

# MEETING MINUTES

## CRVEDP Quarterly Meeting- Q2

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Date: April 30, 2024

Time: 10 AM

Location: Garfield County Building- Rifle and Zoom

Facilitator: Alicia Gresley- On Mountain Time

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### **Attending:**

#### Board Members:

Dave Reynolds- Town of New Castle

Travis Elliott- Town of Parachute

Pat Waller- Interim City Manager- City of Rifle

Michael Langhorne- Rifle Regional Economic Development Corporation

Tinker Duclo- Colorado Mountain College

Paige Haderlie- Property Professionals

Cole Buerger- Town of Silt

Fred Jarmen- Garfield County

Tiffany Pehl- AGNC

#### Additional Attendees:

Mistalynn Meyeranne- AGNC

Kim Woodworth- EDCEC

Kami Collins- OEDIT

Evan Zislis- Hurst Initiative

Gail Swartz- Habitat for Humanity

Vinnie Tomasulo- Town of Parachute

Carl Ribaud- Triple Point Consulting

Patrick Morrissy- Mountain Voices Project

Kari Slappey- Rifle CoWork

Tanya Doose

Amy Moyer

Marylee Morhleng- Battlement Mesa

Derek Hanrahan - Town of Silt Trustee

Jeff Engell- CSU Extension

Kathleen Wanatowicz

Meeting was called to order at 10:05 AM by facilitator Alicia Gresley

## **Agenda:**

- **Welcome and overview**

Alicia Gresley introduced herself and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

- **Discuss, Nominate and Vote for Executive Committee  
(Chair/Vice Chair, Treasurer/Alternate)**

This agenda item was tabled to the later in the meeting –

- **Approve Minutes**

Alicia Gresley asked if there were any other corrections or comments about the minutes. She explained the purpose of recording the meeting is to ensure accurate information in the minutes.

With no additional conversation:

- Michael Langhorne made a motion to accept the minutes from January 30, 2024 as presented
- Fred Jarman second the motion
- The vote was called and the motion carried

Alicia clarified that the voting board is made up of 13 people with New Castle's business position currently vacant and actively being filled.

- **Review Q1 Financials and Current 2024 Budget**

### **Financials**

- Partnership is utilizing the 501c3 structure of the RREDC as it continues to get started
- Currently the Partnership has its own bank account
- The Finance Committee meets the third Thursday of each month. If you are interested in this group, you are welcome to join.
- Partnership has a credit card with a limit of \$1000
- A cellular phone and minutes were purchased giving the Partnership its own dedicated phone number.
- Business cards for the Partnership were purchased.
- Thank you to New Castle for their investment
  - Investor Contributions- \$70,500
  - Expense- Joined the Economic Development Council Colorado (EDCC)
  - Expense- Contract services for Alicia Gresley
  - Expense- \$1200 Building Better Places Workshop. Grant with OEDIT has been applied for to cover this expense. It has not arrived at this point. Will be reflected on income for next meeting

There were no questions concerning the financials

## 2024 Budget (Draft/Working Budget)

- Reviewed by Finance Committee each month
  - Income
  - Investment Breakdown
  - Operating Expenses
    - Placeholders have been put into place for anticipated expenses
    - Known expenses-
      - Contract Services-\$45,000 - approved January 2024
      - Dues & subscriptions- \$350- EDCC
      - Grant Writing- \$5000- Mistalynn is a grant navigator with AGNC
      - Grant Matching- \$30000
      - Marketing- \$1000
      - Business Supplies- \$1000
      - Phone- \$40.00 per month + \$50 cost of phone - minimum available
      - Insurance- \$1500
        - Kim Woodworth indicated before creating the 501c3 or 501c6 there will need to be D&O insurance for operating expenses and supporting officers. This should be around \$1500.
- Finance Committee approves all expenditures. The Committee has discussed having an amount of \$100 that Alicia Gresley can spend as necessary so the Committee is not bothered by menial charges.

There were no questions concerning the Budget

Alicia Gresley called for a motion

- Michael Langhorne made a motion to accept the financials as presented
- Travis Elliott second the motion
- Motioned Carried

## • County Broadband Update- Fred Jarman, Garfield County

Handouts were given. One is a graphic timeline and the other is a press release that was issued in April.

Program is three stages-

### ❖ Stage One:

Access the fiber in I-70. It is currently there and is live. Carrier Neutral Locations (CNL) formerly referred to as Meet Me Centers

Currently there is an active CNL in Rifle at the county building and an inactive CNL in Glenwood that is in

the process of becoming active. Initial activation at this location was met with some challenges.

- Six Million dollar investment to get to this point over past 4 years.
- DOLA is a huge supporter of this project.
- Garfield County is well ahead of other parts of the state in getting This trunk infrastructure in place. Cost has been placed with DOLA and the County Commissioners
  - ❖ Stage Two:  
Light up New Castle to Parachute/Battlement Mesa with the same CNLs.  
The boxes are already on the ground and connected to the I-70 fiber. Specialized, expensive equipment now has to be put in place in the municipalities.
  - ❖ Stage Three:  
Last Mile- getting the fiber to the homes. In negotiations with six Internet Service Providers
- This will bring 100-1000 faster speed.
- \$42 billion dollars are available at the Federal level for Broadband infrastructure across the nation.

The state, Garfield County and the region is trying to position itself to take advantage of this funding.

There is a 25% match but the companies the county are talking to are so capitalized that they will provide the match.

The goal is to serve 4000 underserved and non-served citizens. Total cost to get Broadband to the homes in our region- \$60-\$65 million

Alicia Gresley asked about the time frame- Fred indicated they are waiting on PAMS to come out around late summer or early fall.

Tinker Duclo thanked Fred for working on this project and wanted to point out its importance in education. Pandemic showed actually how many people don't have access to internet. Really important project.

Marylee Morhleng asked if Battlement Mesa will be included in the project- Fred's response is yes with no additional cost.

Gail Schwartz asked about towers- Fred's responded by saying that over the past five years, all four towers have been replaced and are all brand new. These towers can serve the 5% that are unable to receive fiber to the home. And will be part of the infrastructure.

Vinnie Tomasulo asked if they were planning to use any existing fiber. The answer is yes.

Fred Jarmen also responded with an answer to Tinker Duclou's question "What is the county doing for economic development from a previous meeting.

Answer- Airport

County is re-visiting an economic/impact study through the state.

Handout highlights talking points-

- 3<sup>rd</sup> busiest general aviation airport in Colorado
- Hanger real estate development
- 8 thousand aircraft per year from 31 countries
- 43 limousine services
- Hosts Center of Excellence
- Provides:
  - 277 FTEs
  - \$16 million in payroll
  - \$41 million in business revenue

• **Director Updates- Alicia Gresley**

Grand Junction Economic Partnership- As we look at our region- Grand Junction is viewed as an opportunity zone to learn from and pick up best practices.

Kami Collins is the representative for our region from the Rural Opportunity Office which is an office out of OEDIT. Her experience will bring a lot to the table

Grand Junction Business Incubation Center (BIC)- visited the center which is housed in a repurposed military building. SBDC, Maker Space, Commissary Kitchen, Food Truck parking are just a few services they offer.

Business Incubation Program- Five year program- Alicia gave information on the Parachute company that went through the program that we were able to meet during our visit.

BIC is an organization that is mission based. They have the blueprints and experience to help shape the EDP. BIC would also make great partners and want to share what they have done.

Building Better Places Workshop- Workshop was not about creating a strategic plan but rather identifying our issues and challenges and how to find a way to build stepping stones to the next stage.

Top Issues Identifies-

Housing

Planning and managing growth effectively

Cost of Services

Sense of Community

Cost of Living Transit System and Infrastructure

- Summary-

- Better Jobs Closer to Home is our main focus
- How to find better wages and benefits
- Better quality of life in our region
- Still looking for an energy representative to be part of the group
- There are increasing strains and instability in our workforce
- How to create capacity to be present in your community and in your home and able to contribute
- Alicia Gresley pointed to the example that New Castle is not having an election this year because no one is running. Dave Reynolds responded saying he believes this reveals that people don't have time in their lives. They are too busy commuting and working to make enough money to pay bills.

Alicia Gresley- most important thing that came from Building Better Places workshop- We need to form a foundation of who we are meaning clarifying and solidifying our mission, vision and values. This is a 2024 goal. Once foundation is made, building lanes or pillars can occur  
June Strategic Planning- dates will be sent out o the group  
Met with Chris Romer with Vail Valley Partnership who has facilitated strategic planning sessions and could provide guidance.

Dave Reynolds- encouraged that there were many people involved in the workshop and all had a common goal. People at the table realize there needs to be a regional approach. Dave took away from the workshop that the goal is non-competitive.

“What does success look like for Partnership in 2025”

Ready to launch- Solid organization structure, leadership and partner support

Amplify- Building our brand and communication

Business cards were made with QR code to website and phone number for Partnership phone

Exploratory Outreach- Do surveys or “Walk & Talks” of businesses or business partners and utilize the data to see what they need . New Castle is already doing this. DDA in Rifle will begin a survey.

Fred Jarman- spend energies on identifying gaps within the “Lane” concept and keeping that as a focus to avoid duplication.

Alicia Gresley's response- how does the Partnership become the 30,000 foot view and work with the groups who are already "boots on the ground". Can the Partnership be an arena for discussion about challenges our region is having.

Strategic Planning- Dates- June 11, 12, 13, 25 or 26  
Lakota Links in New Castle  
Half Day session  
Goal to Achieve- Mission, Vision and Values

AGNC- Mistalynn Meyeranne- Grant Navigator

Monitors Federal and Regional grants along with Foundations

Has a background in grant writing

Reach out with funding needs and she can point the organization to the appropriate source

Revenue streams come from different sources outside of grants

AGNC can help with stacked funding approach

First project- Professional website design

Mistalynn found a grant with match for website development

Step one- send out request for proposal on cost

Gayle Swartz- Habitat applied for 3 revolving loans and did not receive any.

This is where advocacy will play a major part. Working together is

critical

Vinny Tomasulo- All the entities represented at the table are all competing for the same dollars. A coordination effort would give a more strategic take on how monies are allocated

Alicia Gresley- any questions on process of starting with a RFP for a website. She will put it to the group to choose a company. She is looking to have three options. This is a 2024 project and a 2024 win.

Dave Reynolds- the budget shows \$1000, is that accurate? Alicia was not sure

Fred Jarman- County experience shows \$5000 is basically one grant

Kim Woodworth- EDCC's website started with the \$5000 which gave a base and then they have built off of it every year with an additional

\$5000-\$10,000. The website is your window to the world". Website is the infrastructure and you will always be putting money towards it.

Alicia asked if there were any objections. There were none. She said she will be sending out proposal requests today.

Travis Elliott- "What is the business walk and talk survey?"

Alicia Gresley- This came from the BBP workshop. A committee will be formed to go into businesses and have a conversation to build trust and get to know owners and challenges

Dave Reynolds- we do this every couple of months. Walk in the businesses around town and have conversations about how things are going and what they might need

Michael Langhorne- will this be done in combination with the Chamber and other organizations?

Alicia Gresley- Yes

Michael Langhorne- this would be a great way to build an email database that could then receive communications like a newsletter to inform the community of various programs that are available.

Mistalynn Meyeranne- wouldn't want a group talking to her front line. How will the committee connect with the business owner?

Alicia Gresley- this is how we can utilize the Partnership business card and request they be given to the owner to reach out and set up a time to have a conversation.

Dave Reynolds- this is a great point. Continuing to do these talks will allow a relationship to develop with the business owners and then creates an open line of communication when issues arise.

Tanya Doose- a lot of small business owners in our communities are Latinos and there doesn't seem to be a representation of these small business owners in the room. Agrees that the walk and talks but what plan is being devised to address the diverseness in our communities?

Alicia Gresley- has been having conversations with Hill Group. Sensitive that it is a different approach and have been speaking with small business owners. It is trust building with individuals rather than group participation

Kim Woodworth- Reach out to your service providers who are working with businesses and have already developed trust and ask them to help you make connections.

Tinker Duclo- another challenge is that there are individuals from the Latino community who are asked to be on everything and are at capacity. Be mindful of that and recognize that meeting them at their business is better than asking them to leave their business to attend a meeting.



- **Kim Woodworth- Economic Development Corporation Colorado (EDCC)**

Industry in the State of Colorado that focuses on economic development

Goal is to have high performing economic development professionals and organizations across the state

There is an advocacy side to the EDCC

Do not want to create redundancy but rather capacity and have to identify the gaps to do so

Reiterates that the vision and mission of the Partnership needs to be identified.

AGNC is already at the table, it is suggested to bring in Rachel with the Northwest SBDC.

Each COG has to have a CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy)

Every 5 years they go into their region and identify what they want to work on that is the most important thing to that region. As a COG, they decide what their activities will be to support those needs

Economic development is evolving. It is no longer chasing businesses but focusing on economic development based on businesses needs. Think about the person- the person is the job. And what are their needs to thrive in their community

Job – Education – House - Food

How do we create ecosystem to support this person in our community?

Focus is on workforce- talent shortages, mismatched skills

Adding a job means business grows- more tax dollars from business and personal side which goes back into the community and creates economic engine. Always have workforce partners at the table

Community Development- economic developers are having to go backwards.

Housing got out of control in 2008. During economic downturns it is important to focus on infrastructure. That didn't happen in 2008. Focus was on housing

Healthcare- follows rooftops

Resiliency- lots of gaps in economy. Gaps create opportunities. Broadband was an opportunity that came out of Covid

Capacity is where we struggle the most

Most common structure is a public/private partnership- tax exempt

501c6 (not tax deductible) can be membership based

501c3 (is tax deductible) can be membership based

Can use 15% of revenues for lobby activities

Funding determined by activities choosing to do.

As regional organization it is recommended that part of the job be advocacy.

Advocate for all of the organizations that are already in the ecosystems that you are representing

Public/Private Structure- 70% income comes from private or "in kind"

30% income comes from public

Governmental funding is limited as government  
Changes

Recommends private funding more than government funding for sustainability

Michael Langhorne- would like to hear more about how this is done. How many places are there that have a good representation of the 70% private funding source?

Kim Woodworth- hard to say but Grand Junction has done a really good job and it has taken a lot of time

Vinny Tomasulo- What seems to be the major sources of private funding?

Kim Woodworth- Top- Utility providers

Next- Industry Clusters (Construction)

University Partners

Healthcare

Cole Buerger- Bringing dollars from largest business entities at the same time cultivating the smaller business entities creates tension. How do you balance this since the majority of jobs come from the smaller businesses?

Kim Woodworth- Stresses use capacity. What is organization trying to do?

Remember there are already organizations working in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. How can you leverage that work that they are already doing. Partnership could be more intentional in using the boots on the ground.

Mission- Identify Objectives and Strategies- What activities to achieve objectives and strategies- Funding models will come from this

Funding streams that have been most effective-

Tax increment from special taxing district

Administration fees for being a fiscal agent

Incubator- Membership dues

In kind services

Tanya Doose- Durango could be good resource

- **Amy Moyer- Director of Strategic Partnerships Colorado River District**

Alicia Gresley- At the end of the presentation, she wants to sign a letter of support

Colorado River District- Local government entity founded in 1937 by the Colorado General Assembly. Represent 15 counties on Colorado's Western Slope in water issues and are based in Glenwood Springs

Shoshone Water Rights- Associated with the Shoshone hydro plant.

Owned by a subsidiary of Excel energy

Built in the early 1900's  
Run of the river hydro-electric plant  
Water rights are very senior  
Non-consumptive  
Operate year round  
Calls out upstream diverter

Benefits agricultural industries, recreation, drinking water and other environmental ecosystems

Recreation benefits- 70,000 commercial customer trips and over 60,000 individual trips through Glenwood Canyon generating over \$23 million

Drinking Water- Rifle, DeBeque, Silt, Parachute and Battlement Mesa pull directly from river for drinking water

Agriculture- \$11.9 billion across western Colorado and the state. Flows support clean water. Benefits over 250 miles of aquatic ecosystem

At end of 2023, Colorado River District executed a purchase and sale agreement with Xcel Energy to acquire the water rights. (not the plant). Must meet several contingencies by the end of 2027. These water rights would be leased back to Xcel to use as long as the power plant is online. If the plant goes offline, the rights switch over to an instream flow water right. Water stays in the stream to be used for multiple purposes working with the State of Colorado.

Contingencies:

1. Negotiate in stream flow agreement with the state of Colorado
2. Go to water court to add additional beneficial use of water rights for in stream flow purposes

Purchase price- \$99 Million- one time investment supports Western Slope in perpetuity

Colorado River District allocated- \$20 million

State of Colorado- \$20 million

City of Rifle, West Divide Water Conservancy, West Garfield County- \$8 million

Federal Funding request

Dave Reynolds- Does Xcel have other buyers for these water rights?

Amy Moyer- if plant goes offline and water rights were eventually abandoned, the front ranger diverters would be next in line to capture those yields. Denver Water had negotiated a Right of First Refusal to purchase these rights. Denver opted to initiate the first right of refusal and support the acquisition of these rights by a West Slope entity.

Travis Elliott made a motion to provide a letter of support for the purchase of the Shoshone water rights

Dave Reynolds Second the motion

Motion carried

In response to a question asked by an attendee if they have reached out to Garfield County; Amy Moyer- Yes- we have reached out to all 5 main stem counties. We accept to be on their workshop and regular agenda within the month.

Mesa County (1 Million), Eagle County (\$1 million) and Grand County (\$2 million) formalized their financial commitment with a collective \$4 million

- **Discuss, Nominate and Vote for Executive Committee (Chair/Vice Chair, Treasurer/Alternate)**

Since individuals necessary for this conversation were not present, Alicia Gresley tabled the discussion and said she would have it with the main group. This meeting was via Zoom and happened on May 9, 2024. The result was Carolyn Tucker with Workforce Colorado was voted as Chairperson and Vincent Tomasulo with Town of Parachute was voted as Vice Chair person through January 2026. [Link to meeting here](#)

Alicia Gresley announced she accepted the John Scalzo award on Michael Langhorne's behalf at the Chamber Dinner. She presented him with the award

Mary Morhleng- Introduced herself as Battlement Mesa's advocate

Meeting was adjourned at 12:29 PM by facilitator Alicia Gresley