

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

September 22, 2020

A regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of Gilpin County was held on September 22, 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 Chair Watson, Commissioner Linda Isenhart, Commissioner Ron Engels, County Manager Abel Montoya, County Attorney Bradford Benning, and Deputy Clerk to the Board Sharon Cate.

**Agenda Review.** County Attorney Benning added an executive session to receive legal advice per CRS 24-6-402(4)(b) on election matters. A discussion of alcohol service in casinos was also added to the agenda.

**COVID-19 Update.**

Public Health Coordinator Bonnie Albrecht: Gilpin County remains at 18 confirmed cases, plus two positive cases (not County residents) in two casinos. She will do contact tracing on these cases. There are five tests for today.

Emergency Manager Nathan Whittington: For the Emergency Operations Center, he worked with vendors to secure enough personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect the County's first responders through remainder of 2020. He is using current data to calculate projections for the first quarter of next year. He is working with Jefferson County and Public Health Coordinator Albrecht on a plan for mass vaccinations, the logistics for the PPE needed for this operation. Emergency Manager Whittington has found that a unique challenge with the COVID-19 vaccine is that it has to be held at an ultra-cold temperature of -120F, so lab coolers are needed. Jefferson County might work with Gilpin County or the EOC will have to acquire a cooler. Other aspects of the mass vaccinations plan include public information volunteers, working with the Gilpin County RE-1 school district and the Office of Information Technology, and software to help coordinate and track who has and has not received the vaccine.

**Discussion of Alcohol Service in Casinos.** Commissioner Engels stated that the governor has issued a new order allowing alcohol service in bars and other businesses until 11:00 p.m. unless a jurisdiction has been granted Protect Out Neighbors status. Also, the Board has received letters from the cities of Black Hawk and Central City requesting permission to serve at all hours. Discussion followed on the possible need for a new County public health order (PHO), or an amendment to an existing PHO.

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.

Commissioner Engels moved to change the current PHO, and said he had reservations about the possibility of a number of less compliant patrons coming to Gilpin County after the bars close in metro area. He said the casinos have very strict regulations on how they can serve, and Gilpin County expects alcohol businesses to observe the 2:00 a.m. cut-off time across the County. Commissioner Isenhart seconded the motion and agreed with Commissioner Engels' concerns. Commissioner Watson said staff should contact the Colorado State Patrol and the Sheriff's Office to let them know of this change. The motion passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

Commissioner Engels move to adjourn as the 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 Hearing—CDBG-CV Grant for Food Bank.** Chair Watson opened a public hearing for a Community Development Block Grant—COVID (CDBG-CV) application for a Gilpin County Food Bank grant. Business Analyst Gabrielle Chisholm stated that the legal requirements of public notification had been performed, then shared the DOLA grant application onscreen. This grant would be specifically for a concrete slab for new electric walk-in freezers, plus some electrical work, required permits and inspections. The County's contribution would be the grant from Food Bank of the Rockies for food. She noted that Human Services employee Jennifer Josselyn administers the County food bank and has seen an exponential increase in the need for this service, due to pandemic. The grant request amount is \$49,500.00 and must respond to COVID-19 needs and must serve 50% or more of the local moderate- to low-income population. Jennifer Josselyn joined the meeting and stated she had just spoken with the Food Bank of Rockies who said they will send a payment today for the freezer and the related electrical work.

Chair Watson opened the hearing to public comment. Sandy Hollingsworth, 224 N. County Road, said that as a food bank volunteer, she fully supports the grant application. There being no further public comment, Chair Watson closed that portion of the hearing.

Commissioner Engels moved to approve submission of the CDBG-CV application for food bank freezers and electrical work. Commissioner Isenhart seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0. Chair Watson closed the public hearing at 9:24 a.m. *(The legal recording of the public hearing, including any public comment, is an audio file available through the Clerk and Recorder's Office.)*

**Land Use Comprehensive Plan Update.** Senior Planner Stephen Strohminger gave a status report on the Land Use Comprehensive Plan, including today's fourth meeting of the Interagency Task force and this evening's meeting with the Planning Commission. The current topic of focus is Planning Goals, then Zoning Code changes and recommendations. A review with the Board is planned for some time in October. County Manager Montoya said these meetings have seen a good amount of public participation of 40 to 50 people at times, which should provide helpful input from the community. After the October review, the Plan will move toward finalization of this phase in November or December.

County Manager Montoya shared information onscreen that illustrated the low property taxes paid in Gilpin County, which affords only a lower level of County services to residents. Gilpin and San Miguel counties have the lowest effective property tax rates in the state, information that should be distributed to residents to tell Gilpin County's story. He concluded by saying the County needs balanced development, and that new development needs to pay its own way.

**Resilient Communities Grant for Planning Opening of Community Center Campus.** Business Analyst Gabrielle Chisholm shared onscreen information about the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Resilient Communities grant awarded to Gilpin County in the amount of \$109,000.00 for the development of outdoor features and activities. These funds will help with a tentative plan to open the Community Center in early 2021. Business Analyst Chisholm also spoke to the many tasks to be addressed in planning to open the Center, such as new policies, childcare guidebooks, new pricing structure, membership parameters, training for lifeguards and childcare workers, plus the need for new registration software. A work session with the Board will be scheduled soon for a detailed review of the opening plan.

**Human Services and Public Health Building Update.** County Manager Montoya and Senior Planner Stephen Strohminger gave an onscreen status report on renovations at the Public Health/Human Services building, for which Gilpin County received a \$936,000 grant from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs. They noted there are several contractors doing different types of work, all while adhering to Green Globes standards to reduce energy use and costs. County Manager Montoya said he expects Public Health and Human Services to be able to occupy the building in January 2021.

**SAFEbuilt Contract Addendum for Human Services and Public Health Building.** Senior Planner Stephen Strohminger referred to Gilpin County's contract with SAFEbuilt for construction plans review of the future Public Health and Human Services building, and recommended an addendum to the contract for inspection services. They would serve as a third-party, independent inspector, and their hourly rate has been reduced plus there is a cap. Commissioner Isenhardt moved to approve the Addendum to retain SAFEbuilt as the inspector through the project. Commissioner Engels seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

**Health Insurance Changes.** Cheryl Harding of Moody Insurance Brokers gave an onscreen demonstration of some options for renewal of the County's health insurance plan; a new plan will become effective on January 1, 2021. She noted that renewal of the current plan with Anthem's Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) would carry a 17% increase. Ms. Harding also spoke of Gilpin County's current benefit of long-term disability, and its move to Hartford Life for life insurance; she recommended adding short-term disability and administration of FMLA coverage by a provider, rather than County staff. County Manager Montoya recommended moving to an insurance provider that could offer a comprehensive plan for a simplification of records and more effective use of Human Resources staff hours. He and People, Culture and Finances Director Lori Schrayner pointed out several advantages to the plan offered by CIGNA, including an online benefits election process, and that 99% of the doctors are the same as BCBS. Commissioner Watson said it was clear a move to a different insurance carrier was needed, but that the County was in no position to increase benefits at this time, though they are a small expense. After further discussion, Commissioner Isenhardt said she liked the total picture with CIGNA as they could provide a great savings and would streamline processes for the Human Resources staff.

Commissioner Engels moved to direct staff to move to CIGNA for employee health insurance coverage for the year 2021. Commissioner Isenhardt seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0. County Manager Montoya confirmed that the approval included CIGNA's added benefits of short-term disability and FMLA administration.

**Employees' Telecommuting Costs and 4/10 Work Schedules.** People, Culture and Finances Director Lori Schrayner presented two topics for discussion by the Board:

Employees' Telecommunicating Costs. Earlier in the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board approved a one-time stipend to Gilpin County employees who have incurred costs by working from home for internet and cell phone use. A second stipend could be paid from the DOLA CARES Act funds, which improves employee work hours flexibility. This topic will be revisited soon.

Work Schedule of Four Ten-Hour (4/10) Days. Employees in some departments and elected offices currently work four ten-hour (4/10) days per week, while others work a 5/8 schedule. Each office chooses which schedule provides 40 hours of accessibility and services to the public and the most efficient use of an employee's time. County Manager Montoya noted that if all employees moved to a 4/10 schedule, there could be a significant cost savings to the County. This topic will also be revisited soon.

**Promotion Policy Discussion.** People, Culture and Finances Director Lori Schroyer informed the Board that the State had a change in employment law for 2021, that will require employers to have in place a promotion policy. Gilpin County currently has no policy on this. The Board consensus was that she should begin work on a proposed policy soon. County Attorney Benning said there will be heightened scrutiny on employers in 2021.

**Intergovernmental Agreement with Grand County Housing Authority.** Human Services Director Laura Solomon recommended the approval of an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with Grand County, who has provided oversight of Gilpin County's housing assistance program for over 40 years. She said Grand County has incurred annual costs of approximately \$4,800.00 above the federal payments for administration of Gilpin's vouchers. The proposed IGA would provide up to \$5,000.00 to cover these costs. Commissioner Watson noted Gilpin County had enjoyed these services free-of-charge for many years. After brief discussion, Commissioner Isenhart moved to approve the IGA with the Grand County Housing Authority for up to \$5,000 per year for administration of Section 8 housing vouchers. Commissioner Engels seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

**Treasurer's Monthly Report.** County Treasurer Mary Lorenz reported on operation in her office for the month of August 2020, saying that the 2020 gaming distribution of \$11million was not received until September. Tax collections are at 98.63%.

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

- The 2020 Election Information Booklet (blue book) election matters subcommittee met on September 21, and considered some public comments and County Manager Montoya's comments on the Sheriff's Office and Parks and Recreation mil levy questions. The language for the blue book is now complete, and overseas ballots have been mailed.
- Work will begin soon on a new public health order for alcohol service to end at 2:00 a.m., as Gilpin County has been granted Protect Our Neighbors status.

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

National Voter Registration Day. Today is National Voter Registration Day, all are encouraged to register and vote.

Press Release on OpenGov. Business Analyst Jaime Tirado said Gilpin County applied for and was awarded the Digital Government Experience award for its development of the online tool OpenGov. This award goes out to city and county governments who successfully shift to digital software. Gilpin County was the smallest of 10 competing counties, making the award even more significant. The Board agreed that OpenGov will issue their own press release, while County staff creates a local press release that is more Gilpin County centric. County Manager Montoya thanked Business Analyst Tirado for his hard work and the months of work off-campus to put OpenGov into use. The software offers more options for public interaction and keeps the public and staff safe during a pandemic. Business Analyst Tirado thanked Gilpin County residents for working in new ways to do County business.

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

Notice of Public Meetings. The Board's upcoming public meetings will include: public budget work sessions today and September 22 and 24; and September 29, as the Board of Equalization and the Board of County Commissioners.

CCI Public Lands Dues. Commissioner Watson said the dues for Colorado Counties, Inc.'s Public Land Committee are only \$184 for Gilpin County, but suggested the Board wait to look at professional organizations they are associated with until after the budget work sessions.

Letter of Support for Xcel Wildfire Protect Plan. Commissioner Engels moved to approve a letter of support for Xcel Energy's Wildfire Protection Plan to the Public Utilities Commission. Commissioner Isenhart seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

#### **Minutes.**

Commissioner Engels moved to approve the Board of County Commissioners Meeting Minutes for September 1, 2020. Commissioner Isenhart seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0

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

Commissioner Engels moved to approve the Board of County Commissioners Meeting Minutes for September 8, 2020. CI seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0

Commissioner Engels moved to approve the Board of County Commissioners Meeting Minutes for September 11, 2020. Commissioner Isenhart thanked SEC for great job. seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

**Public / Press Comment.** Donna Okray Parman, 529 Highpoint Circle, expressed her thanks for meeting, though she missed the parks and recreation planning portion. She also expressed her disappointment about the “village centers” concept in the draft of the Land Use Comprehensive Plan.

**Recess to Executive Session.** At 11:54 a.m., Commissioner Engels moved to adjourn into Executive Session in accordance with C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b), to receive legal advice on election matters. Commissioner Isenhart seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

**Ballot Questions Language.** At 12:13 p.m., the Board resumed their regular session. Commissioner Watson stated that the language in the two ballot questions for mil levy increases for the Sheriff's Office and the Parks and Recreation Department was clear, and that the County is not asking to “de-Bruce” all County funds, but only the funds raised specifically by these two measures. She clarified that it was the Board's intent to levy the mil as stated and not have it float to achieve the estimated dollar amount cited in the ballot language. Commissioners Isenhart and Engels agreed. This information will be added to the County's website.

**Adjourn.** There being no further business to come before the Board, they adjourned at 12:16 p.m.

Signed this 20<sup>th</sup> day of October 2020.