

Regular Meeting Minutes | Tuesday, August 13, 2019 | 7:00 a.m.

Mountain View Restaurant | Monte Vista

Attendees: Gigi Dennis, Marcus Shawcroft, Gene Glover, Emma Reesor, Marty Asplin, Bonnie Asplin, Forrest Neuerburg, Lyndsie Ferrell, Jim Clare, Tom Monaco, Traci Holmes, Bernadette Martinez, Gary Johnson, Linda Robinson, Earl Robinson, Suzanne Benton, Senator Larry Crowder, Tom Slade, Gene Farish, Kathy Woods, Representative Donald Valdez, John Noffske, and Kathryn DeSouchet.

Call to Order 7:07 a.m. by President, Forrest Neuerburg.

- I. **Present Agenda:** M/S for approval by Jim Clare/Kathy Woods; approved.
- II. **Minutes of the July 9, 2019 meeting:** M/S for approval as presented by Bonnie Asplin/Gene Glover; approved
- III. **Director's Report:**
 - a. EDCC/OEDIT webinar "Remote Rural Work Incentive" aka Colorado's Mutual Prosperity Program (COMP) strategy. Discussion on how this could help URG and SLV.
 - b. Talked with prospective businesses (an expansion and two new businesses – MV and DN)
 - c. Communications with Continuum Partners LLC regarding upcoming design and operations meeting about the Frontier Drive-In project.
 - d. Work for the SLV Economic Summit is finished. The Summit was August 5th and was excellent.
 - e. Tour of Formation Ag, update and grand opening discussion. They are cranking out equipment.
 - f. Attended meeting TSJC and Stakeholders continuation of Skill Trade Center/Workforce.
 - g. Attended CDOT meeting on Transportation Planning Region 5 at RG County BOCC chambers.
- IV. **Business:** One Example of Economic Development – Rio Grande National Forest releasing their land management plan. We don't always think of the forest providing economics.
- V. **Program:** Emma Reesor, Executive Director of the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project and the Del Norte River Front Project, spoke on what it took to accomplish all permitting, to fully fund the river project and the critical role RGHRP plays from start to finish. She began by explaining the history of RGHRP, a non-profit group that began in 2001 to protect the Rio Grande River. It's mission to restore and conserve the historic function and vitality of the Rio Grande for improved water quality, agricultural use, riparian health, wildlife and aquatic species habitats, recreation and community. They work closely with private landowners and irrigation companies to maintain, repair and enhance riparian restoration along the Rio Grande. Once they had a plan, they needed boots on the ground to implement it. There are 4 programs: Riparian Restoration Program. Irrigation infrastructure improvement program: to improve irrigation to be more efficient. Most of them have been built over 100 years ago. Work with them to replace headgates, irrigation etc. Watershed Stewardship Program: They work with partnership coordination team, forest, improve watershed health. Outreach and Education Program: Work with community groups and water leasers. The Rio Grande is a working river and the life blood of the San Luis Valley. It supports agriculture, towns, recreation and wildlife. Reesor went through the time line for the Del Norte River Front Project. Del Norte Trails masterplan identified community need for river recreation. In 2015 RGHRP began working with partners on initial planning and fundraising. 2016 through 2018 community outreach, fundraising and planning was done. In August 2017 designs

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were completed by Riverbend Engineering. December 2017 permit documents were submitted to the USACE and State. Permits were acquired in September of 2018 and in December 2018 construction of boat ramp and access road were completed. The entire project will include a play wave, public access to the river, a picnic area and parking lot. In Spring of 2019 funding was secured for all the first phase construction with plans to start construction this fall. Work will resume this fall in late October/early November when water levels are at their lowest and endangered species are out of the area. The project is expected to be complete before runoff next year.

VI. **Regular Reports:**

- a) *Rio Grande County* – Gene Glover reported they survived high water, Covered Wagon Days and were now working on the budget. Senior citizens are having their yard sale September 6th.
- b) *Monte Vista* – Forrest Neuerburg reported that they are getting a new fixed base operator at the airport. Cielo will be out there by the end of the year. They survived Stampede and had a great turnout. There are new businesses in town. The Potato Festival is coming up in September. There is a new business at the Fasset Building – a coffee shop open from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., 7 days a week. Also serves beer and wine.
- c) *Del Norte* –Bernadette Martinez reported that the town is completely under construction. The school project is ongoing.
- d) *South Fork, Crestone, and Saguache* – Gene Farish reported that South Fork continues to work on the water system one step at a time. Saguache is working through the projects on the new school and the sewer system, to complete this fall. Crestone has its street projects finished up
- e) *Mineral County, Creede, RWEACT* – Larry Crowder reported that the Fire House in Creede has a new façade thanks to DOLA
- f) *Alamosa* – Kathy Woods reported ASU is getting ready to welcome students back. Early Iron is coming up. Denver Dumb Friends League is working on opening an 8,000 sq. ft shelter. Radar project will be county wide in September. They are getting official training at the end of August. Ribbon cutting with Kathy Sabin is September 18th.
- g) *SLV SBDC* – Tom Monaco reported on Leading Edge, a 12-week program to be held every Wednesday evening. The cost is \$300.00. If the course is successful, they get a refund. Finally got SBA on how they can work with hemp companies. Greeley has a program on hemp. They hope to partner up with them on bringing this program to the Valley.
- h) *SLVDRG/COG* – No report
- i) *Other* – Gigi Dennis reported on their recent Census 2020 meeting. This impact federal funding and congressional seats. Will take a lot of community effort to get an accurate census. You can go online and apply to be a census taker. Pay starts at \$14.00/hr. If you are on public assistance those dollars don't impact your assistance. The website is 2020census.gov/jobs.

VII. **Next Meeting:** September 10, 2019, at Windsor Hotel in Del Norte, with program by Tom Monaco, Director of the San Luis Valley Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

VIII. **Adjourn:** at 8:03on a motion by Gene Glover and second by Gigi Dennis

Respectfully submitted, Linda Robinson