

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
GILPIN COUNTY, COLORADO

March 17, 2020

A regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of Gilpin County was held on March 17, 2020, in an online format available to the public. Chair Gail Watson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. In attendance were Chair Watson, Commissioner Linda Isenhardt, Commissioner Ron Engels, County Manager Abel Montoya, County Attorney Bradford Benning, and Deputy Clerk to the Board Sharon Cate.

Instructions to Join Board's Online Meeting. Commissioner Watson said today's online meeting was open to public; Business Analyst Jaime Tirado gave instructions on how to join the meeting.

Agenda Review. Commissioner Watson added a discussion of a request for the Conservation Fund, to be heard under the Board of County Commissioners (Board) report.

Public Health Update. Emergency Manager Nathan Whittington and Public Health Coordinator Bonnie Albrecht joined the online meeting from the Gilpin County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at the Justice Center. Coordinator Albrecht cited current statistics on the coronavirus outbreak from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and confirmed there are no known cases of COVID-19 in Gilpin County at this time. Manager Whittington gave a brief update on actions in the EOC, noting the County is currently providing senior meals, but might not be able to continue. Discussion followed on scheduling additional Board meetings to stay current with the rapidly changing outbreak.

Sheriff's Office Continuity of Operations Plan. County Manager Montoya informed the Board that on March 6, the Senior Leadership Team began discussing the County's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) as it relates to the current virus threat. Each department director and elected official has completed a continuity form for essential services for the next two weeks; a second exercise will address a closure for longer than two weeks. The final products will be compiled by Manager Whittington, submitted for Board review, and once approved the COOP will be activated. The County's cleaning service will perform an extra sanitizing of all County-owned facilities. County Manager Montoya also said that the current system for senior lunches might have to be canceled, but that alternative services would be available and posted for public.

Public/Press Comment. No public comment was offered via the online access to today's public meeting.

FAA Update. Regarding the County's opposition to the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Denver Metroplex Plan (flight paths) Commissioner Watson said US Senator Cory Gardner had met with some FAA representatives and the discussion was informative. FAA Administrator Stephen Dickson said community engagement could be improved, and he wants to meet in Gilpin County, though the public input forum will not be reopened.

SOTAR Agreement. After brief discussion with the Board, County Manager Montoya was directed to have the Sheriff's Office re-address the Board about the Sex Offender Tracking and Registration (SOTAR) Agreement at another time.

Legal Status Report. County Attorney Bradford Benning advised the Commissioners on the following legal issues:

- One zoning violation case is on hold. The Board directed County Attorney Benning to continue actions on this violation.
- Work continues with two other jurisdictions' attorney on the FAA matter.
- Regarding County finances during the coronavirus outbreak, County Attorney Benning is reviewing documents from various departments.
- Potential legal issues related to the closure of County offices are being researched.

County Manager Status Report. County Manager Abel Montoya updated the Board of County Commissioners on the following items:

Monthly Leadership Team Reports. The Public Works Department is maintaining essential services only; the trash transfer station is open, but only for household bagged trash and there is no contact between staff and the public. County Manager Montoya will direct staff to post email auto-replies that emphasize that although County offices are closed, many County operations are not closed. Employees should respond to the public as soon as possible.

Treasurer's Report. County Treasurer Mary Lorenz reported on operations in her office saying January 2020 tax collections are slightly ahead of the same period last year. The majority of home owners have mortgages that pay their taxes, usually in two halves, the second of which is due June 15, 2020.

Board of County Commissioners Status Reports.

Conservation Fund, request for support. Commissioner Watson said The Conservation Fund has been very beneficial to the County such as the Tolland Ranch, have the County has supported the Conservation Fund in the past. She will write a letter of support.

Notice of Public Meetings. The public meetings in the upcoming two weeks that could be attended by more than one Commissioner and at which public business may be discussed will include:

- The Board agreed to begin holding special meetings of the Board of County Commissioners in an online format every Tuesday and Thursday until further notice. The list is updated as needed and is posted on the Gilpin County website, Commissioners' page, under public meeting notices (gilpincounty.org).

Waiver for Employees to Pick Up Prescriptions. The Board discussed a draft waiver written by County Attorney Bradford Benning to allow Gilpin County employees to pick up and deliver prescriptions for residents. County Manager Montoya said the waivers could be discussed in an upcoming meeting of the senior leadership team, then direction can be given to staff.

Recess. The Board recessed at 10:10 a.m. to listen to a tele-briefing coordinated by the offices of Congressman Joe Neguse, US Senator Cory Gardner & US Senator Michael Bennet, about some actions at the state level in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Various speakers addressed potential legislation, financial assistance and current public health preparedness. The tele-briefing ended at 11:02 a.m. and the Board resumed their meeting.

Financial Discussion. The Board, County Manager Montoya, County Attorney Bradford Benning and Finance Director Clorinda Smith held a broad-ranging discussion on the County's current financial status, an expected loss of gaming tax revenues and ideas on how to cut expenditures. Talking points included:

- recovery planning to begin immediately
- revisit 2020 budget and restrict spending on items such as:
 - revisit fleet replacement plan
 - positions vacated by employee not to be filled
 - no employee merit increases will be given
 - suspend contracts for Public Works equipment
 - suspend contracts for Comprehensive Plan and others
- request that DOLA suspend requirements for grants in process
- contact Congressional delegates regarding Gilpin County's only revenue-producing industry is shut down and County has no sales tax

Gilpin Ambulance Authority Executive Director Brandon Daruna joined the online discussion and said:

- the shut-down of casinos will affect their call volume
- he does expect to see an increase in COVID-19 calls, as other ambulance groups have been inundated
- there have been no patients for this yet
- the Gilpin Ambulance Authority crew will help deliver meals to seniors' homes, without any person-to-person contact

Adjourn to Executive Session. Commissioner Engels moved to adjourn into Executive Session as follows:

- For a conference with the County Attorney for the purpose of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions under C.R.S. Section 24-6-402(4)(b);
- For the purpose of determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, developing strategy for negotiations, and/or instructing negotiators, under C.R.S. Section 24-6-402(4)(e);
- To discuss the purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer, or sale of real, personal, or other property interest under C.R.S. Section 24-6-402(4)(a);

Commissioner Isenhardt seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0. There being no further business to come before the Board, they adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

Signed this 24th day of March 2020.