

Upper Arkansas Area Council of Governments

Board Meeting Minutes – February 28, 2024

UAACOG Office and Zoom

Attendee list attached to end of minutes.

Call to Order 10:03 – Board Chair – H. E. Buck Wenzel

Introductions: Dana Greene, Mayor of Leadville, and Mary Tinkcom, UAACOG HR Director

1) Consent Agenda

A. Dwayne McFall nominated to accept Consent Agenda; P.T. Wood seconded. Unanimous consent by Board.

2) No additions or changes to the Agenda.

3) Program Managers Reports

Max Hansen – Housing Director

CSPG/Transportation. Update to December 2023 report. Addressed application barrier with revision. Lake City DHS to offer program – optimistic to approval.

Transportation – Issues related to Custer County subcontractor. Ongoing investigation. Engaging with CDOT and regional administration.

4) New Business

A. Heather Evans, Executive Director: the position of Secretary is not listed in the By-Laws; therefore, we do not need to fill that position.

Nomination for President: Dwayne McFall nominated Buck Wenzel. Seconded by Ryan Stevens. Unanimous Consent.

Nomination for Vice President: Buck Wenzel nominated Ryan Stevens. Seconded by Dwayne McFall. Unanimous Consent.

B. UAACOG 2024 Budget Revisions - Braden Wilson, Finance Director

UAADAC added.

Budget presented. Minimal changes. Heather's new contract and salary – placed in Indirect.

Motion to approve the budget. First – Ryan; Second – Dwayne; Unanimous Consent.

C. AAA Funding update – Tom McConaghy

Same position as in December 2023. Have a shortfall. Attempting to get funding up. State is proposing \$5M for State Budget. Our portion would be \$117,000. The governor may veto automatic increases. Could be overridden although no guarantee on how much AAA could

get. Serious shortfall as services have tripled or quadrupled in the past year. Will have to say no to some programs. The OAA requires certain services – others may have to go. May have carryover and make it this year but next year in doubt. Going forward with message in the communities to alert them to the possible cut in services.

- D. Need a letter of support from the Board for House or Senate bills, including the JBC. Motion to approve a letter of support from the Board: First: Dwayne; Second – Buck; Unanimous consent.

- E. Head Start Self-Assessment – Chris Henager
Conducted annual self-assessment. Only one non-compliance. Enrollment and recruitment levels are lower. Asking for a change in scope. Working with Head Start on getting enrollment up. Areas of strength: Families report along with great results. Motion to approve: Frist – Buick; Second – Dwayne; Unanimous Consent.

- F. Community Assessment – Chris Henager

Determined how many licensed preschool slots are open. Given overage have requested a change in scope based on assessment and current capacity. Motion to approve: Frist – Dwayne; Second – Buck; Unanimous consent.

- G. Cost Allocation plan – Chris Henager

Braided funding for children with an IEP. There will be 8 slots held for IEP children and 8 for UPK. General cost allocation will be 9% UPK/91% HS funding.

Recommend monthly allocation – look at actual enrolled (HS/UPK/Blended) set at the beginning of the month. May change monthly. HS does not allocate over 15% admin costs. Motion to approve: First – Buck; Second – Ryan; Unanimous consent.

- H. Head Start Change in Scope – Chris Henager

Enrollment reduction for Head Start. Reduce from 157 slots by 27% to 115 slots. Keep current Head Start funds/budget. Unable to compete with two school districts (UPK). Federal income guidelines for Head Start are challenging due to Colorado's minimum wage versus Federal minimum wage. Makes it difficult to find eligible families.

Reinvestment Plan: increase salaries based on wage comparability study. This will help with the recruitment of new staff and retention of current staff. The proposed budget will be to increase teacher salaries by 15% and all other positions by 10%. Hours for staff have increased to 9 hours a day for in-class staff. Burnout prevalent in Teacher's and Teacher's Assistants. Part of reinvestment is to create two new positions, which would be 20 hour a week bus monitor/ float assistant. These positions would ride buses in p.m. for assistants and give lunch breaks to all education staff.

Motion to approve Head Start Change in Scope. First – Ryan; Second – Sara; Unanimous consent.

I. Head Start Continuation Grant 2023-2024– Chris Henager

Not a lot of changes from baseline grant. Services will remain the same with children attending 4 days a week 7 hours a day to total 1020 service hours for the year. Chris went over any changes that did occur:

- Came to an agreement with RE-2 for IEP. For IEP the family will get services as they enter Kindergarten but will receive evaluation while at Head Start if referred.
- Working on policies in reference to credential programs and educational assistance. Chris/Mary/Braden to work on this. Will increase family service staff from 1.5 positions to 3.5 positions to decrease caseloads.

Motion to accept Head Start Continuation Grant: First - Ryan; Second - Buck; Unanimous consent.

J. DOLA Mini Grants – Heather Evans

Have used all of 2022-2023 mini grants. Last year received \$65,000. This year asked for \$100,000 and received the full amount. Ask if your idea would be eligible for the mini grant program. Initially will be dividing it equally among the four counties. If a county does not use their full portion, it will be distributed to the other counties.

K. Legislative Update – Max Hanson

Senate Bill for changing the level of access for Large Employer health plans from 100 employees down to 50 employees. We are currently in the Small Employer health plans level. If this were to pass it could drop our costs by at least 10%. Mary will work with our insurance broker to look at our current offerings and will take a deeper look if this bill passes.

There is a proposed update to warrant of habitability. If during an environmental event, such as a period of extremely high heat, the property would be required to provide temperature control. This is designed to address health events, including death, that occur during an environmental event.

There is a land use bill that has been broken into 5 or 6 bills. This includes ADUs – to have municipalities the right to opt in.

A bill is proposed to expand fire mitigation on Home Sales.

5) Old Business

A. AAA building in Salida – Tom McConaghy

Have contracts in Pueblo for kitchen design. Preliminary unofficial approval for parking plan. Still haven't closed on land – will do some when permitting is completed to finalize the purchase.

B. Strategic Plan – Heather Evans

The Strategic Planning committee will meet on March 1, 2024, to finalize the Strategic Plan. Will be discussing outreach to community partners, including marketing of UAACOG. The Plan will be on the UAAOG website.

6) Director's Report – General Information – written report in the board packet.

Acknowledge Beth's impactful role as Grant Navigator in securing valuable grants.

7) County/Community Reports

A. Congresswoman's Pettersen's office – Justin_Kurth

New bipartisan committee to address AI – there are 24 members. America needs to take the lead in developing AI as well as creating guard rails. Happy to connect with local entities.

B. Senator Bennet's office – Renee Martinez

Important for Fremont County – the DOC has received retention pay for retention officers.

Also, a big support of AI

Congressionally directed spending. Need interest forms in place. Want to act as a united front. March 15 will meet with applicants. Moving forward despite the budget not passing.

Need letters of support for Federal funding, including direct funding. Need 3-week lead time. Joint letters work well.

Grant newsletter every month.

C. Senator Hickenlooper's office – Antonio Huerta

Have a new grant newsletter. Searching through agencies to identify potential grants. Will be updated every other week.

Get interest forms to Antonio and Renee.

New Medicare proposal for LPN's and residency. This is an important issue for assisted living facilities as nurses are difficult to hire, especially in rural areas. Get letters to Bennet and Hickenlooper with support for changes.

D. Chafee County – PT Wood – left the meeting.

E. Buena Vista – Devin Rowe – not present

F. Lake County – Jeff Fiedler – not present

G. Leadville – Dana Greene – City of Leadville.

Engineering analysis for drainage issues. Doing Strategic Planning for town itself – looking for clarity of plans.

H. Fremont County – Dwayne McFall

Ongoing issues with the Return to Nature Funeral Home. Plan to take down facilities but currently haven't identified what area/facility will take the materials. This is much like asbestos mitigation. Attended the national Association of Counties. Many good conversations and collaborative effort.

I. Canon City – Ryan Stevens

Lots of construction, including median project (done by May) and storm water. The latter is delayed for the Railroad and will begin after water is turned off in November.

Broadband - - waiting for approval from Black Hills to use their poles.

Waiting to take down the New Method Building.

Looking at grant for low-income housing – 42 units.

J. Custer County – KevinDay

Engineering phase of west side of Court House. Landfill got last trench approved. Split HR and Finance functions. Robert Smith is the new HR Director. Still looking for a Finance Director. Admin position for the County Commissioners is open. Missed out on grants for Broadband.

K. Silver Cliff – Buck Wenzel

Have electric plug-in town for electric vehicles. Profit will cover maintenance and extra funding will go to the museum. Cancelled the elections as all candidates were running unopposed. Need help with mobile food markets. Went from 2 markets per month to one a month or one every two months. Need for our elderly, vests, families. Waiting for Farm Bill to pass. Custer County is the second 'oldest' county in the US (has the second highest elderly population in the US). Are going to have to condemn the park due to lack of funding. Were turned down for Drought Resiliency Project by the DOR.

Attendees:

H.A Buck Wenzel

Ryan Stevens

Beth Lenz

Mary Tinkcom

Renee Martinez

Kevin V. Day

Justin Kurth

Dwayne McFall

Antonio Huerta

Lisa Bivins

Jae Rathke

Heather Evans

Max Hanson

Dave Paul
Tom McConaghy
Virtual:
Caleb Patterson
Sarah Mudge
Dana Greene
PT Wood
Chris Henager