



# NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

## MINUTES

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### SPRING MEETING

April 21, 2021

Virtual Meeting

Held via ZOOM | Streamed & Recorded to [Facebook](#)

## 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 9 of the 9 voting entities of the Board (100%), along with COG staff, guests, and their CPA.

#### BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

CIBOLA COUNTY: Judy Horacek; Martha Garcia  
MCKINLEY COUNTY: Billy Moore; Anthony Dimas, Jr.; Doug Decker  
SAN JUAN COUNTY: Jim Cox  
CITY OF AZTEC: Michael Padilla Sr.  
CITY OF BLOOMFIELD: Jason Thomas  
CITY OF FARMINGTON: Linda Rogers; Julie Baird  
CITY OF GALLUP: Fran Palochak; Louie Bonaguidi; Michael Schaaf; Maryann Ustick  
CITY OF GRANTS: Erik Garcia  
VILLAGE OF MILAN: Roseanne Lopez; Ellen Baca

#### GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:

Armando Sanchez, CPA  
Eric Ghahate (Contractor)  
Trisha Korbass, EDA  
Vincent Martinez, Tri-State

#### STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

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

### B. AGENDA & MINUTES ADOPTION.

Chairman *Moore* provided an overview of the day's agenda topics. Chairman *Moore* reviewed the minutes of January 20, 2020 for review and approval.

**ACTION:** *Martha Garcia* (Cibola County) moved and *Louie Bonaguidi* (McKinley County) seconded adoption of the agenda and minutes. Motion carried – see voting sheet.

### C. BOARD OFFICER VACANCY.

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 required that this position be nominated by the San Juan area caucus and be a representative of that area. The caucus asked that it be given an opportunity

to caucus on this appointment and bring back a nomination at the Annual Meeting. This would be very appropriate as the Annual Meeting typically is the time for election of officers. Julie Baird will help to head that Nomination Committee with support of COG staff.

**ACTION:** *This item was tabled.*

## II. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

*Jim Glover*, Once-A-Day Marketing and EndeavOR New Mexico, provided a presentation on the outdoor recreation as an economic driver and new trends in this space. A copy of his presentation will be available on the COG website.

## III. REGIONAL PLAN PRESENTATION

**A. COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY.** *Evan Williams*, Executive Director, for the Northwest NM Economic Development District (EDD) a presentation on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Plan - |La Ristra Northwest". This plan is update and approved every five (5) years as per the COG's work program with the US Economic Development Administration.

**ACTION:** *Jason Thomas* (Bloomfield) moved and *Michael Padilla, Sr.* (Aztec) seconded adoption of Resolution 2021-04: CEDS. Motion carried – see voting sheet.

## IV. EXECUTIVE/STAFF REPORT

- A. Staff Summary Report:** Executive Director *Williams* provided a summary of the past quarter's key activities and issues.
- B. Connecting the Dots Newsletter.** Mr. Williams noted that the COG had a historic 9 months of impact and the last quarter is captured in our [Connecting the Dots newsletter](#). Mr. Williams showcased our newsletter for the quarter, which highlights our work.
- C. Legislative Session Review:** Mr. Williams mentioned that COG transitioned Legislative Services to Brandon Howe this year, and Mr. Howe provided a quick synopsis for capital outlay and other funding appropriated during this Session.
- D. Personnel Policies Changes:** Mr. Williams highlighted two needed changes that would off cycle to a full review and update on these internal policies. He wanted to brief the Board so they are aware, and had already sat down with staff.
- 1. Hospitality Fund:** This was a fund created by paycheck deductions that helped the COG pay for water, coffee, birthday cakes, etc. At this point, I believe it is feasible for the COG to cover these minor costs.
  - 2. Annual Leave Buy-back Program:** A program to buy-back unused leave from longer tenured employees (5-year threshold). This program only currently effect Martina Whitmore and Evan Williams. There are a number of other staff that are approaching the 5-year threshold, but no one is within 1 year. Due to budget constraints and the way that this is paid out, staff is recommending that we end the program at the conclusion of the fiscal year, thus providing all owed and obligated benefits. This change would take effect July 1, 2021.
- E. Work Program Overview:** Mr. Williams provided an update to the Board on the major organizational work program focus and a need to focus for the next 90-days on supporting

members and communities on accessing State and Federal resources.

1. **Finances.** The COG has cleaned up its financial house and is very stable including having a clean audit with no findings and meeting its internal goals of increasing a reserve.
2. **Staffing.** The COG has attracted, retained and trained one of the most professional teams in organization history, and continues to meet the Board's approved wage and classification plan. Staff is continuing to learn and get coached on the COG standard of excellence.
3. **Special Projects.** While the COG was not able to internalize the Farmington MPO, it has continued to increase fee-for-service contracts and produce great product including McKinley County Comprehensive Plan, Zuni Mountains Trail Design and QA/QC, and potential contracts with the City of Aztec and Cibola County.
4. **Economic Development.** The COG has committed to re-focusing and doubling down on its efforts in economic development including garnering several EDA investments and investing back into local and tribal economic development organizations.
5. **Projecteering.** Director Williams asked the Board for some flexibility to focus on delivering investments mainly in transportation, water/wastewater, and economic development related to the avalanche of opportunities both at the State and especially at the Federal levels related to CARES Act, American Rescue Plan Act, and potentially the American Jobs Act. COG staff is offering to workshop members to create funding strategies and project action plans to set them up for success. He mentioned that the Department of Information Technology is partnering up to help communities with broadband.

## V. FINANCIAL REPORT

- A. **FY2021 Financial Report, Q3:** Armando Sanchez, CPA provided a brief overview of the third quarter financial reports provided in the Board packet. He mentioned that COG has moved from full accrual back to modified accrual, which resembles a more accurate financial position of the organization and its operations.

**ACTION:** *Louie Bonaguidi* (Gallup) moved and *Martha Garcia* (Cibola County) seconded, to accept the FY2021 Financial Report, Quarter #3 as presented. Motion carried – see voting sheet.

- B. **FY2021 Budget, Revision #4:** Mr. Williams presented and explained that mainly included removing and decreasing contract/fund columns that have not been awarded yet. Staff apologized for not including the Quarter #3 budget to actuals report and will get that out as part of the meeting de-brief.

**ACTION:** *Louie Bonaguidi* (Gallup) moved and *Martha Garcia* (Cibola County) seconded, to accept the FY2021 Budget, Revision #4 as presented. Motion carried – see voting sheet.

- C. **FY2022 Budget, Preliminary:** Mr. Williams presented the FY2022 draft budget to the Board for approval. Mr. Jim Cox asked for clarification of why the RTPO program was budgeted as a deficient and assumed this was due to carry-over. Mr. Williams apologized and stated he would get that corrected.

**ACTION:** *Louie Bonaguidi* (Gallup) moved and *Michael Padilla, Sr.* (Aztec) seconded, to accept

the FY2022 Budget as presented. Staff was directed to correct that error in the RTPO program.  
Motion carried – see voting sheet.

## VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS; OTHER BUSINESS

- A. **Standing Partner Spotlights:** Based on guidance from the Executive Committee, rather than adding ex-officio members to our Board it was suggested to invite State and Federal agency partners to our meeting and allow them some time under this standing agenda item to present short updates and share critical information with our members.
- B. **2021 Board Meeting Calendar.** Mr. Williams presented the approved COG Board Calendar. Next meeting will be July 21, 2021, which will be held as a hybrid and entail our Annual Meeting followed by our Annual Luncheon. Cibola Area caucus members are encouraging the COG and supporting the COG in having an in-person event.
- C. **Announcements & General Comments:** No announcements to report.

## VII. ADJOURNMENT

**ACTION:** *Doug Decker* (McKinley County) moved and *Michael Padilla* (Aztec) seconded, to adjourn. Motion carried. Chairman Moore again thanked all Board members for their participate and patience for this virtual meeting and adjourned the meeting of the Board of Directors at 11:45AM. Motion carried by acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,



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Evan J. Williams  
Board Secretary and Executive Director



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