



NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

MINUTES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS WINTER REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

January 15, 2025

at the Farmington Civic Center
200 W. Arrington Street *** Farmington, NM

I. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

A. CALL ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS/QUORUM.

Board Secretary Evan Williams [COG] convened the meeting of the Board of Directors at 10:08 am. Roll call proceeded in the form of introductions around the table. In attendance were 14 Board Representatives, representing a quorum 7 of the 9 voting entities of the Board (77.8%), along with 3 COG staff. Chairman Louie Bonaguidi provided a welcome to the Board.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

BOARD EMERITUS: *Excused*
CIBOLA COUNTY: Judy Horacek
MCKINLEY COUNTY: Danielle Notah; Jodie Sowers
SAN JUAN COUNTY: GloJean Todacheene, Sandra Lanier, Sam Gonzales
CITY OF AZTEC: Jeff Blackburn
CITY OF BLOOMFIELD: *Excused*
CITY OF FARMINGTON: Linda Rodgers, Warren Unsicker
CITY OF GALLUP: Louie Bonaguidi, Michael Schaaf, Patricia Holland, Frank Chiapetti
CITY OF GRANTS: *Excused*
VILLAGE OF MILAN: James Mercer

GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:

Tim Gibbs, Mike Stark, Steven Saavedra, Seth Puls, Chad Gaines, Steve Holland, Brian Lee, Jim Dumont, and

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Evan Williams
OFFICE MANAGER: N/A
STAFF: Brandon Howe;

B. AGENDA & MINUTES ADOPTION.

Chairman Bonaguidi asked for a motion to approve the day's agenda topics and the minutes from October 16, 2024 Board meeting.

ACTION: *Michael Schaaf* (Gallup) moved and *Linda Rodgers* (Farmington) seconded adoption of the agenda and minutes as presented. Motion carried.

II. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

The COG arranged for two presentations under this section based on suggestions and informational needs from COG Board members. Copies of the Four Corners Freight Rail Study presentation is posted at: <https://www.nwnmcog.org/board.html>

Mike Stark, Manager, San Juan County provided an in-depth overview of this project and its status as well as potential alignments and a recent award for \$4M additional dollars to continue to design and clear the project.

The second presentation was made by Peabody Energy (Seth Puls and Chad Gaines) to discuss the current life of coal mining at their facilities including continuation at Lee Ranch. They also presented rail assets and rights-of-way that they held or held in partnership that might be worth discussing if the preferred alignment is chosen for eastern McKinley County. These assets also would be of benefit to the Prewitt Industrial Park and other re-use planning and development being driven by the McKinley County Electric Generating Facility Economic District.

III. EXECUTIVE/STAFF REPORT

Director Williams and Planning Director Brandon Howe provided a summary of the past quarter's key activities and issues.

- A. **STAFF SUMMARY REPORT.** Brandon Howe, COG Lead Planner, reviewed the Connecting the Dots report to the Board for their review and understanding of the previous quarterly activities.
- B. **LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW.** Mr. Howe provided an overview of the role the COG plays in this process, the coordination of Legislative Forums, and preparation of capital outlay requests as well as how it tracks progress in Santa Fe, keeps members updated, and provides a final report breaking down funding bills.
- C. **SPECIAL PROJECTS & PROGRAMS REPORT.** Mr. Howe reported on programs and projects for their review and understanding of the outcomes and opportunities.
 1. **GRO PROGRAM.** COG Staff provided the following report as a designated grant management agency for the new Government Results & Opportunity program created by the Legislature.
 2. **Interstate 40 Projects.** COG is currently managing five interchange planning projects for the City of Gallup, McKinley County, and Village of Milan. These projects are due by June 30, 2025 and are over \$10M in funding that does create cashflow pressure on the COG.
 3. **Authority Contract.** Based the PED model, the COG agreed to a contract with the McKinley County Electric Generating Facility District (a.k.a "Authority) to onboard and manage its selected and hired Executive Director Eileen Yarborough to coordinate and manage the work of this Authority to diversify economic initiatives and workforce development in the Prewitt Industrial bi-county area.
- D. **Open Meetings Act Resolution.** This resolution was presented and approved as follows:

ACTION: *Linda Rodgers* (Farmington) moved and *Danille Notah* (McKinley) seconded adoption of the open meetings act resolution as presented. Motion carried.

- E. **Fiscal Agency Policy / GRO Program:** Director Williams reviewed this program and how it was stood up during the last Legislative Session. He reviewed the direction that the Board took last time to limit the COG's role as fiscal and administrative agent to only its member governments and to deny all non-profit requests at this time. Mr. Williams brought this back up and did not have a clear understanding of how the program will be structured and conducted this Session, but will keep the direction provided last year and inform the Board as information becomes available. He will be scheduled to be in Santa Fe from February 3 -10 in case GRO request reviews are needed.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORTS

- A. **FY2025 Quarterly Financial Report, Quarter 2:** Mr. Williams apologized as he could not get these ready in time for the meeting and pledged that they would be sent out as soon as possible for Board review and information. This item was postponed.
- B. **FY2025 Budget Amendment #2.** Mr. Evan Williams provided a review of the organization's budget and changes to the FY2025 budget that were needed.

ACTION: *GloJean Todacheene* (San Juan) moved and *Michael Schaaf* (Gallup) seconded, to approve the budget amendment as presented. Motion carried

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS; OTHER BUSINESS

- A. **FY2025 Board Meeting & Holiday Calendar.** Mr. Williams presented the COG Board 12-month Master Calendar including Annual Luncheon and NADO Conferences.
- B. **Announcements & General Comments:**
1. Congressional Delegation staff reported on the large amount of investment made recently into the region including Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project, a facility in Aztec, and several transportation investments.
 2. Steve Saavedra presented and passed San Juan County Gravel Guides highlighting bike routes on existing routes as this type of recreation is growing in popularity. <https://graveladventurefieldguide.com/shop/ols/products/san-juan-county-nm>

VI. ADJOURNMENT

ACTION: *Linda Rodgers* (Farmington) moved and *Michael Schaaf* (Gallup) seconded to adjourn. Motion carried. Chairman Bonaguidi thanked City of Farmington for their hospitality for this meeting and adjourned the meeting of the Board of Directors at 11:55AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Evan J. Williams
Board Secretary and Executive Director

ATTEST: _____
Louie Bonaguidi
Board Chair