



## NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

### MINUTES

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS SUMMER/ANNUAL MEETING

July 28, 2021

Hybrid Meeting – Coyote Del Malpais Golf Course, Grants, NM  
Held via ZOOM | Streamed & Recorded to [Facebook](#)

**CORRECTION/APOLOGIES:** Evan Williams apologizes to all Board members, presenters, and guests as he had difficulty in running the virtual meeting including not posting presentations as they were given or remembering that he needed to admit participants via ZOOM. He will ask staff to run this for him from now on. Second, he apologizes for the mistake on the event program regarding Mayor Nate Duckett – he is the City of Farmington Mayor and not City of Grants.

### I. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

#### A. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS/QUORUM.

Chairman *Billy Moore* (McKinley County) convened the meeting of the Board of Directors at 10:02AM. Roll call proceeded and in attendance were 17 Board Representatives/Alternatives, representing a quorum 8 of the 9 voting entities of the Board (89%), along with COG staff, guests, and their CPA.

#### BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

CIBOLA COUNTY: Judy Horacek; Martha Garcia; Dr. Christine Lowery  
MCKINLEY COUNTY: Billy Moore; Anthony Dimas, Jr.;  
SAN JUAN COUNTY: Jim Cox  
CITY OF AZTEC: Michael Padilla Sr. (*excused*)  
CITY OF BLOOMFIELD: Jason Thomas  
CITY OF FARMINGTON: Julie Baird  
CITY OF GALLUP: Fran Palochak; Louie Bonaguidi; Michael Schaaf; Maryann Ustick  
CITY OF GRANTS: Erik Garcia; Vanessa Chavez  
VILLAGE OF MILAN: Roseanne Lopez; Ellen Baca

#### PRESENTERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Armando Sanchez, CPA  
Eric Ghahate (Contractor)  
Gar Clarke & Rand Tildon, NMDOIT  
Erica Velarde, TRANE

#### STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Evan Williams  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Martina Whitmore  
PLANNING TEAM: Michael Sage, Brandon Howe, Martina Whitmore, Robert Kuipers; Angelina Grey

#### B. AGENDA & MINUTES ADOPTION.

Chairman *Moore* provided an overview of the day's agenda topics. Chairman *Moore* reviewed the minutes of April 21, 2021 for review and approval.

**ACTION:** *Jim Cox* (San Juan County) moved and *Michael Schaaf* (Gallup) seconded adoption of the agenda and minutes. Motion carried by acclamation.

### C. **BOARD OFFICER VACANCY.**

Board elections are held on even number years, which will occur at the next annual meeting in 2022.

Evan Williams explained that due to Commissioner GloJean Todacheene resignation for the Board as the San Juan County caucus representative, the Board needs to fill the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chair position. It is customarily but not required that this position be nominated by the San Juan area caucus and be a representative of that area. At the last meeting, Julie Baird volunteered to organize and convene the caucus. Based on that meeting, the caucus nominates *Michael Padilla* (Aztec). Mr. Williams did check to make sure Commissioner Padilla would be willing to serve as he had notified the COG staff that he would not be able to attend. Commissioner Padilla has agreed to serve.

**ACTION:** *Louie Bonaguidi* (Gallup) moved and *Martha Garica* (Cibola County) seconded to except and approve the nomination of Michael Padilla as the COG's 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chair. Motion carried by acclamation.

## II. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

All presentations will be emailed as part of the COG Board Meeting De-brief and available on the COG website at: <http://www.nwnmcog.com/board.html>

*What's Cooking at EDA?* This presentation was put together by Trisha Korbas, Economic Development Representative from the EDA-Austin Regional Office representing New Mexico and West Texas but was delivered by Evan Williams due to emerging priorities since the release and notice of US Economic Development Administration's grant opportunities underwritten by \$3B of American Rescue Plan Act funding. Information available at: <https://www.eda.gov/ARPA/>

*Gar Clarke and Rand Tildon*, New Mexico Department of Information Technologies provided an in-depth presentation on the new broadband legislation that passed this last Legislative Session and current actions that Department is taking to advance those and other priorities. They discussed their Technical Assistance Program that is supported by a \$1.5M EDA grant to provide support to communities involved in broadband feasibility, planning, design, and investment.

*Erica Velarde*, TRANE, provided a shortened presentation of how communities can benefit from Energy Efficiency Performance Contracting.

## III. EXECUTIVE/STAFF REPORT

**A. Staff Summary Report:** Executive Director *Williams* provided a summary of the past quarter's key activities and issues.

**B. Annual Report.** Mr. Williams provided a quick overview of the highlights from the past year including the four focus areas he established:

Executive Director Evan Williams provided an overview of special key initiatives and accomplishments including a three year upward trend of membership return on investment for the region. He mentioned that since taken over in April 2019 the COG has focused on four key areas: financial stability, staffing, special projects, and economic development. His State of the COG report included the following highlights:

**Financial Stability:** the COG delivered its first clean audit with no findings since 2011 and built a modest reserve for the first time ever.

**Staffing:** the COG had no staff turnover in last 2 years and has an amazing team of professionals that continue to train, work hard, and deliver for the region.

**Special Projects:** the COG has delivered some impressive fee-for-service projects like the McKinley County Comprehensive Plan and Zuni Mountains Trail Project design and quality assurance to diversify and deepen its ability to produce quality planning and development products for the region it resides in.

**Economic Development:** the COG has made this the overarching focus of organization’s mission as it is the number one priority of its membership and region. Key highlights include designing Prewitt and Milan Industrial Parks, establishing a new Revolving Loan Fund, sustaining McKinley Paper, designating a national byway, and attracting a record amount of US Economic Development Administration grants for the region and its projects.

- C. **FY2022 Work Program Overview:** Mr. Williams informed the Board that the Executive Committee had meet the previous day to engage a strategic planning session to discuss the COG’s future, growth plan, and other items including an update of the work program. Below is a visual of the draft update, which does not change base programs and member services, but does add (in italics) so new spaces the COG feels it needs to expand into, such as, broadband planning, water development, and creating a non-profit organization for the region.

NWNMCOG				
MISSION SUPPORT		CORE MISSION		
MS-1 Regional Leadership & Partnerships	MS-2 Operational Innovation	CM-1 All-Level Planning, Implementation & Integration	CM-2 <del>Projecteering</del> Strategic Infrastructure	CM-3 Center for Regional Innovation
MS-1.1 Memberships, Partnerships & Strategic Networking	MS-2.1 Technology Deployment	CM-1.1 Member Services & Work Programs		
MS-1.2 Enterprise Loan Fund	MS-2.2 Building & Asset Management	CM-2.1 Economic Development Planning & Implementation	CM-3.1 Infrastructure Planning & Prioritization	CM-4.1 Water System Regionalization & Support
MS-1.3 <del>Americorps</del> *VISTA Program & Internships	MS-2.3 Marketing & Branding	CM-2.2 Transportation Planning & Development	CM-3.2 <del>Projecteering</del> Training & Workshops	CM-4.2 Energy Efficiency & Conservation
MS-1.4 Economic Transition & Recovery Teams	MS-2.4 Data Management & Dissemination	CM-2.3 <i>Water Planning &amp; Development</i>	CM-3.3 <del>Projecteering</del> Action Plans & Financing Strategies	CM-4.3 Trails Planning, Design, & QA/QC
MS-1.5 Shovel-Ready Site Coordination	MS-2.5 Board & Staffing Support and Training	CM-2.4 <i>Broadband Planning</i>	CM-3.4 Investment Attraction & Grantsmanship	CM-4.4 Brownfields
MS-1.6 Four Corners Commission Revitalization	MS-2.6 Fiscal & Financial Management	CM-2.5 Local Strategic, Comprehensive, and Land Use Planning	CM-3.5 Legislative Technical Assistance	CM-4.5 Regional Tourism, Arts, & Outdoor Recreation
	MS-2.7 <i>Regional NPO Strategy</i>		CM-3.6 FUNDIT	CM-4.6 Special Fee-for-Service Projects & Services

**D. Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program Revisions:** Mr. Williams provided a quick background that the COG Board approved an updated plan in April 2021 to keep the COG compliant with EDA guidelines. Since that time, the COG was awarded \$990,000 in new CARES act funding to capitalize the RLF program. This funding comes with different terms and conditions, and thus the COG must update its RLF Plan to be complaint. The COG also has contracted with National Development Council for technical assistance services including review of the RLF program and has incorporated their recommendations and best practices to strengthen the overall program. COG staff is recommending approval of a resolution that does the following:

- 1. RLF Plan:** approves the updated plan as of July 28, 2021.
- 2. Loan Committee Structure:** updates the loan committee structure to included membership from the three-county areas representative of the private sector with one COG Board member identified as the RLF Loan Committee Chair.
- 3. Loan Committee Chair:** appoints the Loan Committee Chair.
- 4. Delegation of Authority:** delegates the authority of the Board to the loan committee to approve loans based on the RLF Loan Plan and its policies and procedures but requires timely reporting back to the full Board.

**ACTION:** *Louie Bonaguidi* (Gallup) moved and *Eric Garcia* (Grants) seconded adoption of the resolution and the above described actions. Motion carried by acclamation.

**ACTION:** Based on Executive Director recommendation and willingness to serve, *Louie Bonaguidi* (Gallup) moved and *Julie Baird* (Farmington) appointed Jim Cox to serve as the Board's Loan Committee Chair. Motion carried by acclamation.

**E. Building Report:** Mr. Williams provided an update to the Board on major improvement projects to the COG Building including fixing both roofs, upgrading to broadband with Sacred Wind, and several aesthetic projects. The COG thanks all Legislators who have provided capital outlay over the past three (3) years, especially Senator Shannon Pinto (\$125,000) and Representative Harry Garcia (\$25,000) that provided funds in 2021 as this information is now publicly available and disclosed.

## IV. FINANCIAL REPORT

**A. FY2021 Financial Reports:** Armando Sanchez, CPA provided a brief overview of the annual and fourth quarter financial reports provided in the Board packet. He discussed the major shift over the last five years from overspending to actually being able to accrue a small amount unexpended funds. Jim Cox asked about historic loans that have not be re-paid or closed out and Mr. Sanchez explained that these will need to be written off by the Board according to EDA guidelines, which he understood would happen once the RLF is launched as that is the priority.

**ACTION:** *Vanessa Chavez* (Grants) moved and *Michael Schaaf* (Gallup) seconded, to accept the FY2021 Financial Report, Quarter #4 and Annual Reports as presented. Motion carried by acclamation.

**B. FY2021 Budget, Revision #5:** Mr. Williams presented this budget revision from FY2021 that was recommended necessary as a fund was established due to a contract that was executed in

June that was not listed on the previous revision.

**ACTION:** *Louie Bonaguidi* (Gallup) moved and *Eric Garcia* (Grants) seconded, to accept the FY2021 Budget, Revision #5 as presented. Motion carried by acclamation.

- C. **FY2022 Budget, Final:** Mr. Williams presented the FY2022 final budget to the Board for approval that includes the RLF CARES funding.

**ACTION:** *Judy Horacek* (Cibola County) moved and *Michael Schaaf* (Gallup) seconded, to accept the FY2022 Budget as presented. Motion carried by acclamation.

- D. **Wage & Classification Plan:** Mr. Williams presented the updated Wage & Classification Plan for the next three years.

**ACTION:** *Jim Cox* (San Juan County) moved and *Eric Garcia* (Grants) seconded, to accept the Wage & Classification Plan as presented. Motion carried by acclamation.

## V. ANNOUNCEMENTS; OTHER BUSINESS

- A. **Partner Spotlights:** No reports as many delivered full presentations under that section.

- B. **2022 Board Meeting Calendar.** Mr. Williams reviewed the approved COG Board Calendar. Next meeting will be October 20, 2021, which will be held as a hybrid in McKinley County. He noted that the Annual Meeting will constitute the COG's 50<sup>th</sup> Year and be held in Gallup.

- C. **Announcements & General Comments:** No announcements to report.

## VI. ADJOURNMENT

**ACTION:** *Michael Schaaf* (Gallup) moved and *Anthony Dimas, Jr.* (McKinley County) seconded, to adjourn. Motion carried. Chairman Moore again thanked the City of Grants for hosting and assisting with Annual Luncheon and adjourned the meeting of the Board of Directors at 11:52AM. Motion carried by acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,

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Evan J. Williams  
Board Secretary and Executive Director

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Billy W. Moore  
Board Chair