

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 February 5, 2015

Call to Order

Chairman Nancy Bogenhagen called the February 5, 2015 meeting of the ECCOG Board of Directors to order at 7:10 pm at the Community Building in Limon, CO. In addition to Nancy Bogenhagen, Board members present included: Valerie Rhoades, Harry Nelson, Greg King, Larry Ross, Dave Hornung, Monica Halde, Troy McCue, Maarten Van Zoeren, Harvey Martin, and Nancy Harris. Staff members present included Jo Downey, ECCOG Executive Director and Terry Baylie, Senior and Transit Services Director. Also present was Donna Ross, Elbert County. Board members Jack Hendricks and Gary Beedy were absent.

Nancy then asked the Board to consider the Minutes of the November 5, 2014 meeting. Dave Hornung moved to approve the November 5, 2014, meeting Minutes. Motion was seconded by Greg King and carried unanimously.

Jo stated the appointment of Dana Siekman to the Prairie Development Corporation board for another two year term was approved by mail ballot.

The Board next reviewed the February 2015 Financial Report and list of bills for January 2015. The report showed a total net payroll of \$24,503.78 and total bills for January of \$92,592.15. Jo Downey explained the new look of the check register and the list of bills. The new software that was purchased in 2014 is nearing full use. Additional detailed reports will be available by the next meeting. It was noted that January 2015 Financial Report showing net payroll of \$27,591.99 and the list of December bills of \$74,463.02 were approved by mail ballot. The January meeting was canceled due to weather concerns. Dave Hornung moved the Board approve the February financial report and pay the January bills. Troy McCue seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Broadband Plan Status

Director Downey updated the Board as to the status of the Regional Broadband Planning Project. Jo reminded the board that since the January meeting was canceled due to weather, a mail ballot was issued to appoint Patricia White as the broadband committee chairperson and approval was received to allow ECCOG Chairman Bogenhagen to sign the ECCOG contract with Mid-State Consultants. A most successful kick-off meeting was held January 23 and

potential Steering Committee members volunteered at that initial meeting. A list of the proposed Steering Committee members was distributed. Staff reported on the varied makeup of the committee and that they were most pleased that so many diverse and important interests were represented. Jo said that some DOLA (Department of Local Affairs) staff members have voiced concerns regarding private providers being on the ECCOG Steering Committee. The main concern seems to be the potential of a conflict of interest. Downey said that she checked with the consultant and two other COGS that had already completed Broadband Plans. All three stated that there were far more positives in having Broadband providers working with Broadband users and economic development interests than there were negatives. After lengthy discussion with all comments supporting the importance of involving the private sector in the planning process, a motion to approve the makeup of the Steering Committee as presented was made by Valerie Rhoades and seconded by Larry Ross. Motion carried unanimously. A copy of the Steering Committee roster is attached to the official file copy of these minutes.

Town of Limon Outback Express Vehicle

The new bus for Limon arrived November 20th. It was inspected and accepted. There was an issue with the spare-tire carrier, it didn't have one...which resulted in a \$150 over-billing. ECCOG staff asked the bus company to re-send a corrected invoice, minus the \$150, and asked the company to refund the Town of Limon \$30 (the town's share of their 20% match). A new reimbursement request was sent to CDOT showing a difference of \$120 (80% of the \$150). The vehicle was paid for on January 23rd.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Jo Downey outlined the status of the development of the new Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the four-county region and the involvement of the Department of Local Affairs Technical Assistance Program in helping with data research and development. The initial vision and goals for the plan have been approved by the CEDS/Blueprint Committee and were previously enclosed with Board Materials. An outline of the entire plan was distributed. Jo discussed the importance of developing a list current (in process) and proposed economic and community development projects to submit as part of the plan. Having a potential project listed in an adopted region economic development plan will increase the priority of that project to various funding sources. A memo asking for projects along with an electronic spread sheet to list the projects will be sent to each town and county within the next thirty days. This same mailing will also go to the COG and PDC Boards, etc. COG staff will also schedule an "in-person" meeting with each Town/City Council and each County Commission to discuss projects and the overall CEDS. Meeting will begin in early April. As many (if not most) of the town and county elected officials have changed since the last CEDS project list was developed in 2009...staff will send out a link to the current CEDS so the communities and their elected officials can review what was submitted six years ago.

NEW BUSINESS:

Enterprise Zone Tax Credit Summary and EZ Application Letter of Intent

A summary of the Enterprise Zone Tax credits certified by ECCOG during 2014 was distributed to all in attendance. Discussion was led by Jo Downey as to the critical role ECCOG has in this most important State Income Tax credit program. There were 336 businesses/farms/ranches within the ECCOG service area (Elbert, Lincoln, Kit Carson and Cheyenne Counties) certified in 2014 with total state income tax credits of \$1,507,714. During 2014, ECCOG also certified 42 contributions totaling \$59,050 to 15 of the 19 contribution projects designated by ECCOG and the State Economic Development Commission. Total credits were 25% of this amount. Downey reminded everyone that a designated project must receive at least one contribution within a two year period or it will be dropped from the eligible project list. Brief discussion followed regarding what types of projects past and present have been designated by ECCOG. A copy of the certification summaries is attached to this official file copy of these minutes.

Jo Downey led discussion on the need for ECCOG to submit a full application to the State of Colorado asking that the ECCOG service area continue as an Enterprise Zone. She stated that the East Central Enterprise Zone was one of the first six zones designated by the State in 1986. Since that time additional legislation has increased the total number of zones in the State to 16. Because of that cap, ECCOG later added the six counties in Northeast Colorado to its official zone boundaries but the actual enterprise zone program administration for those six counties is undertaken by the Northeast Colorado Association of Local Governments. Legislation passed in 2010 makes it mandatory that the sixteen zones must apply to be re-designated in 2015 with any new boundaries becoming effective January 1, 2016. In order to be considered for Enterprise Zone status, an area must meet at least one of the three distress criteria defined in statute: 1) Per Capita Income: Less than 75% of the State average for the most recent period OR 2) Unemployment Rate: More than 25% over the State average during the most recent 12 month period OR 3) Population Growth Rate: Less than 25% for the most recent five year period. At this time, it appears that all of Lincoln and Kit Carson County meet the population growth criteria. Most of Cheyenne County meets the population growth criteria but there is a "mid-section" of the county that does not. However, Downey said that ECCOG has requested and been granted permission to use the 2014 data as one of the last of the five years rather than the 2013 data currently used by the State...(2014 will be available within the next few weeks). This should then result in all of Cheyenne County being eligible to apply. It appears that most of Elbert County will be eligible....part population, part unemployment and part per capita income. The boundaries will have to be drawn as low as census tracts or even "census places".

The first step in the re-designation process is for the Zone to submit a letter of intent that it will be applying and will be submitting a full application by the end of June. The Board then reviewed a draft of a letter to the Governor's Office of Economic Development and International Trade stating ECCOG's intent to apply to designate all qualified areas in Elbert, Lincoln, Kit Carson and Cheyenne Counties as an Enterprise Zone and the qualifying areas within the

counties of Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington and Yuma as a sub-zone. ECCOG would be the administrative agency for the East Central counties in the zone and the Northeastern Colorado Association of Local Governments would apply to continue to administering the northeastern six counties.. A motion to sign the Letter of Intent and submit it OEDIT was made by Harvey Martin and seconded by Dave Hornung. Motion carried unanimously.

State Fiscal Year Desk Evaluation from State Unit of Aging

Enclosed with Board materials was a copy of the letter/summary from the State Unit on Aging regarding the recently completed evaluation of ECCOG provided senior programs. Terry Baylie reviewed the documents and answered questions.

Salary Schedule Amendment

Included with Board Materials was a copy of a revised 2015 Salary Schedule for part-time/waged employees. The revisions are necessary because the base salary for some positions had to be increased to the new minimum wage rate effective January 1, 2015 (\$8.23 per hour). The revisions cause only a few dollars of budget impact as all current employees are being paid at a rate higher than “base” which resulted in their 2015 wages still being above the new minimum. Harry Nelson moved to approve the amended salary schedule; motion was seconded by Harvey Martin and carried unanimously.

Aging and Transit Services During 2014

Included with Board Materials were the year-end reports for the 2014 aging and transit services. Area Agency on Aging Director, Terry Baylie, reviewed the reports and answered questions. A copy of each report is attached to the official file copy of these minutes.

2015 Events Guide/Summer Tourism Promotion

Those present were briefed on the work program/tasks for the upcoming Heritage Tourism Travel season, including the area’s 2015 summer events guide. Requests for events will be sent out within the next two weeks. Jo Downey then discussed the planned direction for the Our Journey tourism marketing campaign for 2015. The events guide, historic site guide and “museum admission ticket” will have an art deco theme using the museum images designed for a series of magnets four years ago. A major emphasis will again be placed on conveying that the attractions in Colorado’s Central Plains are not that far away and in promoting special events...both large and small. Danielle Dascalos will also assist as in years past with obtaining Front Range media coverage on special exhibits, events, etc. The Our Journey web site has undergone significant updating during the past year. Once the events and antique listings have been developed, the web site will again be updated. A different special event will be highlighted every two weeks on the home page.

New Transit Vehicles for City of Burlington and Cheyenne County

The contracts from CDOT for the new Outback Express vehicles for Kit Carson County - Burlington based and Cheyenne County have been received. Terry also included the most recent information on vehicle replacement funds (VRF). She said that Kit Carson County matching fund estimates for the two 2015 vehicles is \$24,400, minus the FASTER funds of \$9,200 leaves \$15,300, minus \$11,300 in VRF, leaves \$3,900 to be provided from Kit Carson County general funds. The match funds estimate for the Cheyenne County vehicle is \$5,625, minus \$2,720 in VRF leaves \$2,905 to be provided from Cheyenne County general funds. Terry then asked the Board to approve these two contracts (the contract for the Kit Carson County - Stratton based vehicle is still being processed), so that procurement could begin. Motion was made by Troy McCue to approve the Kit Carson County contracts; motion was seconded by Greg King and carried unanimously. Motion was made by Harry Nelson to approve the Cheyenne County contract; motion was seconded by Dave Hornung and carried unanimously.

Reappointment of Senior Services and Transit Advisory Board Members

The Board was asked to officially reappoint Edna Fross from Kit Carson County, Mary Curtiss from Elbert County, and David Crismon from Lincoln County to the Senior Services and Transit Advisory Board. The name of a new appointee from Cheyenne County will be presented for consideration at a later date. Motion to reappoint the above people to the SSTB was made by Greg King and seconded by Monica Halde. Motion carried unanimously.

Next Two Meeting Dates/Locations

April 1, 2015 – Hub City Senior Center in Limon – dinner at Jenny’s Mexican Cafe

June 3, 2015 – Hub City Senior Center in Limon – dinner location to be determined

ECCOG Meeting Locations/Conference Call Capability

Discussion took place regarding the fickleness of “Mother Nature”. Weather has been an issue for holding scheduled COG Board meetings (usually November through March) due to road conditions varying throughout the region and the impact of needing to postpone or cancel a Board meeting at the last minute. Current By-Laws call for a minimum of six meetings a year. The Board discussed the feasibility of having “conference call meetings” while still needing to meet the open meeting criteria since ECCOG is considered a public entity rather than a non-profit entity. A possible solution may be to schedule up to two meetings a year in Stratton with public access to those meetings for all but allowing the Board to call in on an open speaker phone so the “audience” could hear all discussion, votes, etc. As some staff members live in Stratton, setting up that meeting even during poor weather would not be difficult. Jo was asked to bring to the next meeting copies of the current By-Laws and possible wording changes to amend the By-Laws so that such a conference call meeting could be held.

Adjournment

Nancy Bogenhagen declared the meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.