

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

May 5, 2020

A regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of Gilpin County was held on May 5, 2020, in an online format; no physical meeting was held. Chair Gail Watson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. In attendance were Commissioner Linda Isenhart, Commissioner Ron Engels, County Manager Abel Montoya, County Attorney Bradford Benning, and Deputy Clerk to the Board Sharon Cate.

**Moment of Silence for Quinn Patterson.** Commissioner Watson asked for a moment of silence for Quinn Patterson a Gilpin County resident who passed away recently. She thanked Coroner Zane Laubhan for helping the Patterson family through a difficult time.

**Public/Press Comment.** Gilpin County resident Sandy Hollingsworth thanked Gilpin County for the May 4, 2020, online Town Hall saying more people had participated this time, and the forum was a great way to share information during a crisis. Commissioner Watson thanked staff, County Manager Montoya and the community for participating.

**COVID-19 Update.** Sheriff Armstrong said the Emergency Operations Center is working with the State to identify community testing locations, to locate personal protective equipment and personnel to support the soft opening at the Courthouse on Monday, May 11.

Public Health Coordinator Bonnie Albrecht said that this week she has been working on: finding guidance on the State's public health orders to work through conflicting information; a community testing site; investigation forms; and making sure the contract tracing volunteers are up to speed.

**Consideration of Continued Funding for Gilpin County-Based Non-Profit Organizations for 2021.** The Board noted Gilpin County has provided funding to local non-profit organizations in the past, and agreed to see what will happen at the federal level before making decisions on future funding. Finance Director Clorinda Smith will submit a change to the wording on the County's website to indicate that no Board decisions will be made at this time.

**Eagles' Nest Early Learning Center Update and Discussion of General Funding for 2020.** Executive Director Kayla Lowe said she is concerned about the financial situation at Eagles' Nest Early Learning Center (ENELC) for 2020 and 2021, and asked if the County could share any information on expected funding. County Manager Montoya said ENELC will need to see what funding they receive through grant awards and other sources, then determine if County funding is still needed. Commissioner Isenhart agreed and said the County wants ENELC to stay open.

**Golden Gate Canyon State Park Update.** Sheriff Kevin Armstrong said Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CWP) has been discussing whether or not to open state parks yet, but that the messaging to the public continues to be confusing. Golden Gate Canyon State Park Manager Todd Farrow agreed and said he was waiting for more information from CPW regarding the Governor's Safer at Home order.

**DOLA Gaming Impact Grant Applications Local Prioritization for 2020.** Commissioner Engels began the discussion by disclosing that he sits on the Colorado Gaming Commission that makes recommendations to DOLA Director Rick Garcia on Gaming Impact Grants. Gilpin County Staff Accountant Lorna Plamondon prepares the grant applications submitted first to Gilpin County for review and local prioritization, then to DOLA, using 2019 data for demonstrated expenses. After brief discussion, County Manager Montoya tallied the three Commissioners' independent ranking of applications at the County level as follows:

1. Gilpin County Sheriff's Office—Detentions
2. Gilpin County Sheriff's Office—Patrol
3. Gilpin Ambulance Authority
4. Gilpin County Victim Services
5. Eagles' Nest Early Learning Center
6. First Judicial District Attorney
7. Jefferson Center for Mental Health

Commissioner Engels moved to approve the local ranking as presented. Commissioner Isenhart seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

**Timberline Fire Protection Impact Fee and IGA Consideration and Decision—Resolution #20-06, Approving Collection and Remittance of Timberline Fire Protection District Impact Fee.** The Commissioners informed Timberline Fire Protection District (TFPD) Chief Paul Ondr that they had received numerous calls and emails from residents who are not in favor of TFPD's proposed Impact Fees, and posed several questions to him as to how the impact fee study had been performed. Commissioners Watson and Isenhart asked Timberline to reduce the fees. Commissioner Engels said he felt the fee assessment report was valid, but asked if the Timberline Board would consider negotiating the fee. Chief Ondr and the Board agreed to hold a work session in the near future.

**Trout Unlimited Abandoned Mine Restoration Update.** Lauren Duncan, Project Manager for Trout Unlimited, gave a PowerPoint update on the organization's work on abandoned mine restoration in Colorado. The national

non-profit works to conserve, protect and restore North America's cold-water fisheries and their watersheds. County Manager Montoya suggested to Project Manager Duncan that she talk with Gilpin County Community Development Director Stephen Strohming, as that department is currently working on the County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan, including environmental stewardship; a partnership might be possible.

**Parks and Recreation Department Comprehensive Plan.** Director Kyle Benedict said two graduate students in the Masters in Urban and Regional Planning program at the University of Colorado had worked with him and Jacob Rippy, Youth Coordinator for the Gilpin County Parks and Recreation Department, on the Department's Comprehensive Plan. They will make a full presentation to the Board at a work session on May 8, 2020. Commissioner Isenhart noted that the students are volunteering and the County is grateful for their input.

**Recommendations on Potential Grants for Parks and Recreation.** Director Kyle Benedict said Youth Coordinator Jacob Rippy has been searching for grants for that department and has applied for a Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse for Teens grant. This, and information on other potential grants, will be presented to the Board soon. Also, the Colorado Parks and Recreation Association has highlighted the importance of funding for recreation centers to keep this topic in the forefront of health initiatives.

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

- Clerk and Recorder Sahari McCormick is working on election changes for this year per the Secretary of State's (SOS) concerns that the Courthouse does not have enough space to allow for social distancing. The Community Center will likely serve as the primary location, with the Courthouse as a back-up.
- Some long-time volunteer election judges might not be able to serve, due to the restrictions in the State's Safer at Home order. The SOS will soon render a decision on this question.
- County Attorney Benning has been working on the County's Return to Work protocol and some Employee Handbook issues.

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

Return to Work Protocol. Human Resources Director Lori Schraye stated that the County's Stay at Home public health order would expire on May 8, so staff is planning on protocols for the first phase of a soft opening of the Clerk and Recorder, Assessor and Treasurer's offices at the Courthouse beginning May 11. She cited the requirements of: face masks for staff and the public; online appointments made three days in advance; and social distancing inside and outside the building. The Board agreed to address the Return to Work Protocol later in the meeting as the Board of Health.

Resolution #20-07— Approving an Amendment to the Gilpin County Employee Handbook Regarding Pay and the Removal of Part-Time Benefits. County Manager Montoya gave an overview of Resolution #20-07 as follow-up to the Board's earlier direction to update the Employee Handbook regarding part-time benefits. After discussion, Commissioner Engels moved to approve Resolution #20-07, "Approving an Amendment to the Gilpin County Employee Handbook Regarding Pay and the Removal of Part-Time Benefits. Commissioner Isenhart seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

Town Hall. County Manager Montoya thanked all who have worked on the County's Town Hall online forums. He talked with the Board about scheduling future forums. Information will be posted on the Gilpin County website: [gilpincounty.org](http://gilpincounty.org).

#### **Board of County Commissioners Status Reports.**

Notice of Public Meetings. The Board's upcoming public meetings will include May 12, 19 and 26; work sessions will be held on May 8, 14, 21 and 28.

#### **Minutes.**

Commissioner Engels moved to approve the Board of County Commissioners Meeting Minutes for April 30, 2020. Commissioner Isenhart seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

**Board of Health.** Commissioner Engels moved to recess as the Board of County Commissioners and convene as the Board of Health. Commissioner Isenhart seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

Potential Change to Gilpin County Public Health Orders. County Attorney Bradford Benning advised the Board of Health (BOH) that their Stay at Home Order would expire on May 8 and they would need to decide whether to extend the expiration date or adopt a new Order. After brief discussion, they agreed to accept public comment on this topic then enter into Executive Session to receive legal advice.

**Recess.** The Board of Health recessed from 11:11 a.m. until 11:17 a.m.

#### **Public / Press Comment.**

Cary Ihme, 177 Aspen Lane, Black Hawk, Colorado, 80422, co-owner of Base Camp Campground on Highway 46, thanked the Board of Health for the opportunity to speak about the extensive measures she and her staff have taken to keep the public safe at their place of business.

They require social distancing, glove and face masks, and they provide face masks and hand sanitizing supplies. Business owner Ihme also said campgrounds provide an option to those who reside full time in recreational vehicles, provide shelter to displaced people, and provide an excellent setting for individuals quarantining away from others. She further noted that the Governor has termed campgrounds as critical businesses, and that she continues to expand services and to monitor “what works and what doesn’t” in a campground setting.

Chuck and Leza Spencer, owner/managers at KOA Campground, 605 Lake Gulch Road, in Central City, thanked the BOH for the opportunity to speak, noting Ms. Ihme’s comments above. Mr. Spencer cited information on KOA Campgrounds nationwide, and spoke to some specifics in the State’s Stay at Home order. He said the KOA website for Central City posts information on the State and County Stay at Home orders and the County’s road closures. He added that it would be unfortunate to turn campers away for Mother’s Day weekend, as those revenues—\$7,000 to \$10,000 annually—go to Cares Camps for kids with cancer, to help them go camping. The campground also provides a seasonal pizza business, propane and a grocery that is also used by residents of Russell Gulch for curbside pick-up.

Commissioner Engels moved to recess as the BOH and enter into Executive Session per C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b) to receive legal advice on matters related to the Safer at Home public health orders. Commissioner Isenhart seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

**The Board of Health resumed their regular session at 12:06 p.m.**

Public Health Order #20-05. Commissioner Watson said the State’s Safer at Home order does not restrict RV parks, and that the BOH is happy to see the steps both campground businesses have taken to keep guests safe. Also, the BOH will allow the County’s Stay at Home order to expire on May 8, and will follow the State’s Safer at Home requirements, and will consider a requirement of face masks to enter the County’s public buildings. Commissioner Isenhart moved to approve PHO #20-05, Requiring Masks and Other Safety Measures by Members of the Public When Accessing Gilpin County Buildings and Other Property in and for Gilpin County, Colorado. Commissioner Engels seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

Public Health Order #20-06. Commissioner Watson said the Board has discussed opening Gilpin County roads to the public, except for Tolland, Apex and Columbine Campground roads. Commissioner Engels moved to suspend PHO #20-03 and to allow PHO #20-01 to dictate road closures with an end date of May 29, 2020. Commissioner Isenhart seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0. County Attorney Bradford Benning recommended a new PHO, #20-06, which he will provide to the BOH.

**Board of County Commissioners.** Commissioner Engels moved to adjourn as Board of Health and reconvene as the Board of County Commissioners. Commissioner Isenhart seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

**Public Comment.** *Weekly Register-Call* reporter Randy Beaudette asked if the face mask order would become effective today? Commissioner Engels said that was correct and was for entry into County-owned buildings; private businesses may implement their own requirements if they are the same as or more restrictive than County requirements, but not less restrictive. Social distancing is still required by the State.

**Gordon Thompson’s Letter of Resignation.** County Manager Montoya said Public Works Director Gordon Thompson had submitted his letter of resignation in preparation for his retirement. County Manager Montoya listed Director Thompson’s many job promotions over the years, his numerous accomplishments for that department, and said he was highly esteemed by his staff and colleagues. Commissioner Watson said Gordon had been the best director of the four she had worked with in her time at Gilpin County.

**Adjournment to Executive Session.** Commissioner Engels moved to adjourn into Executive Session in accordance with C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b) and (e) to receive legal advice on employee compensation benefits, and consideration of a joint dispatch center. Commissioner Isenhart 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 12:22 p.m.

Signed this 12<sup>th</sup> day of May 2020.