



NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

MINUTES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPRING REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

April 17, 2024

Hybrid Meeting – 10 AM

Downtown Civic Center

200 W. Arrington Street, Farmington, NM 87401

I. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. INTRODUCTIONS/QUORUM.

Chairwomen *Martha Garcia* [Cibola County] convened the meeting of the Board of Directors at 10:03 am. Roll call proceeded in the form of introductions around the table. In attendance were 12 Board Representatives, representing a quorum of 7 of the 9 voting entities of the Board (77.8%), along with all 3 COG staff.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

CIBOLA COUNTY: Martha Garcia; Judy Horacek; Dr. Christine Lowery
MCKINLEY COUNTY: Danielle Notah; Sara Keeler;
SAN JUAN COUNTY: GloJean Todacheene; Gary McDaniel; Mike Stark; Steven Saavedra
CITY OF AZTEC: Michael Padilla, Sr.; Jeff Blackburn
CITY OF BLOOMFIELD: *Donna Sharpe (excused)*
CITY OF FARMINGTON: Julie Baird; Warren Unsicker
CITY OF GALLUP: Louie Bonaguidi (Treasurer); Michael Schaaf,
CITY OF GRANTS: *Erik Garcia (excused); Beverly Michael (excused)*
VILLAGE OF MILAN: James Mercer; Felix Gonzales
BOARD EMERITUS: *Jeff Kiely (excused)*

GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:

Armando Sanchez (SJT Group), Tim Gibbs, Scott Bird, and Corey Nelson (4CED), Eileen Yarborough (CCEDF) Nathan Williams (PED), Mark Roper (EDD), Sharlynn Rosales and Jacobo Martinez (MFA)

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Evan Williams
OFFICE MANAGER: Martina Whitmore
PLANNING DIRECTOR: Brandon Howe

C. AGENDA & MINUTES ADOPTION.

Director Williams provided an overview of the day's agenda topics and the minutes from previous meeting.

ACTION: *Michael Padilla, Sr.* (Aztec) moved and *James Mercer* (Milan) seconded adoption of the agenda and minutes from January 10th, 2024. Motion carried.

D. ELECTION OF OFFICERS PREVIEW.

BACKGROUND: Based on our Articles of Agreement (revised February 27, 2012), as needed the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments (COG) has the ability to establish a Nominating Committee by June 30 in order to develop and recommend a slate of officers for the Board’s approval, to be presented at the annual meeting in even-numbered years. The officers of the Board shall hold office for two (2) year terms, with said terms to begin immediately following the annual meeting in even-numbered years.

ACTIONS TO DATE: Executive Director Williams actively followed up with our current officers on January 10, 2024 to find out willingness to continue their service. The current slate of Officers is now:

Martha Garcia (Cibola County)	Chair
Michael Padilla Sr. (Aztec)	1 st Vice-Chair
Danielle Notah (McKinley County)	2 nd Vice-Chair
Louie Bonaguidi (City of Gallup)	Treasurer
Vacant*	Immediate Past Chair

*Billy Moore resigned

To date, there has not been an indication of any officer looking to vacate their position.

RECOMMENDATION: If all officers agree to continue, staff recommends tabling elections and re-confirming these officers at the Annual Meeting, unless an individual Board member requests otherwise. In this case, we would ask Board members to submit nominations and hold elections for that/those seat(s).

DISCUSSION: Martha Garcia did share with the Board that she is winding down her term as a Cibola County Commissioner and has made the decision to step down. She would like someone in place to take over the duties at the Annual Luncheon. Neither Vice-Chair volunteered to move up, so there will be a vacancy at Chair and in terms of nominating and electing a new Cibola Area member.

DIRECTION: Executive Director was directed to organize a nominating committee of Cibola County representatives to provide a slate of nominations or recommendation to bring back to the full Board. Executive Director will also give some thought and consult the bylaws on the vacancy at the Chair position.

II. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

The COG arranged for three very special presentations under this section from:

- A. **Legislative Remarks.** Legislators were invited to provide remarks on the Session and any other concerns regarding COG or its direction on the Government Results & Opportunity trust fund

created and on role in it. No Legislators were present but there was a conflict with Legislative Finance Committee (LFC).

- B. **State of Economic Development.** Mark Roper, Cabinet Secretary, of NM Economic Development Department provided an overview of the Session, outcomes and changes within the Department including Division and staffing, and other initiatives that the Department is focused on to create opportunities in NM.
- C. **State of Housing.** Sharlynn Rosales and Jacobo Martinez with Mortgage Finance Authority provided a presentation on the role that this agency can provide with Federal and State resources. A full copy of their presentation is available at:

https://www.nwnmcog.org/uploads/1/2/8/7/12873976/nmhtf-nwnmcog_4.12.24.pdf

III. ACTION ITEM

BACKGROUND: The COG was contacted by Nate Williams, Breau Deputy Director, Finance and Operations of the Community Schools Team with NM Public Education Department to explore an opportunity. Currently, the Public Education Department has a contractor based in San Juan County that provides program and financial oversight of Community School programs that it wants to retain. The Public Education Department (PED) does not have the full-time employees (FTE) positions available to transition these contractors over and feels that that is necessary for retention including being eligible for public benefits like Public Employee Retirement Association (PERA). Based on an arrangement with Mid-Region Council of Governments and its Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico program, they have reached out to us to propose the following arrangements.

PROPOSAL: High level summary of the proposal as we understand it:

- PED is looking to the COG to hire this person as a full-time employee of the COG;
- COG would be responsible to manage and office this person;
- COG would work collaboratively with PED on work program and performance requirements;
- PED would pay 100% of costs for this position including salary and benefits.
- Current contract ends on June 30, 2024 – so looking at starting this on July 1, 2024.

ACTIONS TO DATE: Executive Director Williams has met with PED representatives in Santa Fe as well as virtually to understand the details of this opportunity. One item that I think would be important to clarify is whether this FTE of the COG would have the ability to perform COG work like attend public body meetings on behalf of the COG, act as a member liaison, and support grant management and financial support for member in the area.

ANTICIPATED WORK: If directed to pursue, the steps to be completed would include:

- Contracting via Memorandum of Understanding and Inter-governmental Agreement;
- Meet/Interview/Discussion with contractor;
- Work on an office lease either provided by a member for free or possibly rent from San Juan College;
- Develop and finalize work program with contractor;

- On-board contractor as a full-time employee; and
- Weekly check-in and monthly reports to COG and PED.

RECOMMENDATION: The COG has provided some alternative ideas that are more aligned with PED and its mission but wanted to bring it to the Board for discussion and direction.

ACTION: *Michael Padilla, Sr. (Aztec)* moved and *GloJean Todacheene (San Juan County)* seconded approval of moving forward with a one-year contract. Motion carried.

IV. EXECUTIVE/STAFF REPORT

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

- Quarterly Reports.** Mr. Howe provided this report to the Board for their review and understanding of accomplishments this quarter.
- Legislative Preview & Endorsements.** Mr. Howe provided a report on the outcomes and appropriations made during the Session.
- Financial Policies & Procedures.** Mr. Williams provided a review of revisions made to the COG's Financial Policies and Procedures to align with all current State and Federal requirements including 2 CFR 200 provisions.

ACTION: *GloJean Todacheene (San Juan County)* moved and *Louie Bonaguidi (Gallup)* seconded approval and adoption of the 2024 Financial Policies and Procedures. Motion carried.

- Revolving Loan Fund Program - RLF Extension:** EDA granted the COG a two-year no-cost extension to complete the disbursement and lending phase of the program.
- Wage & Salary Classification Schedule:** Mr. Williams asked the Board of Directors to consider a 3.5% increase in compensation this year due to substantial employee side increases in State insurance and PERA program rather than the approved 2.5% increase for all staff.

ACTION: *Michael Padilla, Sr. (Aztec)* moved and *Danielle Notah (McKinley County)* seconded approval of the 1% increase to the approved and standard Wage & Salary Classification Plan. Motion carried.

V. FINANCIAL REPORT

- FY2024 Financial Reports, Quarter 3:** Mr. Armando Sanchez provided a review of the organization's financials.

ACTION: *Michael Padilla, Sr. (Aztec)* moved and *Danielle Notah (McKinley)* seconded to approve the financial reports as presented. Motion carried

- FY2024 Budget Amendment #3.** Mr. Evan Williams provided a review of the organization's budget and changes to the FY2024 final budget that were needed.

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

approve the budget amendment as presented. Motion carried

- C. **FY2025 Draft Budget:** Mr. Evan Williams presented the draft budget for FY2025 for review and approval.

ACTION: *Michael Padilla, Sr.* (Aztec) moved and *Danielle Notah* (McKinley) seconded to approve the FY25 draft budget as presented. Motion carried

- D. **Audit Update.** Mr. Evan Williams provided a quick report that the COG's annual audit, which received an unmodified opinion with no findings for the fourth year in a row.

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS; OTHER BUSINESS

- A. **Annual Meeting Preview:** Mr. Williams announced that the annual meeting will be held August 7th in Milan, NM. He also reviewed the regional champions that have been identified or nominated for this year. A keynote speaker has not been identified yet and the Executive Director will be out of town, so COG staff will run the show with Board member support.

- B. **Holiday Calendar.** Ms. Whitmore presented the holiday calendar that was administratively approved but that the COG staff wanted to get ratified by the Board.

ACTION: *Michael Schaaf* (Gallup) moved and *Danielle Notah* (McKinley) seconded, to ratify the holiday calendar as presented. Motion carried

- C. **FY2024 Board Meeting Calendar.** This calendar was reviewed and distributed.

- D. **Announcements.** Staff announced the location of lunch, who is also working to close a loan with the COG.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

ACTION: *Michael Schaaf* (Gallup) moved and *GloJean Todacheene* (San Juan County) to adjourn. Motion carried. Chairwoman Garcia again thanked the City of Gallup and its staff for their facility and hospitality for this meeting and adjourned the meeting of the Board of Directors at 12:17PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Evan J. Williams
Board Secretary and Executive Director