



Northwest Colorado Council of Governments

NWCCOG Council & EDD Board Meeting

December 5, 2019

NWCCOG Silverthorne Office

Silverthorne, CO

Council & EDD Board Members Present:

Andy Miller, Town of Fraser
Anne McKibbin, Town of Eagle
Carolyn Skowrya, Town of Dillon
Corry Mihm, Summit Chamber
Jennie Fancher, Town of Avon (phone)
Jo McQueary, Town of Walden (phone)
John Bristol, Steamboat Springs Chamber
Karn Stiegelmeier, Summit County
Kristen Manguso, Grand County
Mark Hoblitzell, CO Dept. of Labor & Employment
Michael Gardner, City of Glenwood Springs
Melanie Leaverton, Jackson County Tourism
Patty McKenny, Town of Vail (phone)
Shane Larson, Colorado Mountain College
Watkins Fulk-Gray, Town of Basalt (phone)
William Infante, Town of Basalt

Others Present:

Betsy Bair, Senator Gardner's Office (phone)

NWCCOG Staff:

Becky Walter
Doug Jones
Elaina West
Jon Stavney
Rachel Lunney

Call to Order:

Karn Stiegelmeier, NWCCOG Council Chair at 10:02am. Roundtable introductions were completed, and a quorum was present for the groups.

Approval of August 2019 Council & EDD Board Meeting Minutes

M/S: Andy Miller/Carolyn Skowrya to approve the August 2019 Council & EDD Board Meeting Minutes as presented.

Passed: Yes

Approval of October 2019 Council Meeting Minutes

M/S: Andy Miller/Carolyn Skowrya to approve the October 2019 Council Meeting Minutes with corrected typos.

Passed: Yes

NLF Reports

Documents for review, not approval.

Approval of 2019 Budget Revisions & 2020 Budget

The 2019 revised budget is shown on each program page, so both the revision and the 2020 budget are inclusive. There were no questions.

M/S: Carolyn Skowrya/Anne McKibbin to approve the 2019 Budget Revisions and the 2020 Budget as presented.

Passed: Yes

Approval of EDA Grant Application Submission

NWCCOG Economic Development District receives planning partnership funds each year from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). In the past, each year, we have submitted an annual grant request for these funds. This fall, the EDA notified districts that it was changing to a 3-year grant cycle, and on short notice requested a submittal for that 3-year grant. This was submitted and approved between NWCCOG EDD meetings. The EDA has also moved all Denver Region EDD's to the same grant cycle, which is now going to be 4/1/20 – 3/31/23. On Thursday, Oct. 31, the EDA invited NWCCOG to submit a funding request in the amount of \$227,500 for planning partnership funds covering that 3-

year period. This amount represents 3 years of funding at \$70,000/year (\$210,000) plus one quarter (1/1/20 – 3/31/20, in the amount of \$17,500) to bring us into compliance with the new 3-year grant cycle beginning 4/1/20. The grant application was due November 21st, which was prior to our next regularly scheduled EDD board meeting on Dec. 5. Therefore, staff is requesting retroactive approval for submission (and acceptance of grant).

Betsy Bair let staff and the council know that as we go through the grant submission Senator Gardner's office can send letters of recommendations to the EDA. Senator Gardner is on the commerce committee, which has jurisdiction over this. Betsy asked that staff email her to prepare the letters if we would like to take her up on the proposition.

M/S: Corry Mihm/Andy Miller to approve the EDA Grant Application as presented.

Passed: Yes

Approve CLA as 2019 auditor (extend contract)

CliftonLarsonAllen has completed NWCCOG's three previous audits. NWCCOG is looking for one year or three-year approval. Council asked if approval of three-year contract allows NWCCOG to terminate the CLA contract if necessary. Jon said the funding is approved annually, so yes.

M/S: Patty McKenny/Anne McKibbin to approve retaining the CLA auditors for the 2019 audit.

Patty amends her original motion to include the 3-year contract.

M/S: Patty McKenny/Anne McKibbin to approve retaining the CLA contractors for the next three years.

Passed: Yes

Congressional/Legislative Updates

Senator Gardner's Office, Betsy Bair – yesterday senator McConnell published the 2020 senate schedule. It looks different than ever before because they did not publish January's schedule. With potential impeachment trial and hearings, the government does not know what January schedule looks like. Senator Gardner is introducing legislation on mental health issues. In a bipartisan effort, he created a three-digit suicide call number which would be 988. Similar to 911, anyone in a suicide situation could call 988. The problem with local numbers is that most folks in a crisis do not have access to those phone numbers, so 988 is an attempt to make number easier and more accessible.

Betsy shared our fee retention letter with Gardner and their staff. There were also some public land bills that would fit the back log of maintenance in national parks and a permanent authorization for land and water conservation funds. All of those came out of committee and have been referred to the senate floor. They are not scheduled at this time, but they were delighted they came out of committee. The national parks legislation does not include fee increases. Each park goes through their own individual fee increase process.

PRESENTATION: NWCCOG Energy Program—Innovations and successes, an in-person update from Doug Jones, Energy Program Director

First 15 years Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

- Program was developed in the 1970 during the oil embargo
- Funded by DOE, State of CO, Utility Rebates, LEAP
- Saving Energy in Low Income family households covering thirteen counties in NW Colorado
- H&S problems, install high efficiency furnaces, insulation, air sealing, energy star refrigerators,
- 9 in house employees, serving 100 households
- Training: Asbestos, Lead Paint, OSHA, Energy Auditor, Gas piping, Insulation, BPI certifications, furnace troubleshooting

4 1/2 years ago Nate and Doug took over the program

- Change in Culture – involving our staff in decisions, giving them input,
- Visited other agencies around the state
 - Diversifying funding by adding Fee for Service Programs
 - (Hiring and layoffs depending on funding levels)
- Started talking to Energy Outreach Colorado in Denver
- Realized we have a unique skillset
- Introduced CARE and CIP Programs

Today

- 3 Programs working together serving 300 households in NW Colorado in NWCCOG LOGO vehicle
- 16 full time employees – moving into larger space
- Diversified funding portfolio
- Increased Training and Advancement opportunities for employees
- Fee for service programs covering 32% of overhead
- % Indirect increasing – helping smaller programs pay less
- Bonuses / Profit sharing program approved by Executive Director
- All This gives back to our CORE – WAP, Employees, and Clients COG

Future

- Expand our CIP Program - Develop “Pay it Forward Program” – Partner with other NWCCOG programs – so much more

Program Updates:

Economic Development, Rachel Lunney – The EDA is also moving all Denver regional office districts to the same Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) cycle. We are being moved to an October 1st CEDS cycle, which moves our update up by 3 months.

The Third Annual Economic Summit will be on May 3, 2020 in Silverthorne, CO. Instead of having competing conferences, Rachel partnered with the Economic Development Council of Colorado (EDCC). Retention was one of the key economic issues mentioned at our August Council meeting, so the plan is to have a session on that topic at the Economic Summit. They also talked about including a panel of town managers to talk about what economic development looks like in a mountain town. If any board members would like to be a part of the planning committee for the Economic Summit, please email Rachel: rachel@nwccog.org.

Corry Mihm has been working with the Summit Prosperity Initiative and looking at business succession and planning/long-term planning. There are now some state programs coming out on employee ownership plans. The idea is that if business owners grow older but don't have family to take over the business, employee ownership could be a solution. This could be an interesting topic for the Economic Summit. The Colorado Workforce Center has been working with OEDIT to roll out the business education series on employee ownership across the northwest workforce region. They don't expect that toolkit to be ready until May or early spring. There's also a program state is doing on rural remote worker's. Unfortunately, most of our counties are excluded from it (Pitkin, Eagle, and Summit). There may be some opportunity for Jackson and Grand County to participate.

Member Updates:

Town of Vail, Patty McKenny – Recent candidate election had three incumbents reelected to the Vail Town Council. They are joined by new elected Brian Stockmar. Dave Chapin remains Mayor and Kim Langmaid was elected Mayor Pro-Tem. The proposed tax for vaping and tobacco products was passed. Vail is currently working through the collect of that tax with their finance department. There will be future discussion and consideration of increasing the age to purchase those products to 21. The town continues to try to balance housing and the environment. There's been a controversial housing project towards East Vail that is in direct conflict with some big horn sheep who reside above the area, but often venture down along frontage road and the interstate. The project was approved by Vail's planning and environment commission, but is currently sitting in district court as a number of residents appealed the decision. For 2020, Vail will continue to focus on prioritizing projects and programing (community, economy, experience, and sustainability). They will continue the Vail Indeed Housing Program. With the goal of rethinking and reenergizing a piece of Vail, the town recently finished a civic area planning effort. They engaged the community on the planning process and received their feedback. Feasibility studies will be created following the recent first round of planning. They hope to embark on a West Vail Master Plan and possibly a town-wide Community Visioning Process for 2020. Scott Robson is the newly hired Vail Town Manager.

Town of Walden, Melanie Leaverton – Walden finished their first craft studio 101, making them eligible for an implementation grant to use for asset inventory and marketing. They were assigned a coach for Heart and Soul, which is exciting as Walden is the smallest community they have ever worked with. Walden had their Christmas Tree lighting on December 4, 2019. Working on revitalizing the beautification of downtown. The individual who owns a majority of the

town updated the interior and exterior of the Village Inn Hotel, adding some additional rooms dedicated to his employees.

Town of Avon, Jennie Fancher – Avon hopes to finish up some miscellaneous plans and design projects. Avon recently passed an ordinance that will prohibit food vendors in town from using Styrofoam. However, it will go in effect only if the state legislature repeals some language they have in their recycling ordinance that forbids individual communities in Colorado from enacting any legislation prohibiting any specific plastic product. Avon's understanding it that the state is currently looking at a repeal of that ordinance. Styrofoam is not recyclable nor compostable. Since the plastic bag ban, Avon has noticed far fewer plastic bags floating around the environment and culverts that lead into Eagle River. They are hoping for the same positive impact with their Styrofoam ordinance. For this coming year Avon is very focused on working at waste reduction and recycling efforts. They are promoting and encouraging their residents to sign up for the 100% renewal electricity program, Pure, by Holy Cross Energy. Avon is setting a baseline inventory for greenhouse gas emissions, evaluating their own vehicles, and installing electric charging stations at key spots in town. They are also working on housing and partnerships. A townhouse project is wrapping up. A condo development is in the groundwork stage. An apartment complex is underway.

City of Glenwood Springs, Michael Gardner – Broadband in Glenwood is starting construction on new fiber to home project to serve every single home and business in the city next year. They are looking to partner with any community or region in their general area to help support bringing broadband to as many people as possible. They will have the infrastructure and resources available.

Town of Basalt, William Infante – Basalt is plowing forward on a number of initiatives to include Project Thor in the Roaring Fork Valley. A group will meet in early January to discuss providing broadband service for their own corporate interests, but then also explore the notion of how that fiber can be connected to others. In the context of regionalism, a group of folks independently gathered to talk about regional affordable housing, policies, regulation, and production (Cathy Click with Dave Myler, Bill Lamott, et al.). Steering Committee Meeting on 16th at 9:30 in Carbondale Town Hall to review MOU. Basalt budgeted \$10,000 in support of this effort. Following the Lake Christine Fire, Basalt encountered a few issues with their gun range. They continue to discuss with CPW how they can enhance and strengthen their gun range in order to prevent future fires, suppress sound, and provide greater public safety. Citizens are also concerned about lead issues from and the potential for lead to leak into ground and surface water. They asked for a lead survey that is anticipated to occur after the snow melts in spring 2020. Refunds went out for the tabor issue. A group of interested and concerned citizens constructed Basalt Gives. Its purpose is to gather public contributions to invest in services or goods that the public sector is not providing. Eagle County invested \$10,000. Basalt will meet on December 10, 2019 and hopes to contribute a similar amount. The money will be invested in NGOs and other interests that are advancing things like childcare, affordable housing, etc.

Town of Fraser, Andy Miller – Fraser approved annual budget on December 4, 2019. They discovered they are spending more than they are taking in even during a time of good economic turns. Winter Park has the highest sales tax rate in Colorado at about 10%, and Fraser is right behind them. Fraser is starting to recognize how Project Thor could greatly benefit the area.

Town of Dillon, Carolyn Skowrya – Dillon is down to two candidates for Town Manager. They hope to make the decision or start negotiations in two weeks. Santa and Mrs. Clause will be at the community church with the Hazel Miller band December 5, 2019. The Ice Castles will open in a few weeks. They have been successful in the past. Dillon limited the amount of time they are up this year and will enforce stricter tear-down regulations. It's controversial because the town is planning to add tuff to the town park, which is greatly damaged following the Ice Castles. They are also in an ongoing legal issue with an individual who slipped and broken their arm or leg on the property.

Town of Eagle, Anne McKibbin – Home Rule Committee is off and running. The commission has had 3 meetings to date. They have 9 members; 6 were elected and 3 were appointed. Eagle hired a new Events Director. Tuesday, December 10, 2019, they are going to look at a tobacco licensing ordinance. The Town Board previously failed to pass an age 21 ordinance, but there has been a change of heart within the board. There will be licensing fees. Eagle has a new self-sustaining downtown business group that recently received their 501c3 status. They are in discussion with the Eagle

River Station property owner to see if they will help fund a subarea plan for that property and the Chambers Avenue Corridor.

They are getting started on planning for Grand Avenue. Project Thor work is underway. There is a municipal election April 2020.

Colorado Department of Labor & Employment, Mark Hoblitzell – The Workforce Development Center is planning a one-day conference on April 2 at the Silverthorne Pavilion. It will focus on employee attraction and retention and current market struggles. The two main pieces will be panel discussions highlighting area employers from across the region that excel in those aspects. They have been busy presenting Business Education Events. In January they are going to trial a "skillful", which is a skills-based hiring workshop for businesses and employers looking at improving job-postings and free tools for businesses that creates more relevant job postings. There is some good data behind how that improves applicant pools for positions.

Steamboat Chamber, John Bristol – The biggest focus coal-fired electric generation. Steamboat is looking at transitioning from coal-fired power to alternatives. Town Manager from Oak Creek moved to Town of Hayden to be economic development director. Smartwool will be vacating their space from steamboat in April 2020. Honey Stinger will occupy the vacated space. About 1/3 of employees from Smartwool decided to stay and find other employment. Steamboat introduced a plastic bag fee (\$.10) which was spearheaded by a student-led group.

Summit County Chamber, Corry Mihm – Their Executive Director, Judi LaPoint, is retiring. There is someone in place to take over. They continue to work on an ad hoc basis with the Summit Prosperity Initiative, which is a group focused on prosperity and vitality issues in Summit County. The county Received a READY grant from the USDA to fund consultants for planning support. Corry wanted the council to be aware that Vail Resorts strategy deemphasizes individual destinations and instead focuses on Vail's corporate brands. This puts the onus on counties housing Vail Resorts to market, preserve, and protect our local brands.

Summit County, Karn Stiegelmeier – Summit passed a tobacco tax spearheaded by student efforts inspired by a similar youth effort in Eagle County. Each jurisdiction retains their own collections. Summit is assessing minimum wage. They are focusing on legislation specifically looking at the "tipped wage" issue. The state permits a \$3.02 differential dip to the state minimum wage that in theory is made up for in tips. Summit will be hosting the Mountain Town's 2030 Net Zero Summit in September 2020, which is a climate action event focused on zero net emissions. Summit County voters supported better recycling and composting. However, Timberline (Waste Connections/Honey Wagon) poorly manages the recycling processes and has a problem with employee retention. When Honey Wagon was bought out by Waste Connections, Byron left Honey Wagon and opened Vail Valley Waste to serve as a solution to poor waste management services. Counties are currently prohibited from providing waste management services, but Summit is considering legislation to permit counties to collect waste.

Consolidation of Waste Services in Mountains: in light of input from Summit County, the consolidation of waste services in conjunction with the shrinking international market for recyclables was discussed at length. This may be an issue of focus in 2020 for NWCCOG. Jon to make some more calls to define what a scope of inquiry on the matter might look like.

Adjournment:

M/S: Carolyn Skowyr/Ane McKibbin adjourned the NWCCOG Council meeting at 1:14pm.

Passed: Yes


Karn Stiegelmeier, NWCCOG Council Chair

8-21-2020
Date


DiAnn Butler, EDD Chair

8-24-2020
Date