

EAST CENTRAL COUNCIL OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

COLORADO'S CENTRAL PLAINS



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EAST CENTRAL COUNCIL OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS March 5, 2014

Call to Order

Chairman Nancy Bopenhagen called the March 5, 2014 meeting of the ECCOG Board of Directors to order at 7:10 p.m. at the Hub City Senior Center in Limon, CO. In addition to Nancy Bopenhagen, Board members present included: Valerie Rhoades, Harry Nelson, Greg King, Jack Hendricks, Gary Beedy, Larry Ross, Dave Hornung, and Monica Halde. Staff members present included Jo Downey, ECCOG Executive Director; Candace Payne, Special Projects/Lending Director, and Terry Baylie, Senior and Transit Services Director. Also present were John Hill of the Ranchland News; Greg Etl, Department of Local Affairs; Brian Shepherd, Office of Information Technology; Patricia White, George Ehlers and Bill Ensign, all with Eastern Slope Rural Telephone; and Donna Ross. Board members Kyle Fenner, Troy McCue, Tim Ehrlich, and Linda Glidden were absent.

Nancy then asked the Board to consider the Minutes of the January 8, 2014 meeting. Dave Hornung moved to approve the January 8th meeting Minutes. Motion was seconded by Monica Halde and carried unanimously.

The Board next reviewed the March 2014 Financial Report and list of bills for February 2013. The report showed a total net payroll of \$27,858.84 and total bills for February of \$39,744.95. Dave Hornung moved the Board approve the March financial report and pay the February bills. Gary Beedy seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

FTA Contract (operating and admin) for CFY 2014

Terry Baylie said the fully executed 2014 contract was received at the ECCOG office on March 4th. She also provided a brief overview of the system regarding how the operating funds are allocated to provide transit service throughout the region.

Business Loan Grant Request

Staff Director, Jo Downey, briefed those present on the status of the new Business Loan Fund grant application to the Governor's Office of Economic Development and International Trade. Downey stated that the previous grant contract had been in effect for five years but ended on January 31. Lincoln County is the lead applicant on behalf of all four counties in the ECCOG service area with administration of the grant(s) being subcontracted to ECCOG and PDC for administration. \$300,000 in grant funds for future loans to qualifying businesses plus an additional 15% in administrative dollars have been applied for. Downey discussed the criteria for using the admin dollars and said that salaries, fringe and overhead could only be charged to those if a loan actually closed. Though Lincoln County is the primary applicant, all four counties must sign the grant application (only Lincoln County will sign any contract that might be offered) and intergovernmental agreement. Cheyenne, Lincoln and Kit Carson Counties have all signed the application. Jo will meet with Elbert County next week to discuss the application.

Other

NEW BUSINESS:

Broadband Plan Presentation

As a follow-up to the Broadband Meeting held January 29 in Limoní Greg Etl from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) and Brian Shepherd from the Colorado Office of Information Technology (OIT) discussed with the Board and others the opportunities regarding regional broadband planning. The two state agencies are encouraging local governments and other broadband interests (particularly economic development groups) to consider working with local broadband providers to develop a comprehensive plan to address gaps and future needs. Planning funds for such a study are available from the Impact Assistance Programí but are available only for regional cooperative efforts. Though Impact Grants ordinarily require a 50-50 match, Broadband planning funds can be applied for with a 75-25 match.

Following extensive discussion and input from Eastern Slope Rural Telephone Association General Manager, Pat White and others, Gary Beedy made a motion that ECCOG pursue a broadband planning grant, supported by matching funds from area Internet service providers and ECCOG, to conduct a survey of community needs and mapping the existing infrastructure. Greg King seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Brian Shepherd and Greg Etl along with Pat White of Eastern Slope Rural Telephone Association gave their support to this effort. Jo Downey will immediately begin gathering information to use in developing an application. Those present also discussed the importance of coordinating in every way possible with the counties in NECALG who are also considering undertaking a similar study.

Enterprise Zone Credits Summary for 2013 and Boundary Changes

Three summary reports outlining the number and value of the Enterprise Zone tax credits certified by ECCOG for businesses within the East Central Enterprise Zone for 2013 had been included with the COG mailing to the Board and others on the mailing list. Due principally to the construction of additional wind turbines in 2013, the total State Income tax credits earned were \$3,612,699. Total number of business/farms/ranches claiming one or more credits was 456. Downey reminded those at the meeting that there was a cap of \$500,000 per business/industry/farm/ranch per year in the amount of credit that could be used to offset tax liability. A copy of the tax credit summary is attached to the official file copy of these minutes.

Downey also announced that the time frame for the state re-examining the existing Enterprise Zone Boundaries has been moved back and the new effective date for implementing boundary changes will be January 1 of 2016 rather than January 1 of 2015. The State felt it most important to have the most current population and economic distress data available, rather than be tied to the 2010 census. Department of Local Affairs will be finalizing 2013 estimates within a few months. Therefore, 2014 will be a data collection year to determine possible boundary changes by county or within a county by census tract. 2015 will be the year to finalize the boundaries with the new Enterprise Zone boundaries being effective January 1, 2016.

Our Journey 2014 Campaign

Jo Downey discussed the planned direction for the Our Journey tourism marketing campaign for 2014. 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 eventsí both large and small. The theme for the summer will be Trailsí particularly the Smoky Hill Trail. The Elbert County Museum will be unveiling a new exhibit for 2014í on the Smoky. Danielle Dascalos will also assist as in years past with obtaining 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.

Blueprint Process and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

The Board and others were briefed by Jo Downey on the status of the Blueprint process for the four counties and how it will tie into the development of an updated CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy). A new CEDS for the region must be submitted to EDA (Economic Development Administration) by July 1, 2015. Jo Downey said that ECCOG received an invitation two days ago to apply for another EDA Planning Grant for the

twelve month period beginning July 1. EDA has indicated that a grant of \$61,000 will be made available to ECCOG assuming a successful application. The grant must be matched on a one to one for a total budget of \$122,000. The grant is specifically earmarked for staff salaries and support costs (including overhead) to work on regional economic development issues and to assist individual local governments with meeting their local economic development objectives. The general work program for the grant will highlight the needed regional work for developing the CEDS over the next year and will also allocate staff time to the Broadband Study. As the application is due to EDA by March 24, Gary Beedy made a motion to authorize Nancy Bogenhagen to sign the CEDS application. Motion was seconded by Valerie Rhoades and carried unanimously.

Senior Services and Transit Advisory Board Members Re-appointment

Terry Baylie said that when the Senior Services Advisory Board and the Transit Advisory Board were re-structured/combined several years ago, it was determined that member appointments would be staggered. This year, Terry asked the Board to consider re-appointment of Henrietta Owen (Cheyenne County); Loren Lambert (Kit Carson County); J.R. Wehrman (Elbert County) and Beverly Newbanks (Lincoln County) to the ECCOG Senior Services and Transit Advisory Board, as well as appointing Marcia Eder (at-large member) to fill the vacancy left by Shelley Hornung. Valerie Rhodes moved to re-appoint/appoint the individuals listed above. Motion was seconded by Monica Halde and carried unanimously.

Next Two Meeting Dates/Locations

ECCOG will not have a meeting in April. The May meeting will be Wednesday, May 7 in Limon. Valerie Rhoades volunteered to host the July meeting in Burlington. The Board will meet Wednesday, July 2 and Valerie will confirm the meeting place and dinner arrangements at a later date.

Other

There was no other business brought before the Board.

Adjournment

Nancy Bogenhagen declared the meeting was adjourned at 8:54 pm.