



Northwest Colorado Council of Governments

NWCCOG Council Meeting

March 25, 2021

Conference Call Only ("Present" means on the call")

Council & EDD Board Members Present:

Alyssa Shenk, Town of Snowmass Village
Andy Miller, Town of Fraser
Bill Infante, Town of Basalt
Coby Corkle, Jackson County
Gusty Kanakis, Town of Minturn
Josh Blanchard, Summit County
Jonah Landy, Grand Lake
Kristen Manguso, Grand County
Patti Clapper, Pitkin County
Patty McKenny, Town of Vail
Robert Hill, Town of Red Cliff
Skippy Mesirov, City of Aspen
Steve Child, Pitkin County
Tamra Nottingham Underwood, Town of Avon
Tom Fridstein, Town of Snowmass Village
Watkins Fulk-Gray, Town of Basalt

Others Present:

Matthew Kireker, Senator Bennet's Office
Janeth Stancle, Hickenlooper's Office
Melanie Leaverton, Jackson County Tourism
Sarah McCarthy, Senator Hickenlooper's Office
Christina Oxley, CDLE
Hogan Peterson, Representative Boebert's Office
Carolyn Tucker, CDLE

NWCCOG Staff:

Elaina West
Erin Fisher
Jeff Andrews
Jon Stavney
Nate Speerstra
Nate Walowitz
Rachel Lunney

Call to Order

Alyssa Shenk, NWCCOG Council Chair, called the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) meeting to order at 10:16am. Roundtable introductions were completed, and a quorum was present for the group.

Approval of January 2021 Council & EDD Board Meeting Minutes

M/S: Patti Clapper/Andy Miller to approve the January 2021 Council Meeting Minutes as presented.

Passed: Yes

Approval of 2020 End of the Year Financials

M/S: Patti Clapper/Tom Fridstein to approve the 2020 end of the year financials as presented.

Passed: Yes

Ski Area Fee Retention Bill Update

There is no current bill for this session, though ski area reps are shopping for sponsors to revive same bill as previous years. Jon provided a quick summary of the bill which delegates a portion of ski area rental charges to be retained for the local forest service and ski areas. Bill specifies funds be used for helping the forest service administrative office process items for the ski areas (permits for expansion, recreation, etc.). In 2018 and 2019, NWCCOG wrote letters to Colorado representatives in support of this bill adding that the funds could be used to improve all-season, local forest service operations instead of restricting the funds to benefit only ski areas. The ski areas were opposed to this recommendation. .

Matthew Kireker, Senator Bennet's Office, let the council know that many details remain in the works and representatives plan to meet and discuss in April 2021. Matt noted that the Great American Outdoors Act establishment of Nation Park and Public Lands Legacy Restoration Fund's goal was to invest in critical deferred maintenance and other infrastructure projects on National Forests, which will benefit more than 50 projects in Colorado.

Sarah McCarthy, Senator Hickenlooper's Office, and Hogan Peterson, Boebert's Office, reiterated sentiments similar to Matthew Kireker.

NWCCOG is operating with the understanding that we may want to weigh in on this again and that the council maintains opinions similar to those in the 2018 and 2019 letters. NWCCOG will follow up with the council on future updates.

Mountain Migration Project Update

Jon reviewed the current Mountain migration survey numbers. Survey closes at the end of March 2021. NWCCOG will provide another update when full results are available. Project is looking at influx of visitors in our communities, asking if this is going to last, and what it means for future planning and decision making. Jon asked the membership if anyone wanted to be more involved in this project to contact him.

Approve Edits to 2021 Employee Handbook

NWCCOG updates the Employee Handbook every other year. Jon provided a high-level verbal overview to the edits which were shown in red-line in the packet.

M/S: Patti Clapper/Andy Miller move to approve the 2021 Employee Handbook.

Passed: Yes

2021 Member Handbook

Online: <http://www.nwccog.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/2021-member-handbook.pdf>.

2021 Member Survey

Jon asked the council to distribute the 2021 Member Survey at their next staff or council meeting. Link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BTJVQXP>

Executive Director Updates

There was an ECO Trails inquiry about use of NWCCOG Foundation. The project is not confirmed, but Jon will let the council know if this becomes a serious proposal. Last year, Jon helped Fraser hire a short-term Town Manager. Jon is currently helping Avon hire a new Town Manager. Routt County is gathering more support to officially move to Region 12. There is no timeline. Jon ended his update with reviewing the new NWCCOG Website that will soon go live.

Program Updates

In packet: <http://nwccog.org/about/meetings/>.

Legislative Updates

Hickenlooper's Office, Janeth Stangle – Janeth introduced herself as the Central Mountains Regional Representative for Hickenlooper's Office. Janeth oversees the following counties: Eastern Garfield, Pitkin, Eagle, Summit, Lake, Chaffee, West Grand, Jackson, and Routt. Hickenlooper's office is still getting things off the ground. Janeth wanted the council to be aware of the committees Hickenlooper is a part of: Small Business and Entrepreneur Committee (advocated for the American Rescue Plan and to have the Revitalization Fund added to that), Health, Education, Labor, and Pension Committee (HELP) (Chairman of the Workplace Subcommittee, which will focus on the workforce and economics in our mountain, tourist, and rural communities), Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Chairman of the Space and Energy Subcommittee, and also on the Commerce Committee (deals with transportation and broadband). Janeth shared a [Title-By-Title Summary of the American Rescue Plan](#) now posted on our website. She lastly provided her contact information and let the council know she is available to answer any of their questions: Janeth Stangle, U.S. Senator John Hickenlooper, Central Mountains Regional Representative, C: (970) 342-3150, janeth_stangle@hickenlooper.senate.gov.

Sarah McCarthy from Hickenlooper's Office also shared her contact information: Sarah McCarthy, Western Colorado Regional Director, sarah_mccarthy@hickenlooper.senate.gov, cell: 970-975-3528.

Bennet's Office, Matt Kireker – Matt notified the council regarding a clause in the American Rescue Plan expanding how monies can be spent to include funding for sewer, water, and broadband infrastructure. The American Family Act was seen through the expansion and enhancement of the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit of the American Rescue Plan. Currently, it will sunset after a year. The goal is to reintroduce the American Family Act and make this permanent. It would increase the credit from \$2,000 to \$3,600 per child annually for child under 6 and \$3,000 per child for children 6-17. It is fully refundable and still being debated on rollout timeline (twice a year vs monthly). 93% of

children will benefit in some form and it will lift 4 million children out of poverty including 57,000 in Colorado. Matt shared his grief in response to the recent Boulder shooting. Bennet's office thinks it would be beneficial to pass universal background checks, ban hire capacity magazines, and offer more mental health resources in order to hopefully help anyone struggling. Matt shared his contact information: matthew_kireker@bennet.senate.gov, 303-883-3119.

Boebert's Office, Hogan Peterson – Hogan introduced himself as the Regional Director for the Western Slope, but that he covers the Northern and Central Rocky Mountain communities as well. Three subjects Boebert's Office hears the most about is water policy, broadband policy, and retaining the BLM. The Western Water Security Act prevents the federal government from compelling the signature of water rights over to a federal agency in exchange for a federal permit. This is important for agriculture, municipalities, and ski areas. Boebert's office introduced legislation called the Local Act to house BLM headquarters in some form in a western state with the thought that the community will be better served by someone who lives in the community. Hogan also provided his contact information: Hogan Peterson, Western Slope Regional Director, Congresswoman Lauren Boebert (Co-03), Hogan.Peterson@Mail.House.Gov, GJ Office: 970-208-0460.

Member Updates

Pitkin County, Steve Child – Pitkin returned to level orange on the COVID state dial. They have many 5-star business that are able to operate at the Yellow Level. 40% of the county's limited vaccine supply is going to people who do not reside in Pitkin County. The county is asking the state to send them more vaccines. Pitkin passed a regulation regarding the growing of industrial hemp, making it a use by special review in their agricultural zoning districts to prevent hemp being grown in the wrong places.

City of Aspen, Skippy Mesirov – Skippy reiterated some of Steve Child's comments and shared his hopeful attitude regarding COVID and receiving more snow.

Town of Snowmass Village, Tom Fridstein – Snowmass is discussing continuing the mask mandate to be as safe as possible.

Town of Basalt, Bill Infante and Watkins Fulk-Gray – Basalt extended their mask mandate. The council recently voted on a resolution led by the Mountain Pact supporting President Biden's initiative to suspend oil and gas drilling on federal lands.

Grand County, Kristen Manguso – Grand is preparing for impacts following the East Troublesome Fire (debris flow, mudslides, flooding). They had a head on collision on Red Dirt Hill, so they continue pushing to get funds to fix their highways and hopefully prevent more accidents. Kristen shared her appreciation for NWCCOG.

Town of Fraser, Andy Miller – Andy shared his appreciation for Jon in assisting them with finding a temporary Town Manager. Fraser is getting closer to selecting a permanent Town Manager.

Town of Avon, Tamra Nottingham Underwood – Tamra shared her appreciation for Jon's help in searching for a Town Manager.

Town of Minturn, Gusty Kanakis – The problems revealed by the Grizzly Creek Fire led Minturn to do an upgrade on their water system. They are currently in the design process of having two tanks for redundancy and upgrading the water plant to a ceramic filter system.

Jackson County, Coby Corkle – Jackson's new Public Health Department is up and running. NWCCOG supported this project with a grant. They received a Master Planning Grant for some upgrades. Jackson is worried about a couple pieces of legislation that could hurt their economy. They have a new ski organization called Bluebird Backcountry. Jackson is down to two finalists for a new County Administrator.

Jackson County Tourism, Melanie Leaverton – Jackson is trying to get some projects together with the University of Technical Assistance (UTA) for beautification. DOLA is working with them on the beautification projects as well. The

Boettcher Foundation gave the North Park Heart & Soul a \$12,500 matching grant to hire a Project Coordinator. Jackson has a new Chamber Board and new lodging tax panel. Melanie also shared her appreciation for NWCCOG.

Summit County, Josh Blanchard – Summit’s COVID numbers are rising; the county moved up to level orange on the COVID state dial. They are going through an economic development initiative to figure out how summit can take a leading roll in local economic development. The past year showed Summit how vulnerable their economy is with 70% of jobs relating directing to tourism. Their goal is to address this and diversity the economy. Housing challenges escalated following COVID with Summit becoming a “zoom town” (individuals moving here because they can work or attend school remotely). Summit is involved in community-wide conversations regarding CDOT (COVID signage, improvement projects impacting exit’s 195, 203, and 205).

New Business

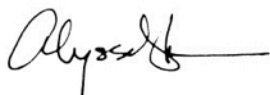
JBC Letter, AAA Proposed Alternative to the Current FY 21-22 Budget Request in packet:

<http://nwccog.org/about/meetings/>.

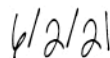
Adjournment

M/S: Tamra Nottingham Underwood/Steve Child adjourned the NWCCOG Council meeting at 12:04 p.m.

Passed: Yes



Alyssa Shenk, NWCCOG Council Chair



Date