

12 Jan 10
Upper Rio Grande Economic Development Council
Regular Members Meeting
Boogie's Restaurant Del Norte, CO

The meeting was called to order by President TJ Brown.

The previous meeting minutes were approved on a motion by Suzanne Benton and a second by Shon Davis.

The Treasurer's report was approved on a motion by Don Van Wormer and a second by Marty Asplin.

In new business the membership approved funding SBDC with \$1,000 for 2010 on a motion by Don Van Wormer and a second by Doug Davies. Also, Bonnie and Marty Asplin were re-appointed as directors for 2 more years and Shon Davis agreed to come on to fill the vacant seat that existed.

Donna Wehe described many of the facts about SBDC. The State checks the work done by contacting the graduates of the Leading Edge classes to obtain evaluations of the course. The number of clients was down in 2008-2009 but the amount of time spent with each client was up which translates to increased help for each. The SLV office has been receiving attention for the work that is being done on ARC loans through First Southwest Bank in Alamosa. A new staff member is Bernie van de Boogaard who is a councilor with a strong background in liquor/convenience store operations. The Federal SBA funds States who then allocate funding to the local SBDC offices. Donna hopes to be in Monte Vista and Del Norte on Tuesday's this year. Leading Edge registrations help with the funding for the program. On Feb 19th there will be a half day class in Alamosa for truckers on "How to Manage Your Trucking Business".

Terry Smith reported that Alamosa expects to realize 30,000 visitors at its new location in the renovated Alamosa Depot. The old Depot which served as the chamber offices is slated to be moved to Monte Vista where it will once again become a Railroad Depot. The Rio Grande Scenic Railroad is looking for tours that it can provide and advertise. They will run them out of the Alamosa Depot to wherever it makes sense and are willing to bus from that point on. They are considering a bus tour from Monte that would continue up to Wolf Creek or to Creede. They are pleased with the tours they have done to potato warehouses and for Agri-tourism. Families are taking shorter vacations and also doing more day trips so ideas for short excursion trains to specific events are good business. Don't forget the Tourism Conference on Feb 10th in Alamosa at the Inn on the Rio Grande. CPAC will do the Potato Festival again this year in Monte Vista. A delegation from Washington D.C. will be coming out to look at the Tiger Grant area. This is one we all supported and it will be huge for the valley if approved.

For a program we discussed the direction we are headed with our spread sheet of Town/City and County amenities for business recruitment. This is to show proximity to things like Commercial Airport, private airport, hospital, emergency services, commercial utilities, higher Ed, continuing Ed, recreation areas, sports, Wi-Fi or faster service, local schools, service organizations, railroad, and zoned areas available. Each municipality can prepare its own spread sheet showing space available and site specific information that may appeal to a prospective business. Each

community will have a single person to serve as a point of contact to update information and to respond on short notice when a request comes in from CO OEDIT with the specific items wanted by a business looking to relocate to Colorado. Our intent is to make these responses less onerous on Towns and Chambers and to make them much quicker and specific to the needs of the client. This will be able to be uploaded to the URGEDC web page and any other pages that would be appropriate. We will formulate this with the help of SLVDRG and ASC. We want to be more proactive in selling the idea of the valley.

Community Updates:

Monte Vista is looking to the Water Conservation Board to help with funding currently used to buy water rights. They have received 24 applications for the Police Chief Job. They continue to look at internal issues as they relate to continuing services. Valley Wide has their plans done for the old Rominger Hardware building which could be open by the end of 2010. And of course, Ski Hi continues to find NO limit on funding needed.

Del Norte is closing in on the end of the Brownfields Phase 2 process and preparing to enter final negotiations to purchase the Co-Op property. The Chamber of Commerce is in the planning stages for this year's Run, Rock, and Roll event.

South Fork is preparing to annex the River Mill project area which is the latest Smart Code effort provided by The Crabtree Group.

Rio Grande County's budget is dictating most of what they are doing. They are working with the Museum Board to get the Museum open part time with volunteer staffing. They received the second grant from CDOT and will move a County Rd to allow commencing of earth work for the runway at Rominger Airport. The McMillan Building is now available but requires a fee. Doug showed a Commissioner from Aspen around the area and received a favorable review on the diversity of Rio Grande County from this first time visitor. The Rio Grande Public Health Board, in response to the Clean Water Act, is no longer allowing disposal of car wash waste water. They are working with Alamosa County to handle this disposal.

Alamosa is having their Art Walk on March 27th. You can sign up for their newsletter at the Alamosa Chamber website.

Saguache has received a grant for their main street revitalization. The redeveloped movie theater is showing films 3-4 nights a week with foreign films being the biggest draw. They will convert the old gas station into a visitor center.

The next meeting is in Monte Vista on the 9th of February.

Adjourned

Submitted,
Marty Asplin, Secretary