

UPPER RIO GRANDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

March 8th, 2011

Regular Monthly Meeting

Boogie's Restaurant, Del Norte, CO

The regular meeting of the Upper Rio Grande Economic Development Council (URGEDC) was called to order at 7:00 a.m. by President Marty Asplin. There were 22 members present and one guest Ms. Arlene Harms.

Mr. Asplin reported that Hecla Mining in Creede had projections of \$10.00-13.00 per ounce for their silver operations to be affordable, and yesterday silver was over \$36.00 per ounce, so that is good news for Hecla to proceed with economic development in Creede.

The only changes to the agenda were to note that Crestina Martinez would not present the information on Carepoint today as road conditions were not favorable for her to arrive safely from San Luis. Mr. Dusty Hicks asked to be added to the agenda to speak about the Village at Wolf Creek.

Ms Bonnie Asplin made a motion to accept the minutes of the previous meeting seconded by Suzanne Benton, the motion carried.

Suzanne Benton presented the treasurer's report with a balance of \$7573.20 and thanked members for paying dues and encouraged those who have not, to get their dues paid. Dusty Hicks made a motion to accept the treasurer's report with a second by Shon Davis, motion passed. Suzanne requested that T.J. Brown, Marty and Bonnie Asplin be the audit committee to review the books.

There was no unfinished business to report.

New business included a notice of meeting on March 21st from 6-8:30 p.m. at Inn of the Rio Grande for the Governor's Bottom-Up Economic Development Plan Initiative Meeting. Marty reported that the URGEDC board had approved \$250.00 to help with facilitating this meeting. There is also a Civic Engagement meeting on March 31st at the Inn of the Rio Grande sponsored by Coloradosfuture.org. This is by invitation only and URGEDC will receive an invitation to attend. This will discuss the issues of amendments to the State of Colorado constitution, how to better spend money on economic development rather than campaigns for all these amendments. There were 20 amendments to the State Constitution in the first 125 years of Colorado's existence. In the last nine years, that number has grown by 39 additional amendments.

President Asplin then introduced Ms. Arlene Harms to give the program. Ms. Harms reported that she has been chosen by the Colorado Hospital Association to travel to Washington D.C. to speak to our representatives about rural health care in Colorado. She reported that Rio Grande Hospital has a new website; it is Rio-Grande-Hospital.org. The Hospital is happy to be one of three sites chosen for tele-medicine. This will allow patients to be connected to specialists without having to travel from the Valley. Currently there is 12 staff and Rio Grande Hospital has clinics in Monte Vista, Del Norte, South Fork and Creede.

There will be an Open House for the newly remodeled clinic in Monte Vista On Wednesday March 16th from 4- 6p.m. This is located on Rupert Street and includes four exam rooms and a lab. Arlene also invited everyone to come to the health fair to be held March 26th from 7-11 a.m. There will be new additional tests available, see the flyer that was passed out for more specifics. Marty thanked Arlene for the program.

Town reports included Mr. VanWormer reported that Monte Vista has several new business opportunities in the near future. Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) will be destroying and rebuilding U.S. 160 through the downtown from Broadway to the Mansion. The city will replace old pipelines and upgrade systems while this is in progress. The CDOT project will be 4 -4.5 million plus the City infrastructure costs of approximately \$750,000. The Monte Vista Schools will begin construction and the Valley-Wide Health Systems is remodeling the old Rominger Hardware building, which will mean three healthcare clinics in Monte Vista. The City is working on a novel idea of a program to help downtown businesses with pointers on how to relieve financial stresses with the advent of construction. The annual Crane Festival is this weekend starting on Friday March 11th through Sunday March 13th.

Marty reported that the town of Del Norte is working on the old coop building with architects selected. The trails organization is working on signage and making the trails system more visible in the Town including work at the junction of Hwy 160 and County Road 14.

The Windsorhotel.com website is up for the hotel and they are recruiting for an operator for the restaurant.

The report from South Fork included the Wharton Bridge study and design will be presented to the town the end of March or early April. The design includes golf cart and pedestrian lanes along side of the vehicle lanes.

Shon reported that Alamosa has lots of construction going on at Colorado Sports, the City of Alamosa town hall, the Mental Health building and Sangre de Cristo schools. Donna reported that a committee is looking at bonding issues to be able to develop an agriculture building and sports stadium for the schools. The bonding issue would not cause an increase in payments, but rather extend the current levels for payout longer. The school has three properties for sale as well.

Dennis Murphy reported that the county is working on funding for lighting at the airport including solar. The opportunity is there for anyone to help with this project and your contribution will have Enterprise Zone credits for State of Colorado taxing purposes. Mary Beth Miles reported on the Land Use Conference she and Rose attended last week, and also the building department folks attended a conference last week to get the latest updates on requirements for building codes. Doug Davie reported on the building at Ski Hi Park. This will be an open shed for now with potential to add siding later. This will help with 4-H activities and other events in the future. This building will be added onto the existing McMullen Building.

Suzanne Benton asked for everyone's understanding and patience with courthouse security beginning the first of May. There will be tight security due to a trial that is scheduled for the month of May. There will be an ad in the papers next week for a person to coordinate volunteers for the museum. Bonnie Asplin reported on the progress of the Korean Leaflet Project, and it looks like the latter part of June will be the date for the

event. She is in contact with Federal officials for proper protocols and possible attendance by some military dignitaries as well as congressional and state representatives.

Dusty Hicks reported on the Village at Wolf Creek, and the proposed land exchange. The Forest Service will proceed with a NEPA process and has determined it is in the public's best interest to proceed. The Village proposes great economic benefit when the project can move forward including projections of 2500 jobs over the next five years and 70 million dollars put into the local economies. Dusty will do presentation to boards and groups if requested.

There being no further business, Doug Davie made a motion to adjourn seconded by Shon Davis, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Hagedorn
Secretary