

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 JULY 5, 2023

Call to Order

Chairman Chris Richardson called the July 5, 2023, meeting of the ECCOG Board of Directors to order at 7:05 PM held as a Zoom virtual meeting. All motions were made after the quorum was declared at 7:27PM.

Roll Call

Directors in attendance included: Steve Burgess, Marc Dettenrieder, Ryan Fulmer, Dave Hornung, Sherry Jones, Valerie Rhoades, and Chris Richardson. ECCOG Executive Director Candace Payne and Senior & Transit Services Director Sean Vanous were on the call. Directors Rhonda Brown, Ben Ferree, Derek Isom, Troy Schultz, Ron Smith and Megan Vasquez were unable to attend. A quorum was declared when Director Valerie Rhoades arrived at 7:27PM. Darlene Carpio of Congressman Ken Buck's office also attended.

Approval of May 3, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes

The Minutes of the May 3, 2023, regular meeting were provided in the board packet. Director Dave Hornung made a motion to accept the Minutes as presented. Director Ryan Fulmer seconded this motion, which passed unanimously.

Financial Report of July 5, 2023

The June Financial Report was approved by mail ballot. The Financial Report dated July 5, 2023, was emailed to the board prior to the meeting. Executive Director Candace Payne and Senior & Transit Services Director Sean Vanous reviewed the fund balances with the directors. Director Dave Hornung made a motion to approve the financial report for filing as presented. Director Ryan Fulmer seconded the motion, which passed.

Approval of Bills & Payroll

June payroll and bills were approved by mail ballot. Payroll and bills for June 30, 2023, were reviewed with the attendees. The June payroll of \$44,158.51 was presented. Credit card payments of \$628.00 included parking refund credit, web hosting, and conference registrations. June 2023 payments totaled \$99,212.46 included taxes, vendors, staff reimbursements, utilities, enterprise zone contributions, and SB 290 project reimbursements. Director Dave Hornung made a motion to ratify the payment of payroll and bills as presented. Director Ryan Fulmer seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

ECCOG Staffing

Executive Director Candace Payne stated the Stratton office has an opening now as the Special Projects Assistant resigned and their last day was June 30th. Ads for the position will start the week of July 10th in the local papers. Senior & Transit Services Director Sean Vanous reported the Highway 24 bus route driver position is filled. Burlington needs a backup driver. Cheyenne Wells Senior Services Coordinator and an Outback Express Driver/Food Transporter positions are vacant. Stratton Senior Center Coordinator position is now open as that employee resigned to care for a family member out of Colorado.

ECCOG Audit

The 2022 Single Audit and compliance audit is in process reported Executive Director Candace Payne. The auditor will be in Stratton starting July 10th to perform review of invoices and payroll. Chairman Chris Richardson asked that the audit presentation be made in person, if possible, in August or September. Verification of a date and time will be made with the auditor.

2023 Our Journey

Executive Director Candace Payne reported Our Journey brochures have been distributed across the region in time for the Memorial Day weekend. ECCOG has been invited to participate in the America 250, Colorado 150 Commission representing our four counties on this special committee to mark Colorado's birthday in 2026. The six counties north of Region 5 are also participating in the Commission as part of the Pioneering Plains. Across the state, planning events and activities for the year 2026 will benefit our region from the special milestone occasion. During 2026 special events and celebrations may be coordinated for the Our Journey Museums and communities. The new online training program funded by Colorado Tourism Office's grant is just one idea to help build our tourism program. See the note below on the CTO Tourism Management Grant.

(Director Valerie Rhoades joined the call) Chairman Chris Richardson declared a quorum was reached so we returned to the Minutes and financial reports to approve those items.

Senate Bill 290

Senior and Transit Services Director Sean Vanous shared that Cheyenne Wells, Burlington and Stratton Projects are complete. Flagler's project broke ground last week by digging their north addition's hole for infrastructure. The Kit Carson project is moving forward slowly as contractor bids are being received.

Four-Year Plan

A copy of the Four-Year Plan approval letter was provided in the packet. Work may now begin on new programs since the State Unit on Aging has approved the Scope of Work for our Area Agency on Aging.

HelpMATE

Included in the email sent today is the HelpMATE report provided by Senior and Transit Services Director Sean Vanous. This report demonstrated SFY23 expended \$156,297.68 in all services. Most of the funds were used in the category of audiology services totaling \$135,150. Further explanation by Senior and Transit Services Director Sean Vanous was given as future funding allocations will return to normal levels as the COVID pandemic funds are no longer available. The next 12 months will have \$60,000 available for HelpMATE clients covered by \$30,000 from state funds and \$30,000 from Federal monies. The board expressed their thanks to Senior and Transit Services Director Sean Vanous as this program is very demanding and labor intensive.

CTO Tourism Management Grant

Executive Director Candace Payne reported work had begun as scheduled with the vendor for the Colorado Tourism Office Tourism Management Grant to develop the frontline worker online training program. This program will also be translated in Spanish as some tourism volunteers could benefit from this option. The online "Learning Lab" should be uploaded and tested by year end. The official end date is April 2024 based on the funding guidelines.

Not part of the Tourism Management grant but important to the region is The Roadmap to Recovery group that is in the implementation stage of the DOLA funded program. The Roadmap effort may receive \$40,000 from DOLA to be used for a project identified in the Plan. A tourism project like the Colorado Main St. program or other signage has been discussed to use these funds. ECCOG is participating in the Roadmap group and will coordinate actions as part of our Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) including building a regional tourism group and starting the workforce development partnership called SECTORS.

FYI: ECCOG may apply for a different \$40,000 to implement a CEDS project and discussion within the region has suggested a regional housing needs assessment. Some communities or counties would like their own housing study updated as part of this project. ECCOG staff is working on a Request for Proposal for pursuing such a project but more support funds must be solicited from USDA, CHFA, EDA and other partners to cover the costs exceeding the \$40,000.

NEW BUSINESS:

Employee Policy Manual Additions

Executive Director Candace Payne explained the Secure Savings program registration has been completed now that the access code has arrived. Since we have more than five employees, we must register and notify staff of our decision. After a brief discussion, the Board will offer part-time employees the option to participate in the NERT Retirement program without match for part-time employees. Employees must opt out of the program individually on their own (no blanket option is offered) and ECCOG will inform employees of their need to do so. Employees may choose to enroll in ECCOG's retirement plan or not. This change will be documented in the Employee Policy and Procedure Manual. Director Ryan Fulmer made a motion to offer part-time staff the benefit of retirement savings through NERT. Marc Dettenrieder seconded the motion. Motion passed.

A new law effective June 27, 2023, provides better accommodations for expecting mothers. The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) requires employers to accommodate more and frequent breaks, sitting or standing options, lifting limits and a modified work schedule when the employer is notified of the need for such conditions by female employees. Executive Director Candace Payne explained no office staff is currently in need of such accommodations however, any staff could have such a need in the future and particularly field staff like kitchen staff. Language covering such accommodations will need added to the policy also. Director Dave Hornung made a motion to address these accommodations in our policy as recommended. Director Valerie Rhoades seconded the motion, which passed. Once the policy manual is updated to address both changes, it will be provided to all staff.

CDOT 5310 and 5311

The new CDOT contracts for the 5310 and 5311 programs were emailed via DocuSign to Chairmans Chris Richardson and Executive Director Candace Payne for signing in May 2023. The contract of \$343,473 for 5311 funds was executed by the state on June 1, 2023, when it was signed by the governor. The 5310 contract amount will be disclosed with the executed contract. Since these contracts were signed in between Board meetings, ratification is necessary. Director Ryan Fulmer made a motion to ratify the signing by Chairman Chris Richardson and Executive Director Candace Payne of the CDOT contracts. Director Valerie Rhoades seconded the motion, which passed. These contracts will fund transportation services for ECCOG and our sub-grantee, Dynamic Dimensions in Burlington.

Other

Gary Beedy's term on the Transportation Committee for CDOT is expiring. A Letter of Support was provided to Governor Polis from ECCOG to support Gary's re-appointment to the position as the urging of Chairman Chris Richardson to Executive Director Candace Payne in June. Mr. Beedy has served on the Transportation Planning Region as a former Lincoln County commissioner and continues to have strong support of rural Colorado. We hope to hear Gary was re-appointed by late July as he's currently serving as Interim Chairman of the TC.

Chairman Chris Richardson thanked Darlene Carpio for being on the call and gave her the floor. Mrs. Carpio mentioned Congressman Ken Buck's office is available for conversation and support for anything related to rural Colorado. She also expressed his efforts on the CREP program were well received this past month. Mrs. Carpio thanked the ECCOG Board for welcoming her to the meetings and complimented them on the work performed by staff.

Executive Director Candace Payne announced ECCOG is hosting a Broadband meeting in Limon on August 23rd to explain Colorado's portion of the BEAD funds and how internet providers and local government may apply for funding. The meeting is planned for 10AM-1PM at the Community Building.

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

Aug 2 – Mail ballot

Sept 6 – In-person in Limon for audit presentation

Oct 4 – Mail ballot, in-person, teleconference

Adjournment

Chairman Chris Richardson adjourned the meeting at 8:02PM following a motion by Director Valerie Rhoades and a second to the motion by Ryan Fulmer.

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