next couple of years in the Region.

2022 Our Journey Brochures

Executive Director Candace Payne shared the process for gathering information for the Fun, Fairs & Festivals brochure listing of events has begun. The Place brochure is also being updated with new listings of boutiques and shops. New this year will be RV parks as tourists take to the open road. A new logo for Our Journey on Colorado's Central Plains was shown. The designer, Richard Carraro, is well known for his commercial for Snack Well cookies. The new logo will be used in print and social media and could easily be used for other items like t-shirts, stickers, key chains and other imprinted goods. The museum brochure for 2022 has been re-designed using an old map of the region and easy to read details of each location from the new firm. Full implementation of the new logo will be completed in the fall. Distribution of the brochures will be complete before the Memorial weekend like usual.

Senate Bill 290

Senior & Transit Services Assistant Director Sean Vanous reported that four different senior centers applied for this funding for a total of \$491,584. Staff awaits the award announcement expected by March 11th. A 5-day protest period would be available before final awards are announced to applicants. An update will be emailed when we hear of the funding decisions. The centers who applied were Cheyenne Wells, Burlington, Stratton and Flagler.

NEW BUSINESS:

EDA Grants Update

Executive Director Candace Payne reported due to impacts of COVID, EDA will consider an extension of the CARES Act funds used to update our CEDS and facilitate recovery and resiliency work. The contract end date was June 30 but could be extended to December 31st with an application to EDA in mid-April. Based on personal needs and delays with the contract work, ECCOG plans to request an extension so that all funds may be used and not de-obligated while contractors fulfill their Scopes of Work. The amount to be extended may be around \$35,000 or less. The scheduled visit with Deb Brown, rural economic development specialist, was explained. Her visit in all four counties is planned for April 4-8. Director Marc Dettenrieder offered his time to help in Elbert County with the planning and scheduling.

2022 Title III Surveys

Senior and Transit Services Director Blake Sigler updated the board on the current progress of the annual Title III Performance Measure Surveys. Over 600 surveys were sent to AAA clients before the deadline of February 28th. At least 50% of registered clients must be sent a survey to meet the State Unit on Aging's requirements. ECCOG's staff mailed 100% of the registered clients a survey for the services they received in 2021. Total counts of each survey sent were: 475 Meal, 123 Material Aid, 33 Transportation, 30 Homemaker, and 8 Caregiver. These surveys will give our clients the opportunity to contribute their ideas to our services and programs and help us improve services.

2022 Enterprise Zone Contribution Project

The World's Wonder View Tower of Genoa was presented to the board for approval as a contribution project by Executive Director Candace Payne. This project entails infrastructure improvements or installations, remodeling, and expansion of the existing building west of Genoa. The project costs are estimated to be \$4,500,000 of which \$200,000 could be in-kind and cash donations. The maximum tax credits earned is \$750,000. Future plans of the location include adding an RV park for campers/glampers, artist in residence program, arts & crafts programs, and a café on site. A five-year schedule with over 30 jobs

created related to the Genoa Tower contribution project is expected. Director Steve Burgess made a motion to approve the project. Director Marc Dettenrieder seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

2022 FTA 5311 O & A ARPA Contract

Senior and Transit Services Director Blake Sigler reported on the upcoming 2022 FTA 5311 ARPA Contract. The total amount of the contract will be \$278,872 with \$69,718 available for administrative costs and \$209,154 for operations. Contract start date is January 1st, 2022 with an end date of June 30th, 2023. No local match is needed for this contract. These funds support the normal Outback Express operations like drug & alcohol testing, marketing services, coordinating ridesharing and insurance costs. Other allowable expenses include paid leave for staff in quarantine or a reduction of services due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Motion was made by Director Valerie Rhoades to approve the contract for signing by the chairman and staff. Director Dave Hornung second the motion, which passed unanimously. Spending order of funds dictates ECCOG uses ARPA funds after CARES funds (currently all spent) and CRRSAA funds are expended.

Senior & Transit Services Advisory Council (STSAC) formerly known as SSTB

On February 15th, 2022, the Senior Services and Transit Board (SSTB) met with STS Director Blake Sigler and STS Assistant Director Sean Vanous in Limon to discuss a name change for the council and to update the By-Laws to reflect the name change. STS Assistant Director Sean Vanous stated other by-law changes include inclusive language to not discriminate based on gender. The council also discussed vacancies within the board including: one At Large representative, two Cheyenne County reps, two Elbert County reps, and one Lincoln County rep for a total of six vacancies. Recommendations were sought from the group with no names shared. The next meeting will be in May with an exact date polled later. The new official name of the group is Senior & Transit Services Advisory Council or STSAC which matches our position names.

Transit Update (2022 Supercall)

ECCOG staff received a letter from CDOT notifying all subgrantees (which includes ECCOG) of the price increases for the buses. This price increase only affects the Body on Chassis (BOC) or Cutaway buses. CDOT has informed us that they have settled on a 65% price increase. STS Assistant Director Sean Vanous stated we waiting to hear if our vehicles are approved or denied as this is a competitive grant process.

2022 ARPA Funds for Public Health

STS Director Blake Sigler explained the funding under the ARPA Public Health initiative to the attendees. There are no match requirements for the funds available January 2022 through September 2024. The funds would be used to hire staff to facilitate with public health programs dissemination in the region. The allocation method for the \$1,257,757 over the state in either formula, equal split, or other methods has not been determined as of today. Uses of the funds include hiring for program manager, community health worker, public health nurse, admin staff for COVID tasks or other part-time or contracted positions. After a brief discussion, Director Dave Hornung made a motion that ECCOG opt out of the funds. Director Derek Isom seconded this motion. Motion carried unanimously. This decision will be shared with the state office.

Other Additions to the Agenda

National Employers Retirement Trust (NERT)

Executive Director Candace Payne explained that for the past three years we have tried to remove Jo Downey from the NERT retirement account to no avail. In February NERT determined an amendment to our plan was needed to do so. Therefore, an amendment form was presented at the meeting to replace Jo Downey with Candace Payne as the trustee of the ECCOG Plan. A Certificate of Resolution and Amendment to the ECCOG Money Purchase Plan was reviewed at the meeting. Director Dave Hornung made a motion to authorize Chairman Chris Richardson to sign the Resolution and Amendment which makes Executive Director Candace Payne the fund trustee in lieu of Jo Downey. Director Steve Burgess seconded this motion. Motion passed unanimously and the documents were signed at the meeting. Those documents will be submitted to NERT on Thursday, March 3, 2022.

ARPA Title III

STS Director Blake Sigler reported that ECCOG has been awarded \$264,563.52 from the ARPA Title III funding. Match is required for each program: 25% Admin, 10% Parts B & C, 25% Part E which may be cash or in-kind. (B-Supportive Services, C-Congregate & Home-delivered meals, E-Family Caregiver Support or Respite). The funds are available for use until September 30, 2024. The Older Americans Act funds provide meals, ombudsman, respite caregiver, and preventative health programs in our region.

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

April 6 – Mail ballot

May 4 – TC

June 1 – In Person in Limon – audit presentation if a quorum can be reached to receive the audit report or the date may be changed

***Note – June 8th is the meeting date and audit presentation**

STS Director Blake Sigler and Assistant Director Sean Vanous left the meeting.

Personnel Discussion

Executive Director Candace Payne reported the upcoming senior and transit services director position had only one application after three weeks of advertising in local papers and posting on the workforce center database. The application was from STS Assistant Director Sean Vanous who submitted his resume and a letter of interest for consideration. Chairman Valerie Rhoades was notified of the letter as Mr. Vanous is the son of Executive Director Candace Payne. The executive officers conducted an interview with STS Assistant Director Sean Vanous on March 1st via phone. The executive officers brought the matter to the ECCOG board for direction. Conversation then ensued to cover the risks associated with hiring relatives. Concerns of continuing the search for a non-related person to fill the position and the time needed for transition were discussed. After thoughtful consideration and detailed discussion, Director Steve Burgess made a motion to offer the STS Director position to STS Assistant Director Sean Vanous effective April 1, 2022. Director Dave Hornung seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The board considered the job description requirement stating a four-year college degree in a related field was needed. A motion was made by Director Dave Hornung and seconded by Director Marc Dettenrieder to waive this requirement as Vanous has a bachelor's degree from Colorado State University in horticulture. Salary discussion ensued using the current salary schedule which was provided at the meeting. Director Steve Burgess made a motion to offer Step 11 of the 2022-2024 Full-time Employee Salary Schedule to Mr. Vanous. Director Dave Hornung seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The final discussion involved a change to the ECCOG Organizational Chart making the STS Director position report to the board. The chairman or other executive officers would conduct this position's annual employee evaluation with input from Executive Director Candace Payne on daily performance. Director Steve Burgess made a motion to modify the Organizational Chart to reflect STS Director reports to the board with ECCOG Chairman or another executive office conducting the employee evaluation annually. Director Dave Hornung seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Executive Director Candace Payne was directed to make the offer to Mr. Vanous and notify the board of his decision so advertisements could be placed for positions.

Further discussion was held on the base salaries of ECCOG's pay schedule which are very low. The board would like to revisit the salary schedules in the summer or early fall.

Adjournment

Chairman Chris Richardson adjourned the meeting by declaration at 9:41PM.

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