

**GUNNISON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
February 2, 2021**

The February 2, 2021 meeting was held in the Board of County Commissioners’ meeting room located at 200 E. Virginia Avenue, Gunnison, Colorado. Present, either in person or via Zoom, were:

Jonathan Houck, Chairperson
Roland Mason, Vice-Chairperson
Liz Smith, Commissioner
Matthew Birnie, County Manager
Katherine Haase, Deputy County Clerk
Others Present as Listed in Text

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Houck called the meeting to order at 8:31 am.

AGENDA REVIEW: There were no changes made to the agenda.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Moved** by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Mason to approve the January 26, 2021 special meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

- 1. January 26, 2021 Special Meeting

CONSENT AGENDA: **Moved** by Commissioner Mason, seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve the consent agenda, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

- 1. Core Services Agreement Amendment No. 3
- 2. Addendum to the Claims Administration Agreement between Gunnison County, Colorado and Group & Pension Administrators, LLC dba GPA
- 3. Amendment to Plan Document Dated September 1, 2017 and Restated January 1, 2020; Gunnison County, Colorado Employee Dental and Vision Benefit Plan Cost Plus Plan

SCHEDULING: The Upcoming Meetings Schedule was discussed and updated.

COUNTY MANAGER’S REPORTS:

- 1. County Manager Contracting Authority; Possible Executive Session Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b), Conferences with an Attorney for the Local Public Body for the Purposes of Receiving Legal Advice on Specific Legal Questions Regarding Contracting Authority and/or Delegation. **Moved** by Commissioner Houck, seconded by Commissioner Mason to go into executive session pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b), Conferences with an Attorney for the Local Public Body for the Purposes of Receiving Legal Advice on Specific Legal Questions, and the participants in the executive session will be the full Board of County Commissioners, the County Manager, the County Attorney and the Deputy County Attorney. Motion carried unanimously. The board went into executive session at 8:35 am. Executive sessions of the Board of County Commissioners are conducted as per C.R.S. 24-6-402(4). This specific session was conducted as per C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b).

Attorney Statement Regarding Executive Session

Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4), I attest that I am the Gunnison County Attorney, that I represent the Gunnison County Board of County Commissioners, that I attended all of the above referenced executive session, that all of the executive session was confined to the topic authorized for discussion pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b) privileged attorney-client communication, no record of the executive session was required to be kept and no such record was kept.

Date: _____

Matthew Hoyt
Gunnison County Attorney

Chairperson Statement Regarding Executive Session

Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4), I attest that I am the Chairperson of the Gunnison County Board of Commissioners, that I attended all of the above referenced executive session, and that all of that executive session was confined to the topic authorized for discussion pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(B).

Date: _____

Jonathan Houck, Chairperson
Gunnison County Board of Commissioners

Moved by Commissioner Houck, seconded by Commissioner Smith to come out of executive session. Motion carried unanimously. The Board came out of executive session at 9:02 am. Commissioner Houck confirmed that no contemporaneous recording was kept of the executive session, due to the conversation being subject to attorney-client privilege.

DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT AND PROJECT UPDATES: Deputy County Manager Marlene Crosby was present for discussion.

1. Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) Survey of Somerset System. DCM Crosby informed the Board that the CDPHE recently completed the survey, and the inspector was pleased with the steps that Gunnison County is taking, even though the system is out of compliance.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE STAFFING: County Attorney Matt Hoyt and Deputy County Attorney Emilee Gaebler were present for discussion. CA Hoyt informed the Board that one of his paralegals resigned, which presented the opportunity for proper staffing of his office. Rather than fill the paralegal position, he requested permission to substitute it for an entry-level attorney position at an annual fiscal impact of \$38,000 over the paralegal's compensation. He noted that this pay level is equivalent to what similar counties pay. He also noted that he could make his selection from the recent pool of candidates who applied for the Deputy County Attorney position, and that he would like to fill the position within the next month or two.

The additional attorney, if approved, would concentrate on specific areas, as would the other two attorneys in the office. This structure would allow the other attorneys to focus on the larger issues while supervising the entry-level attorney. CA Hoyt stated that David Baumgarten, former County Attorney, told him that he had never seen the office as busy as it has become.

County Manager Birnie voiced his support for the proposal, due to the increased workload associated with the bevy of projects and the goals outlined in the countywide strategic plan. He also stated that this additional cost could be absorbed within the current budget.

Deputy County Manager Marlene Crosby also voiced support for the proposal, because the Attorney's Office hasn't had the capacity to assist her with pending documents that need to be reviewed and/or created. County Manager Birnie agreed that the backlog experienced by departments hinders operations and efficiency, and it creates risk where departments are forced to proceed with contracts/projects/negotiations without the benefit of legal counsel when the CAO is too busy to provide assistance or guidance.

The Board agreed to allow the proposal to move forward.

COVID RESPONSE DATA MANAGER: Health and Human Services Director Joni Reynolds was present for discussion. She explained that her team has been looking at incident command work related to data, and it's been challenging for months. She stated that we need to hire for this position to manage the whole effort to push, pull, aggregate, interpret and translate data for various audiences, and that the term could extend beyond 2021, depending on the conclusion of the pandemic. The successful candidate would also need to be versed in Public Health issues.

CM Birnie estimated that this would result in a six-figure compensation, and he recommended that the Board approve the request and then use funds set aside for COVID response. As of 2/2/21, that fund had approximately \$600k in it. **Moved** by Commissioner Houck, seconded by Commissioner Smith to authorize Matthew (County Manger) and Joni (HHS Director) to expend the funds to hire our COVID Response Data Manager with the funding coming out of our dedicated COVID-response funds that were set aside by the Board. Motion carried unanimously.

UNSCHEDULED CITIZENS: There were no Unscheduled Citizens present for discussion.

COMMISSIONER ITEMS:

Commissioner Smith:

1. Gunnison Chamber Update. Commissioner Smith attended a recent Chamber meeting. Pam Williams was voted in as the new Chamber President, and Commissioner Smith opined that she has good ideas and enthusiasm. All other Chamber board positions remain the same. Chamber board members asked about the possibility of the County issuing dining dollars, but she stressed that providing the air filters was a better investment as she doesn't feel that issuing dining dollars for unincorporated sections of the Gunnison County is a viable program. CM Birnie noted that the County has spent millions of dollars to provide the COVID-19 response in the valley. Commissioner Houck stated that he has seen citizens understand current circumstances and support restaurants all throughout the valley, in unincorporated areas or not. CM Birnie also noted that the Recovery Team is working on some proposals to assist business areas that are struggling, and those proposals may come to the Board within the next few weeks for consideration.
2. Town of Crested Butte Black Lives Matter Movement Update. Commissioner Smith continues to participate in the local BLM movement. The group is discussing many possible initiatives that might get conversations started in the community. She stressed, during the meeting, that it would helpful for the group to demonstrate requested ethos in their own work to emphasize community collaboration.

- 3. Early Childhood Council Update. Commissioner Smith stated that the ECC will be applying for a competitive grant. Applications are due at the end of the month.

Commissioner Mason:

- 1. Gunnison Valley Regional Housing Authority Update. Commissioner Mason informed the Board that the GVRHA is interested in evaluating small affordable-housing projects in the valley. One potential location may be in the Pitchfork Subdivision, where the County owns a lot. There may also be an opportunity in Mt. Crested Butte.
- 2. Region 10. Commissioner Mason stated that Region 10 hired a firm to handle a regional data dashboard for economic recovery. He will relay this info to our Recovery Team. Also, Region 10's Internet Director mentioned that, per a school system analysis, 18% of kids were not initially able to access the internet during the COVID response; that has since dropped to 4% due to Region 10's efforts. A lot of the increased availability has occurred in Montrose, Delta and Ouray Counties. Region 10 had the largest reduction in connectivity needs compared across Colorado.
- 3. IceLab Pitch Meeting. Commissioner Mason stated that the pitch meeting saw a total of 106 applicants, and two of the top 10 pitches came from local residents.
- 4. Long Lake Parcel Working Group. Commissioner Mason informed the Board that he sat in on the first group meeting. Issues discussed were related to trails, trespassing and enforcement. The parcel is currently owned by the Land Trust.
- 5. Rural Transportation Authority. Commissioner Mason stated that the TSA just announced that mask wearing on all public conveyances, including within airport terminals, will be mandatory.

Commissioner Houck:

- 1. Wolf Reintroduction. Commissioner Houck participated on a recent call with other commissioner, the Department of Natural Resources Director and the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Director to discuss rollout. During that call, Commissioner Houck consistently emphasized that the people who put it on the ballot did not do very well with public outreach to potentially impacted communities. He was also clear that our community has worked to protect the Gunnison Sage-grouse, and that the species might be negatively impacted by the wolf reintroduction.
- 2. Forest Service Plan Revisions and Timeline. Commissioner Houck recently spoke with Ouray District Ranger Tammy Randall-Parker about this issue. The draft is expected this summer.
- 3. San Miguel County Commissioner Hillary Cooper and Representative Lauren Boebert's Chief of Staff David Bernhardt Zoom Call. Commissioner Houck participated in this call, and he noted that the conversation was productive, honest and frank. Many areas for non-partisan collaboration were identified.
- 4. CCI Steering Committee Meetings. Commissioner Houck informed the Board that he was reelected as a member of the Public Lands Traveling Committee. He will distribute the full legislative bill to the Board soon.
- 5. Sarah McCarthy, Western Colorado Regional Director for Senator John Hickenlooper. Commissioner Houck informed the Board that he also has the chance to discuss non-partisan collaborative ideas with Ms. McCarthy.

ADJOURN: Moved by Commissioner Houck, seconded by Commissioner Smith to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:28 am.

Jonathan Houck, Chairperson

Roland Mason, Vice-Chairperson

Liz Smith, Commissioner

Minutes Prepared By:

Katherine Haase, Deputy County Clerk

Attest:

Kathy Simillion, County Clerk