



ASSOCIATED GOVERNMENTS  
OF NORTHWEST COLORADO

MINUTES

AGNC BOARD OF DIRECTORS & MEMBER MEETING

March 22, 2017

9:00 am – 1:30 pm

Garfield County Commissioners Meeting Room, 108 8<sup>th</sup> St., Glenwood Springs, CO 81601

**Call to order and introductions** – Martin Chazen, Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:04 am; after the pledge of allegiance, introductions were made.

Recognition of Chuck Grobe. Mike Samson presented Chuck Grobe with an elk statue recognizing his contribution to AGNC over his many years of public service. Mike noted that Chuck Grobe is one of the members that was always there and is the kind of person that makes AGNC work.

Chairman Chazen thanked Garfield County for hosting the meeting and recognized Glenwood Springs Councilwoman Kathryn Trauger. Kathryn indicated that she was pleased to be attending and that Glenwood Springs will become an AGNC member. Kathryn provided an update about Glenwood for the group. Chairman Chazen also recognized Commissioner Tom Jankovsky and asked if he would like to make some comments. Commissioner Jankovsky noted that he appreciates AGNC as an organization as well as the strength and voice we have for NW Colorado which is so important when dealing with the Front Range majority. He thanked the group for its efforts.

Approval of minutes: Ray Beck made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, John Justman seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously. Ray Beck noted that he is working with the City of Craig to have a representative appointed for AGNC.

**Financial report** – Bonnie Petersen presented the financial report noting that the negative checking balance reflected on the balance sheet was strictly due to timing of a fund transfer and that the account was not actually overdrawn. There were no concerns identified on the profit and loss report. The accounts receivable aging summary now reflects invoices sent for contribution projects and grant reimbursements from grant making entities. Invoices had not been issued in the past for grant reimbursements or contribution projects which can result in delays receiving the funds so going forward those outstanding balances will be reflected on the A/R Aging Summary. The current check register was also reviewed. Petersen noted the 2016 audit will begin on March 27. John Justman made a motion to approve the financials as presented, Cari Hermacinski seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously

**Government Relations** – Dianna, Richard and Ted Orf. The JBC is going to present the budget in a week or so. The transportation bill will be in committee this afternoon; there are other transportation bills in the works, as well. The HPF was voluntarily postponed indefinitely in anticipation of a bi-partisan, rural hospital bill. Senator Sonnenberg is rural legislator and understands plight of rural hospitals, he is working on the bill and will share when he is able to. SB40 was scheduled for final passage this morning. Many acknowledge problems with the bill

and there is a lot of opposition to it, but nobody will stand up and oppose besides AGNC. We will continue to work on it to try to kill or amend it; although, it may not be possible to kill it now. HB1049 – Ken Brownlee brought the concern regarding tax abatements to the attention of legislators, he provided information regarding concerns about the amendments which resulted in the bill being held in the Senate for a short time. AGNC government relations team actively lobbied the committee in support of the bill. We have been joined by CCI and Douglas and Jefferson Counties to help pass the bill. It is up for an action-only vote tomorrow. HB17-1242 the transportation bonding bill is up today, we are sharing our concerns about the bill becoming a front range spending package. HB17-1256 the bill requiring a 1,000 foot setback from property lines rather than buildings for oil and gas drilling is up for hearing tomorrow. We are joining CCI in opposition; expect fireworks tomorrow and a long battle. Ted noted that the transportation bill is turning out to be quite a fight; the tax issue is getting the Republicans. There's a feeling in the political arena that you can't get the bill passed by the people without a project list. A portion of bill provides a direct proportion of monies for cities and counties. We no longer expect to see a bill from Rankin on severance tax. We are expecting many amendments to the transportation bill to make it more palatable. It needs more support from the House before taking it to the Senate. The drone bill for the COE may see some amendments on the Senate side, but it is progressing as we understand merits are good and our position has been one of support for the center. The O & G setback bill - is a setback on all properties owned by school districts, occupied and vacant. The bill only addresses property – the setbacks applying to vacant property is a valid issue. Specific pieces of information and questions like the vacant property question are very important from local government groups. HB17-1187 was killed this week - we monitored the bill. There were a lot of the concerns we raised that were exactly the points used to kill the bill. Ray Beck asked about HB17-1152 - FML district rules regarding investment of funds; it should have passed the consent calendar and should be headed to Governor's desk.

**Dave Norman** – Area Agency on Aging Dave Norman - Reisberg presented SAPGA plan. AGNC has drafted a letter supporting the concepts of the plan and it is in the board packet requesting your recommendation for the plan. Ray Beck said he thinks supporting the concept is the right thing to do. If approved, Dave noted that AGNC will be first group endorsing plan. Ray Beck made a motion to send the letter supporting the recommendations therein; Jeff Rector seconded the motion; there was no discussion, the motion passed unanimously. Dave sponsored senior day at the capitol – Hope West is in process of developing a new PACE program with 120 participants – they will be doing a \$16 million renovation. Most PACE programs have funding partners outside state this is being funded by a local group. AAoA is entering into a time study within ADRC which will include Garfield County now. The study will show how much local money is being contributed to the state Medicaid program to allow for us to apply and certify that we are doing the work for the Medicare services to qualify for a reimbursement of 50%. Grant applications are out and a review committee will be convened to form recommendations and bring them to AGNC. The federal government has not approved a budget yet, so AAA programs may have to start this year with state funding only. There has been no discussion on the increase of the federal debt ceiling and there are concerns about how the sequester will continue to impact AAA. It is unknown if the Older Americans Act will come out from under the sequester provisions. The act is currently in the 4th year of being reduced by 10% per year, in 10 years funding will be totally eliminated should the sequester provisions stay intact. Keeping people home longer may help reduce the need for funding through ADRC programs. It is hoped that it will come out from under the sequester so funding will continue.

**Economic Opportunities Report** – Kimberly Bullen, Town of Rifle - See presentation - In 2015 Rifle was selected as the location of the COE. We see many economic opportunities with the COE.

Short-term opportunities:

- UAS adaptation testing and training – for public safety and public infrastructure
- Testing and training for other aerial firefighting equipment in remote areas
- Accommodations for COE meetings and visitors
- Develop a regional strategy to grow the aerospace industry on the western slope

Long-Term Regional Opportunities include:

- UAV/UAS testing and development
- Training center like Quantico focusing on communications, military, and education
- Public Safety
- Oil and gas
- Realtors

Thanks to AGNC and other Northwest groups that helped to support location of COE in Rifle.

**Center of Excellence Update** – Melissa Lineberger, Director Center of Excellence – see presentation – COE was established as the planes used for firefighting were literally falling apart in the skies and there needed to be research done on the ground to find the best air fighting planes. The USFS had 44 large air tankers in 2002 for use and only 8 in 2013. We are hoping SB164 passes and can be funded. Why was Garfield County chosen for COE? Over 25 letters of support were sent from local communities, organizations, and businesses during the bid for the COE; this support has not waned. We held a night aerial firefighting operations summit in January 2016 with a goal to determine whether or not direct attack on fire at night is feasible in parts or all of Colorado. Currently there are no night missions as pilots have died in the past during these. We are also working on night vision for these operations. COE is testing satellite messenger devices, to determine best technology for use by the local agencies on the ground for communication. One development has been an air-to-ground datalink to make sure data reaches firefighters regardless of location. UAS are being studied and how they can be utilized in firefighting, but also how that can expand into all public safety realms. There has been work to develop a more advanced prediction system to help in the decision-making about how fire response might be managed to limit destruction and loss.

### **Member Roundtable**

Cari Hermacinski for Routt County

- Routt County is supportive of the idea being advanced by Senator Gardner to move the BLM offices to Western Colorado
- Routt County is working on asking the EDC for an exception allowing it to qualify for the Jump Start program. There are county issues including the coal mine jobs declining severely that should be considered and it is hoped that EDC will grant that exception.

Tim Redmond for Hayden town council

- There are concerns in the community about the Hayden power plant going offline.
- There are problems with the coal industry on Western Slope. What can we do and how can we address it? Kind of going to be a negotiation. SHOULD WE HAVE PRESENTATION FROM POWER PROVIDERS FOR COAL FIRED PLANTS.

Ray Beck for Moffat County

- Rumors of the Hayden power plant closing is new to us we have not heard that such a move is being considered.
- Craig station retires one unit in 2025.
- City/County continue to collaborate on human services.
- Had meeting with city last night to make Laudy Park state of the art.
- Don't have building inspector at county collaborating with city to address inspections.
- Identified as a distressed community and have signed up to be rural jump start area.
- County liquidating some assets to address budget issues.
- Collum permit approved for expansion with ColoWyo.

#### Jeff Rector for Rio Blanco

- BLM decided roads at west end of county can't be maintained without a NEPA study - think about to win that fight.
- ED director has done a great job on adventure city program which will help Meeker and Rangely.
- Working with college to do an MOU to do some manufacturing at airport.
- Energy is coming back – have seen some increases.
- Reservoir project coming along second phase is to get to grant process provided \$380K to get to the grant process from county and municipalities.

Art Riddile asked about broadband, Katelin Cook responded: Colorado Fiber Community is the network operator, but the county owns the network. CFC acts as wholesaler to providers. The project was funded with \$11 million from the county and several million from DOLA. Need broadband for economic development. Strategic mistake going down publicly owned route as we've learned that ticket to entry was \$70 million for GJ. Publicly financing an individual company's business model. Didn't adequately address role of current providers and their reaction to government service. If coming from a dial up environment it is different; need to segment the market and determine the private role and the public role. Now that we have the attention of the incumbent providers, we are working to get them to come to the table. We found there are more providers than we thought. Patti Snidow suggested they might consider Rural Electric Association helping and looking at fiber to the meter with smart grid program through USDA. Encouraged to be open access for providers.

#### John Justman for Mesa County

- Energy development in Mesa County will be growing to 7 or 8 rigs this year.
- Wonder if sales of businesses will be an issue in terms of retention - wide range of defense contracting. Our job to keep them there.
- Outdoor recreation is fine but not high wage opportunity.
- Firefighting growth is helpful anywhere on west slope.
- Sales tax revenue down 3% from last year.
- Now that oil and gas is beginning to do better - retail is changing and there are concerns about whether that's positive.

#### Mike Samson for Garfield County

- Tiny homes - new land use codes for those.
- BLM grazing regulations being taken from Ag producers.

- John and Mike going to WIR conference in Oregon and will travel to Coos Bay at the end of the session. MICHAEL HINRICHS HELLP TO SET UP MEETINGS SAMSON, MARTIN, BOLTON, JUSTMAN & RECTOR.

#### Roger Granat for the Town of Palisade

- Cameo shooting range first shot ceremony morning of May 20th - Governor will be there take first shot with gun produced in Grand Junction.
- Palisade Plunge still moving forward - not sure the original timeline will hold but still trying.
- New RV ranch going in 110 RV hook ups - 14 bungalows and three suites in remodeled home. Anticipation of ED from complex and plunge. Annexed another 14 acres on exit 142. G&G industries purchased and will do convenience store and gas station to accommodate large vehicles.
- Retail marijuana has been approved and will begin appearing in Palisade soon.

#### Art Riddile for the Town of New Castle

- No retail or medical MJ outlets.
- CHAFA partnership to do 50 unit senior housing complex - break ground in May.
- Partner with BLM to extend hiking biking trails into BLM properties. Have young professionals volunteering to work on trails. Can take bike out of garage and be on trail in 5 minutes.

#### Tim Redmond for the Town of Hayden

- Excited to be involved again with AGNC it will be a great resource for community.
- Hayden is experiencing a renaissance - young people find more affordable housing there and are buying homes and putting their children into schools.
- Expansion of location neutral businesses - need to improve upload speeds to keep them there.
- Just hired Mathew Mendisco - new Town Manager - highly impressive. Brought lots of energy and networks - moved his family there, building a house. Mathew works with staff of cities and county and doing good things for town.
- Have aging infrastructure, water, sewer, roads declining property taxes – hope the community has hit bottom and is on the way back up.
- Looking at new school - applied for BEST grant.
- Proud of vo-tech center for the first time - kids coming from Routt and Moffat because programs offered at the center are not available in other areas.

#### Marty Chazen for the City of Grand Junction

- Broadband - in the middle of redefining what council wants out of the broadband efforts; staff is reviewing and will recommend next steps on issue.
- Ballot proposal to take TRCC (40-year-old building) and turn into event center. Had to go to ballot \$65 million price tag asking for tax increase. Voters to decide if this will be an economic driver for community.
- Having budget pressures - likely to see a lot of money issues come to the ballot. Fund 911 center, school issues, rec center, lodging tax - concerned voters will become fatigued - some are very legitimate and are needed like deferred maintenance on schools - all affect the various government entities.

- One issue related to road assessment - roads declining - parkway refinance said overages would go to fund to pay off debt early; asking voters to use funds to repair streets debt pays off in 2024 - voters bitter pill to take. Not sure how that will come out.
- Jarvis property along river owned by city - negotiating to sell lots there to start developing along the river in addition to Las Colonias park to develop river front area.
- Palisade plunge goes across property city owns and leases to Van Winkle's who run cattle there. Negotiated an agreement to re-route some of trail - city is supporting now. Next step environmental impact reports.
- Part of ED plan - outdoor industries - mfrs. of equipment like Bonsai Designs (zip lines) want to attract other companies around this to become a cluster industry.
- TRCC losing city about 1/2 million dollars per year or more - contracted management to Pinnacle - pay them 1/4 million per year and will get some return (includes Avalon). Be interesting to see what will happen under private management. If event center fails two other options under consideration to do some improvements.
- GJ has long term chronic vagrancy problem hired officers assigned just to downtown area along with parks patrol as well as ambassador program to help direct visitors to the downtown area - if big enough presence may encourage individuals to go somewhere else. DDA sharing some of cost will help downtown businesses.
- Public safety initiative on ballot to help Sheriff and DA offices. Probably around 1/4 cent. Difficult to pass most likely.
- County has high felony rate comparable to more metro areas - has to do with I-70 presence which is a statewide issue.
- Jail is full - DA says related to meth on the streets and price reduction – trade-offs between meth and heroine.

Patti noted that with regard to tax items being considered for upcoming ballots communities lean toward sales tax. She also mentioned that in Texas property and sales taxes are higher but when a person gets to a certain age, property tax does not increase. Perhaps Colorado should consider a similar model as the state considers changes in the Colorado homestead exemption. Jim Alviljar asked, "How would you characterize issues at the Sheriff and DA offices?" John replied that Mesa County has some of the leanest operations in state and felonies are a larger portion of the cases than in other areas largely due to the influence of I-70 and its use as a major trafficking thoroughway. Sometimes the DA's office loses people to public defender offices because they make more than DA assistants. Mesa County has lower paid prosecutors and the best prosecutors are leaving because of pay. Rural Mesa County has 3.5 deputies to cover a vast area of the community, they are stretched very thin. Mesa County pay scales are very low. Marty: from the municipal side, things are very low, the officer count is not up to state averages, "we have big city problems plus all the problems that go along with a stressed economy." The County can't compete with city law enforcement so workforce is lost to the police department. The Sheriff is doing urban police work in Clifton.

#### **GUEST ROUNDTABLE:**

Brandon Tipton's office: The health care bill voted on tomorrow. The Congressman has concerns and is looking at amendments to see if they will cover his concerns. Asked OMB to prioritize PILT funding for 2018 – Tipton chaired a natural resources sub-committee and they discussed infrastructure on public lands and the need to make sure they have the facilities and infrastructure to keep public lands open. The Congressman is also on the finance committee but it has been pretty quiet.

Susan Alvillar noted that there are now 5 rigs operating in Garfield for Terra Energy Partners - 1 in Mesa County which doubled the county count - one moving to Beaver Creek – they are expected to stay up as long as gas prices stay up. Staff is business as usual, they are very optimistic and have seen positive and helpful attitudes from BLM - permits coming faster – the state is inspecting every day.

### **Administrative Update**

The NWEZ boundary adjustment was presented at the March EDC meeting, we did get Central City and Gilpin County approved to be included in the EZ. AGNC still hasn't been told we've been awarded the EDA planning grant, but we did get a grant award number. We expect to be on the EDC agenda in April for the request to include Routt County in the Jump Start qualified counties. We plan to host the ED Summit this year in Craig on September 15, 2017. In May, CLUB 20 does their DC trip and we are hoping to connect with BLM, EDA, and other folks key to moving on with our projects. She will ask Swartout who we should talk to about Sage Grouse, Jordan Cove/FERC and other AGNC issues.

**New Business:** *Next Meeting is on April 26, 2017, Craig Memorial Hospital*  
**Adjournment** – Meeting Adjourned at 1:23 pm.

### **Attendance:**

Tiffany Pehl, AGNC  
Kimberly Bullen, City of Rifle  
Art Riddile, New Castle  
Bonnie Petersen, AGNC  
Marty Chazen, City of GJ  
Cari Hermacinski, Routt County  
Mike Samson, Garfield County  
Chuck Grobe, Private Citizen  
Roger Granat, Palisade  
Tim Redmond, Hayden  
Katelin Cook, Rio Blanco  
George Rossman, Congressman Tipton's Office  
Brandon Bainer, Congressman Tipton's Office  
Dave Norman, AAoA  
Melissa Lineberger, COE  
Susan Alvillar, Terra Energy Partners  
Jim Alvillar, Private Citizen  
Jeff Comstock, Moffat County  
Ray Beck, Moffat County  
Jeff Rector, Rio Blanco  
John Justman, Mesa County  
Kathryn Trauger, Glenwood Springs  
Don Cook, Moffat  
Patti Snidow, USDA  
Noah Koerper, Senator Bennet's Office  
Sarah Andrews, Senator Bennet's Office  
Karen Harkin, CHFA  
Ted, Richard, Diana Orf – Orf&Orf – Called in Update