



ASSOCIATED GOVERNMENTS
OF NORTHWEST COLORADO

MINUTES

AGNC BOARD OF DIRECTORS & MEMBER MEETING

May 16, 2018

Justice Center, 355 4th Street, Meeker, CO 81641

9:00 am to 1:30 pm

Pledge of allegiance

Call to order and introductions– Chairman, Ray Beck Called the meeting to order at 9:02 am; introductions were made. Roger Granat was designated to serve as the Mesa County municipal voting member for the meeting.

Approval of minutes: Andy Key made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; Si Woodruff seconded the motion; motion passed.

Financial report: Bonnie Petersen presented the financial report – total funds in checking and savings accounts at the end of April 2018 was \$535,979.55. Income for April was lower than projected budget although year-to-date revenue is more positive than the budget projection. Revenue for April is also lower than budgeted which is also true for year to date revenue. April expenses were lower than budgeted and year to date expense are also lower than budgeted. As of May 9, 2018, accounts receivable totaled \$31,944.09. Andy Key moved to approve the financial report; Roger Granat seconded the motion; motion passed.

Project and Committee Reports:

Area Agency on Aging - Dave Norman presented the funding request for fiscal year 2018-2019. The grant review committee, dealing with a situation similar to last year, did not know what the budget would be, so they proceeded based on the premise that the federal budget included some increases. The state budget was passed but did not appropriate all the projected funding. Dave just received word yesterday that the OMB has sent notices to all federal offices about budgets and it is anticipated that funding will be sent soon. The State will use the most current numbers in award letters to AAoA. Dave presented the starting budget and noted that a modification will have to be approved in October or November. The budget provides an additional \$15,000 for consultation to help with training a new director after Dave's retirement. Mike Samson moved approval of the AAoA budget as amended; Roger Granat seconded the motion; motion passed. Dave introduced Grant Jackson who is Dave's supervisor at Mesa County; Grant will provide AAoA support at the time of Dave's retirement in August or September of this year.

Dinosaur Welcome Center – Cheryl provided an update on the DWC; visitation was high in the month of April. DWC greeted a total of 2,427 travelers and May is seeing an increase as well – the majority of the travelers are from out of state. Visitors are stating that they are travelling before gas prices get too high. Stewart Welding in Rangely created a unique bike rack for the center. since volunteer that has been doing it can no longer do the work. The center has a new volunteer from Craig, Larry Hoover, who has committed to work all day on Sundays for the remainder of the year. A grant for the establishment of an electric car charging station is being

considered by a Boulder group for placement on Highway 40. DWC is one of the sites being considered as a location for the station but the Loaf and Jug would like to have it at their location. Electric car drivers will pay for the electricity via credit card at the charging station. The Dinosaur National Monument is open now and there have been a number of people stopping in to ask about events advertised on the new sign.

CEDS Update - Tiffany Pehl updated the group on the progress of the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy development. The individual county meetings have been completed, the regional SWOT is completed, and the next regional meeting will be held in June or July. We are finalizing the documents needed for submission of the application for the EDD designation and plan to submit those documents to Patrick Waggoner at EDA by the end of the week.

2018 Legislative Wrap-Up – Ted and Richard Orf were in attendance; Dianna Orf joined via conference call. 784 bills and resolutions were introduced during the 2018 legislative session, 110 of those were evaluated by the AGNC board; the board took positions on or monitored 48 of those. AGNC positions were consistent with 84-87% of the final dispositions of the bills and resolutions. HB1249 on Anvil Points passed; HB1387 related to oil and gas tax abatements failed. SB001 – transportation funding passed, SB002 – broadband funding passed, and HB1099 – Fairness in Right of First Refusal relating to the requirement that an incumbent provider must match proposed speeds when invoking first right of refusal also passed. During the interim, there will be summer interim committees the Orfs will keep AGNC posted about; there will be ballot initiatives collecting signatures and several elections going in including the Governor's race. The 2018 election could have impacts to the 2019 legislative session as it will determine the makeup of the Senate for the next two years. Representative Rankin and other NW Colorado delegates received thanks from Orf and Orf; and it was noted that AGNC input is extremely valuable in raising concerns, both positive and negative, with legislators from other areas of the state. Local stories are important to legislators and AGNC members are encouraged to continue providing that input.

Coal Product Research Project – Professor Eric Eddings from University of Utah provided a presentation on the Future Use for Coal in the U.S. All sources of energy are rising but coal consumption has begun to drop off over the last 10 years; over the 7 or 8 years, energy retirement facilities have largely been coal related. Natural gas and wind employee numbers are significantly higher now than coal; the decline is due to mechanization and consumption. Professor Eddings has been researching and discussing a shift in mindset about how we might use coal as a resource. Coal is a high value raw material not just something we burn and there are potential alternative uses for coal. One area of need that coal may potentially address is the need for rare earth elements (REE) which are key components used in materials for magnets, batteries, computers, electronics, autos, military/defense products and others. The REE market is dominated by China; the DOE commissioned a study to look at REEs contents in coal and byproducts (ash). They recently announced 9 new research awards to look at REEs. Another area of need is carbon fiber which is used in a wide variety of goods and products; the bulk of carbon fiber in US is produced from petroleum. More than 50% of the materials in a Boeing 787 are made from 50% carbon fiber. Carbon fiber is five times lighter than steel and five times stronger than steel. Carbon fiber is a very expensive material but there are a lot of composites used in automobiles and that industry would like to use more which could lead to more fuel efficiencies. There is a substantial market for lower cost carbon fiber; the auto industry would like a price target of \$5 per pound. If low cost coal can be used to produce a precursor for carbon fiber, it may be possible to reduce the cost substantially. An opportunity to create a value-added

product may be available. If a product could be produced in the \$20 to \$50 per ton range versus today's price of \$15 to \$100 per ton there could be a substantial market expansion for carbon fiber. Mitsubishi produces a small amount of carbon fiber and its on the very high end of the price range – it is used for satellites, aerospace and specialized manufacturing. The product that could be produced from coal has a very high stiffness factor and low coefficient of expansion. Professor Eddings is looking to expand the existing market and to get into other markets. Professor Eddings has been working with Kentucky to produce carbon fiber; this effort is funded through a grant from the EDA and it appears that there could be a lot of opportunities for this high coal product. They are working at the federal level with a number of states to get a national level initiative going to assist coal producing communities.

NW Colorado Higher Ed Updates –

CMU - Derek Wagner, VP, Intergovernmental & Community Affairs; provided an overview and update on Colorado Mesa University's (CMU) education opportunities. CMU just graduated 1,300 students – it is the highest graduating class in the history of the University. Derek noted that education attainment varies widely throughout the state and that all but one of NW Colorado's counties lag the state average for residents that have at least a bachelor's degree. CMU offers a university education track along with a community college track which is unique in the state. Larger numbers of students are attending from areas outside of the Western Slope and 15% are coming to CMU from other states. CMU serves a large number of high need students. Unique degree options were outlined, and new programs reviewed; all are directed at meeting regional needs. In partnership with University of Colorado, Boulder, CMU offers several engineering programs providing students with a great opportunity for success while allowing them to stay in the region for school and ultimately to begin careers. A new engineering building was recently opened on campus which incorporates the local math and science center. Funding is always a challenge, but CMU still manages to provide one of the best values related to education in the state. The Redifer Institute was established to address various matters in the region and in partnership with the Mesa County Federal Mineral Lease District, the CMU Unconventional Energy Center Endowment was created to aid in applied research as well as workforce development and curriculum enhancement.

CNCC – Ron Granger, President; provided an update on Colorado Northwestern Community College which just graduated 300 students, also the highest number of graduates in the history of the college. CNCC is working to offer a bachelor program for nursing to meet the demand of local health care organizations. They have an aviation partnership and are working with CMU and with the front range to bring students to the Western Slope for pilot education – CNCC is the only institution with its own airplanes. The college also has an aircraft maintenance program which allows them to repair planes at a reasonable cost. Private lessons are almost twice as much as the cost of the pilot program at CNCC. A medical assistant program will begin this fall on the Craig campus. CNCC is developing a drone program to be offered on the Rangely and Craig campus starting this fall. CNCC received an increase in funding from the state this year due to the formula although funding was lost last year in Moffat and Rio Blanco counties – it won't make up the loss, but it will help. The college is working with high schools to do concurrent classes, it doesn't matter where a high school is anymore, if a local college cannot offer a class, they can to other places in the state. President Granger introduced Keely Winger, his new presidential administrative assistant and Sue Samaniego, the Executive Director of the CNCC Foundation.

CMC – Randy Rudasics, Manager, Yampa Valley Entrepreneurship Center provided an overview of Colorado Mountain College (CMC) education opportunities. CMC is one of the

largest rural U.S. Community Colleges with 7 campuses and 12 sites, it just celebrated its 50th anniversary; it is ranked the third most-affordable U.S. public college for a 4-year degree. CMC offers concurrent enrollment to Steamboat Springs School District RE2 and college wide – it is among the top 5 Colorado institutions offering dual enrollment. CMC provides opportunities for students to enroll in certificate, associate and bachelor’s degree programs. CMC has strong community partnerships with the entrepreneurship center, BSBA student internship program, US Forest Service, restaurant/culinary and hospitality partnerships; credit courses are offered to non-degree students to enhance the local workforce and non-credit courses are offered to everyone.

CU Denver Rural Outreach - Steve DelCastillo, Director, Community Engagement with University of Colorado Denver College of Liberal Arts and Sciences made a presentation regarding the sharing of ideas between the college and rural areas of the state. CU Chancellor, Dorothy Harrell would like to leverage resources and work with rural areas and Steve is exploring how to work in partnership with rural communities. He noted that the local institutions provide solid comprehensive offerings. CU has identified a shortage of middle skills workforce in rural areas of the state – these would be technical trades. CU Denver is working with students going into the medical profession and plan to educate 10 outstanding students from the State of Colorado with broadly diverse backgrounds who desire to serve the needs of Colorado as primary care physicians or dentists. The program encourages student to return to local rural communities to practice medicine and dentistry. The New Directions (MA program) provides salaried internships in local jurisdictions to do a series of “Best and Brightest” Public Policy internships. Internships are paid by DOLA and compensates the interns at \$42,000 plus per year to work with local governments in rural areas; 8 interns have been funded this year. CU Denver would like to leverage the programs they have to complement what is in place and to find research opportunities for things that are going on in the area in partnership with rural communities, agencies, postsecondary institutions and businesses.

Federal Delegation Updates:

Betsy Bair provided an update from Senator Gardner’s office. The Senator is working on placing sanctions on North Korea who wants access to US natural gas supplies. He is also working to get type 3 body armor for law enforcement and funding for the armor for rural areas. He spent time in Afghanistan with Colorado troops and he is working to get hemp removed from the controlled substance list. The act offers grants for farmers and deals with the water issue and allows for research for uses for hemp; it also fixes banking problem for hemp only. He is working on marijuana legislation that will allow states to handle marijuana as a state’s rights issue. He is working on support of mental health for rural community agriculture workers who have the highest level of mental health problems. DOI meeting was held to review the reorganization of the department – they are doing a pilot program in Alaska and want to make Region 8, which includes Colorado, the second pilot – the reorganization plans can be see in a white paper at DOI.gov – they are taking input, it is important that AGNC members get involved. If AGNC would like a letter of support for the CEDS, let Betsy know. The Senator went on a rural ED listening tour, visited Hayden, Craig, Meeker and Rangely then Delta, Montrose, Norwood and Dove Creek. The Senator has been working on an effort to remove the PILT offset for the Anvil Points money – some language has been agreed upon that DOI says will work, Congressman Tipton will offer an amendment to the NDAA and Senator Gardner will introduce a stand-alone bill to avoid the PILT offset so counties can use the funds outside of the FML structure.

George Rossman provided an update from Congressman Tipton’s office; he is working on the Farm bill right now. There are some parts the Congressman likes that maintains the conservation

reserve program and tightens up snap work requirements. Snap benefits are not going away – they are raising income levels. The NDAA amendment Betsy mentioned is being worked on we should hear something soon. Congressman is working to aid, “blue water vets”, hope to see something that addresses sailors that were in water and suffered exposure when agent orange filtered through that water. There are 300 co-sponsors in the house for the veteran bill.

Shannon Wadas provided an update for Senator Michael Bennet. The Senator was in Grand Junction for the CMU commencement. He is working on an industrial hemp bill along with Senator Gardner. The Farm bill is in negotiation in the Senate and input is being taken if there is anything our members or citizens need to advance. The Senator voted to protect the net neutrality rules, and he is planning to introduce a collaborative bill for forest restoration funding at \$80 million that will increase timber sales and jobs.

AGNC Wolf Resolution 18-1 – Various groups are conducting presentations and engaging in efforts to introduce the gray wolf into NW Colorado. There are already wolves in Colorado, so this would be inappropriate and given the strong economic driver that agricultural livestock and big game hunting are to the region, bringing more wolves into the region would negatively impact those drivers. AGNC needs to send a strong message to the next governor that wolves will not work in Colorado – not only do they decimate livestock and wildlife herds, they bring diseases to livestock and humans. Members agreed this must not happen in NW Colorado. Cari Hermacinski moved to approve the resolution opposing wolf introduction; Andy Key seconded the motion; motion passed.

Amicus Brief RE: Amendment 71 – “Raise the Bar” – AGNC has been requested to sign onto an amicus brief supporting the provisions in Amendment 71 that require signatures from all Colorado Senate districts in order to put an initiative changing the state constitution on the ballot. Mesa and Garfield counties have added their names to the brief; Si Woodruff indicated that Rio Blanco will add their name, Ray Beck noted that Moffat County will too, and Cari Hermacinski said Routt County will include their name as well. Cari Hermacinski moved that AGNC add its name to the amicus brief; Mike Samson seconded the motion; motion passed.

WRAP UP:

Administrative Update:

Bonnie Petersen informed the group that the transportation coalition were meeting on May 18th to determine which of the five ballot titles under consideration would be the best to pursue for November election. The group will most likely adopt either the initiative that asks voters for a .5 cent sales tax increase or a .62 sales tax increase. The coalition had asked that AGNC let them know which would be preferable to the board. AGNC members raised concerns that a sales tax increase will harm local communities, that it is unclear additional funding is needed as it seems there is a great deal of waste in the transportation system. It was determined that AGNC will remain neutral on this issue for now. Bonnie requested support letters from members to be sent in with the application for the EDD designation – a template will be sent out for member use.

New Business:

Next Meeting will be June 27, 2018, American Legion Post 89, 220 S. Third Street, Hayden, CO 81639

Meeting was adjourned at 1:42 pm.

Attendance:

Dave Norman, Area Agency on Aging
Cheryl McDonald, DWC
Cari Hermacinski, Routt County
Randy Rudasic, Colo. Mtn. College
Ken Kreie, Town of Fruita
Keely Winger, CNCC
Jeff Rector, Rio Blanco County
Andy Key, Town of Rangely
John Justman, Mesa County
Ray Beck, Moffat County
Tiffany Pehl, AGNC
Bonnie Petersen, AGNC
Art Riddle, Town of New Castle
Mike Samson, Garfield County
Jeff Comstock, Moffat County
Roger Granat, Town of Palisade

Steve DelCastillo, Univ. of CO - Denver
Betsy Bair, Senator Gardner's Ofc.
Derek Wagner, Colorado Mesa University
Amy Provstgaard, Battlement Mesa
Si Woodruff, Rio Blanco County
Ron Granger, CNCC
Scott Meszaros, Town of Meeker
Konnie Billgren, Rangely Chamber
Michael Hawley, Jones & DeMille Eng.
Ted Orf, Orf & Orf
Richard Orf, Orf & Orf
Grant Jackson, Mesa County DHS
Marie Granat, Visitor
George Rossman, Cong. Tipton's Ofc.
Shannon Wadas, Senator Bennet's Ofc.
Sue Samaniego, CNCC Foundation

ATTENDEES via ZOOM:

Professor Eric Eddings, University of Utah

Michelle Perry Balleck, CMEDP