



Northwest Colorado Council of Governments

Economic Development District (EDD) Board Meeting

March 24, 2022

Conference Call Only (“Present” means on the call”)

Council & EDD Board Members Present:

Alyssa Shenk, Town of Snowmass
Corry Mihm, Summit Prosperity Initiative
DiAnn Butler, Grand County EDD
Jeanne McQueeney, Eagle County
Josh Blanchard, Summit County
Patti Clapper, Pitkin County
Chris Romer, Vail Valley Partnership
Erin McCuskey, SBDC
Kristin Brownson, Town of Breckenridge
John Bristol, Steamboat Chamber of Commerce
Mark Hoblitzell, CDLE

Others Present:

Keely Ellis, OEDIT
Matt Kireker, Sen. Benn
Ashley Perl, Pitkin County
Jeanne Bistranin, Summit Foundation
Paige Johnson, Colorado Dept. of Local Affairs
Kara Silbernagel, Pitkin County
Eddie O’Brien, Summit County

NWCCOG Staff:

Becky Walter
Talai Shirey
Jon Stavney
Rachel Tuyn

Call to Order:

DiAnn Butler, EDD Chair, called the Economic Development District (EDD) Board meeting to order at 12:30 pm. Roundtable introductions were completed, and a quorum was present for the group.

Approval of January EDD Board Meeting Minutes

M/S: John Bristol/Corry Mihm to approve the January 2022 EDD Board Meeting Minutes as presented.

Passed: Yes

DOLA Roadmap to Recovery Project Roundtable Discussion

Funded by EDA and DOLA, there are five different Roadmap projects are underway in the NWCCOG Region. NWCCOG intends to incorporate some of these projects into the SEDS.

Erin McCuskey, Eagle County –Originally applied for a larger region for the roadmap but have narrowed down to Eagle County. The desire is not to isolate the region but to start working as a cross region project. The initiative is Workforce Resiliency however they have not homed in on the project yet; they are working on finding something deliverable. There is interest in working across normal jurisdictions to find a solution to workforce resiliency.

Kara Silbernagel, Pitkin County –Started the process with the state template however recognized stakeholder engagement was necessary. The conversation led to workforce resilience and how to keep people. The workforce and leaders are burned out, healing the fatigue is the first step. Momentum in the valley for regional housing coalition is already in place; currently looking at using the state resources to help come up with innovative actions helping the housing in the roaring fork area. Breaking ideas into “Big Roadmap” and “Little Roadmap”; working with consultants on data updates and a “toolkit” to use resources to benefit the most.

Corry Mihm, Summit County –There are many innovative initiatives already geared toward housing and childcare in Summit County. The focus for the DOLA Roadmap has been narrowed down, focusing on economic resilience, diversification and supporting small business. Consultants have provided interviews which show that Summit County needs to take a step back to make sure the vision hasn’t changed. Summit County Government is in the process of updating the Master Plan and there will be a stakeholder meeting in the spring.

John Bristol, Routt County –Unique to Routt County are the coal mines, powerplants and Just Transition. An intergovernmental agreement Routt, Moffit, Rio Blanca Northwest Colorado Development Council has been tasked with project planning. Phase I - Regional support and communication; Phase II - Consultant round tables and community engagement. Focus is on regional transit, Industry diversification, resilience, and livability.

DiAnne Butler, Grand County – Region includes Grand, Clear Creek, Gilpin, Netherlands, Lyons, and Estes Park. Struggles include changes in the team and having to reiterate the “wish list”. Housing, broadband, transportation and workforce have been the focus however each community has much different needs. There may be sub-committees created to start identifying projects. Page Johnson with the Colorado Resiliency Office confirmed there is a lot of variation in this region. The next steps need to include stakeholder engagement once a project has been narrowed down. Currently there is a small group of people working a very large region.

Josh Blanchard, Summit County – Summit County is redefining Workforce Resiliency to encompass additional issues to include childcare and mental health. Look within the communities for talent to “grow your own”, not necessarily for high skilled positions but to include all jobs for economic resiliency.

Patti Clapper, Pitkin County – Essence of workforce resiliency is community resiliency. The sense of community needs to be built back up. Without the necessities such as childcare it is difficult to strengthen the workforce.

Workforce Update

Jessica Valand, CDLE provided a workforce update. The DOLA roadmaps While workforce resiliency can encompass the additional issues including childcare and mental issues, the focus from CDLE remains on the Department of Labor. The Federal government put out these programs to train the workforce. In the mountain region, the struggle is that we already attract highly educated people to this region so additional training is not the solution. The challenge in our communities is paying people enough to take the lower paying service jobs that are necessary in our community.

Mark Hoblitzell, CDLE shared unemployment rates for January, the NWCCOG Region continues to see declining rates. Summit County is at the lowest at 2.4%. There will be revised data available at the May EDD Board meeting. The census released the population growth reports, the NWCCOG region is generally staying flat. The general theme shows that anyone who is able and willing to work is currently working. It is expected that the labor shortage will be around for some time to come.

Jessica Valand - Funding is available for sector partnerships, specifically for certain industries. The challenge is finding an industry that works for our region as they are generally looking for higher paying positions. There was recently interest in a retail sector partnership. The funds are available, if anyone is interested in exploring a sector-based partnership please reach out.

Rachel – Co SEDS is recruiting private business as advisors for a committee for the statewide SEDS. Please reach out if you know of a local entrepreneur who may be interested.

Adjournment:

M/S: Jessica Valand / Josh Blanchard adjourned the EDD meeting at 1:52 pm.

Passed: Yes

DiAnn Butler

[DiAnn Butler \(May 18, 2022 19:17 MDT\)](#)

DiAnn Butler, EDD Chair

May 18, 2022

Date