

UPPER RIO GRANDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Regular Meeting Minutes | Tuesday, January 9, 2018 | 7:00 a.m.

Mountain View Restaurant | Monte Vista

Attendees: Cathy Garcia, Andy Merritt, Carmen Simone, Andrea Oaks-Jaramillo, Traci Holmes, Tom Slade, Marty Asplin, Karla Shriver, Jim Clare, Kevin Wilkins, Mike Hurst, Gene Glover, Anthony Guerrero, Thomas Tancula, Ron Atencio, Pam Bricker, Joelle Boos-Medina, Dan Hicks, Suzanne Bothell, Linda Robinson, Monte Robertson, Karen Martinez, Sarah Anderson, Gene Farish, Joe McCarn, Joe Schlabach, Lee Swenson, Carolyn Kawanabe, Brent Logan, and Bonnie Asplin

Call to Order (7:08 a.m.) by President, Tom Slade

- I. **Present Agenda:** M/S for approval by Karla Shriver/Mike Hurst; approved
- II. **Minutes of the December 12, 2017 meeting:** M/S for approval with correction (board member slate to include Shon Davis and deletion of Forrest Neuerburg) by Bonnie Asplin/Mike Hurst; approved
- III. **Treasurer's Report:** Linda Robinson reported the account balance to be \$64,192.19, with a restricted/obligated budget of \$59,954.16.
- IV. **Director's Report:** Marty Asplin spoke about some of last month's activities. He met with Senator Bennet and assistants at Alamosa Airport to discuss Economic Development in RGC. The brochures were updated with key industries. He is continuing to look for properties in Monte Vista appropriate to TSJC. He is assisting South Fork Chamber of Commerce to get key speakers for monthly meeting to discuss customer service. The 2017 Annual Report was completed and sent out to investors.
- V. **Business:**
 - a. The new officers were announced. Tom Slade, President, Andrea Oaks, Vice President, Bernadette Martinez, Secretary/Treasurer.
 - b. The programs are being set up for 2018. A monthly meeting program was distributed showing what programs were scheduled and what dates still needed to be filled. Let us know if there is a program someone would like to have. Raleigh Burt of Kristi Mountain Sports will be the speaker in February.
 - c. One example of economic development – South Fork Chamber's monthly program of speakers regarding customer service. Customer service is a critical component of economic development.
- VI. **Program:** Tom Tancula, general manager of San Luis Central Railroad, gave the presentation. San Luis Central Railroad was founded in 1913 and has had the same name for 104 years. San Luis Central was acquired in 1969 by a consortium headed by Ed Burkhardt. Tom stressed the importance of safety. The railroad's top speed is 10 miles an hour. There have been 3 accidents at crossings. The company has zero tolerance regarding drugs or alcohol. He also stated that they were not the ones with the storage cars parked on the tracks. He went on to explain how the process works. The railroad moves agricultural products out of the valley. This includes potatoes, grains, fertilizers and hazardous materials. They have transported over 70 million pounds of potatoes to various parts of the US. They have 74 refrigerated box cars for the potatoes, 49 covered hoppers for grain, 13 miles of track and 7 employees. The railroad can ship all over the country through Union Pacific. They can move your product at a reasonable price and can load and ship almost anything. Questions and Answers followed.

Regular Reports:

- a) *Rio Grande County* – Karla Shriver reported that the county is gearing up for their audit. A feasibility study is being done on the railroad between South Fork and Creede. It should be done next week. An engineering partnership between Monte Vista and the Veterans Waste Water Treatment Plant for upgrades that will help Proximity Malt is being developed. RGC is looking at the Del Norte School buildings but hasn't reached a decision on that. They are hiring a professional to advise them on whether to go for a sales tax increase or a mil levy increase on the next ballot.

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- b) *South Fork* – They are entering the board of trustees election cycle.
 - c) *Del Norte* – Marty Asplin reported that the hospital construction is coming along nicely due to the nice weather. The project is almost on schedule. Environmental studies have been done on the Rio Grande and permits are being sought to begin construction on the River Front Project.
 - d) *Monte Vista* – Joe Schlabach stated that there have been many changes in the city. The members of the city council are new, excluding himself. Carol Schader has resigned due to personal issues. URA project is moving forward and there is now a rough draft of a manual that will help access funds for the program.
 - e) *SLVDRG* – At the end of the month Mick Daniels will attend the outdoor industry conference. He will be attending the Indo Expo to see what is going on in the world of hemp. *February 6-8* – Is the date of the Agriculture Conference at Ski Hi Park. There will be a seminar on industrial hemp. The purpose of this is to educate farmers. There will be sessions on rules and regulations, seed classifications, and how to grow hemp. Kathy Garcia reported that Senator Gardner is working through some of the issues with hemp.
 - f) *Mike Hurst* is asking for support for the American Plan for Prosperity which helps small banks. The question was raised in regard to anyone looking into using the railroad to attract manufacturing in the valley.
- VII. **Next Meeting:** February 13, 2018, at 7:00 a.m., at the Windsor. Raleigh Burt of Kristi Mountain Sports will be the speaker.
- VIII. **Adjourn:** 8:10 a.m. Respectfully submitted, Linda Robinson