

MINUTES

PUEBLO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

FEBRUARY 22, 2018

A meeting of the Pueblo Area Council of Governments was held on Thursday, February 22, 2018, at the Pueblo County Department of Emergency Management, 101 West 10th Street, 1st Floor Conference Room. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Tony Montoya, Chairman, at 12:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Those members present were:

Mark Aliff
Ed Brown
Dennis Flores
Nick Gradisar
Terry Hart
Frank Latino

Judy Leonard
Ted Lopez
Tony Montoya
Garrison Ortiz
Bob Schilling

Those members absent were:

Ray Aguilera
Larry Atencio
Robert Ferriter

Terry Kraus
Chris Nicoll
Sal Pace

Also present were:

John Adams
Joan Armstrong
Sam Azad

Cynthia Mitchell
Louella Salazar
Kallene West

CONSENT ITEMS:

Ms. Joan Armstrong, PACOG Manager, reported there were three items listed on the agenda under the Consent Items. She summarized the Consent Items for PACOG.

Chairman Montoya asked if there were any other additions or amendments to the Consent Items or if any of the members or audience would like an item removed or discussed that was on the Consent agenda. There were no other additions or amendments.

It was moved by Terry Hart, seconded by Garrison Ortiz, and passed unanimously to approve the Consent Items listed below:

- Minutes of January 25, 2018 Meeting;
- A Resolution Approving the FY 2018 Pueblo Area Council of Governments' Delegation Agreement for Regional Land Use Planning and Administration, and Authorizing the Chairperson of PACOG to Execute Same; and

- A Resolution Amending the FY 2018-2019 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Budget Tables for the Pueblo Metropolitan Planning Organization to Include Carryover FY 2016-2017 Consolidated Planning Grant (CPG) Funds.

REGULAR ITEMS:

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:

(A) Lunch Appreciation

Chairman Montoya thanked the Pueblo Board of Water Works for providing lunch for today's meeting.

(B) PACOG Nominating Committee for Officers

Mr. Terry Hart reported the PACOG Nominating Committee consisting of Judy Leonard, Dennis Flores, and he met on February 21, 2018 and selected the following persons to serve as officers for 2018: Judy Leonard (Chair), Frank Latino (Vice Chair), Nick Gradisar (Treasurer), and Louella Salazar (Secretary).

There were no other nominations from the floor.

It was moved by Terry Hart, seconded by Dennis Flores, and passed unanimously to accept the Nominating Committee's report and approve the following slate of officers for 2018:

Judy Leonard - Chair
Frank Latino - Vice Chair
Nick Gradisar - Treasurer
Louella Salazar - Secretary

(C) New Chair Takes Chair

Chairwoman Leonard thanked Mr. Montoya for his services.

(D) Appointment of PACOG Budget Committee

Chairwoman Leonard asked if there was anyone who would like to serve on the Committee. Mr. Hart asked that Nick Gradisar, as PACOG's Treasurer, Larry Atencio, and he continue to serve on the Committee because they continue to research and work on PACOG's restructure. He stated he would also like for other members to join the Committee. He stated Ms. Leonard has also been at the meetings to represent Pueblo West. He stated the Committee has had good conversations regarding the restructure and need to put it in writing, which will be sent to the entire PACOG to review and take back to their respective governments. Chairwoman Leonard asked if there was anyone else who would like to serve on the Committee. Mr. Montoya stated he would also like to be on the Committee.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

(A) EPAC Minutes/Statement/Report

Ms. Joan Armstrong, PACOG Manager, reported the PACOG members received in their packets the minutes of February 1, 2018 EPAC meeting. This being an information item only, no formal action was taken.

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONER/CDOT REGION 2 DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Chairwoman Leonard reported there were no comments from Mr. Bill Thiebaut, the State Transportation Commissioner for the Pueblo region or the CDOT Region 2 Director.

STATE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (STAC) UPDATE

Mr. Hart reported at the STAC meeting there was a good deal of conversation about what the Legislature is doing with transportation funding. The package which was put together last year was slated at \$1.8 billion toward a minimum \$9 billion need. There are bills going through the Legislature to talk about funding options and what projects should be incorporated under that funding. He stated the two primary Pueblo projects--Highway 50 West and I-25—are going to continue and are on the list.

Mr. Hart stated STAC also talked about the ballot questions. It was made clear last year that if the Legislature dropped the ball, then they would go to the ballot with a petition. It is being put together by a large group of people primarily out of the Denver metropolitan area. There are several options what that ballot might look like. In the meantime, all of STAC are working with them to make sure that we have a list of the projects. He stated we want to make sure our projects are still in the mix. He stated our neighbors to the north in the Colorado Springs and Denver metropolitan areas want the funding. He stated when you start talking about the I-70 project being a \$1+ billion, all of the rest of us would be getting the scraps. Colorado Springs has been successful in working their projects in with the I-25 Gap Project, which is going from Monument to Castle Rock. We all know that this is necessary, but it leapfrogged the process and became one of the No. 1 projects in the State.

Mr. Hart stated there has been an adjustment to the 5311 funding, which is funding for transit. The formula has been adjusted with respect to how the money is distributed. He stated transportation funding for SRDA has been increased in the new formula.

Mr. Hart stated STAC also talked about how President Trump's infrastructure bill is being proposed. He stated discussion has occurred about it being an 80%-20% split with the federal government picking up 80% and the State/local governments picking up 20%. The percentages have been flipped and the current proposal is for the federal government to put in 20% and the State/local governments picking up 80%. He felt this means that a lot of the transportation needs would be "dead in the water" because we don't have that kind of money.

Mr. Brown asked who is putting together the ballot question. Mr. John Adams replied primarily it is the construction people, but the Denver Chamber of Commerce is doing it.

There is a large group doing this, who want to stay autonomous. Mr. Hart added it is literally all the folks who are frustrated with the Legislature because they don't know how to do it.

Mr. Gradisar asked if the Pueblo projects are Highway 50 east and west of Pueblo. Mr. Adams responded the ballot would have two tiers. The Tier 1 projects are adding the lanes west of Pueblo. Senate Bill 267 has identified some of those funds. This ballot initiative would pay for the rest of it. The other is the I-25 project from City Center Drive to 13th Street and its realignment and the vertical and horizontal curves. The Tier 2 project is east of Pueblo to the Kansas line. An Environmental Assessment (EA) is being done. Mr. Hart thought that the EA was completed. Mr. Adams replied the Tier 1 EA has been completed, but there is still work going on before the construction occurs. Mr. Hart stated it important to four-lane Highway 50 from Kansas to Utah. He felt it would be a monster impact on the economy of Southern Colorado, in general, and Pueblo, specifically. He stated whatever it takes to move from the EA to drawings and designs for construction and, ultimately, the money needs to happen. Mr. Flores felt it would have a tremendous effect. In the insurance business, the companies which insure these large transportation companies will not allow their trucks to get on Highway 50 just because of the dangers of two lane sections between Fowler and Manzanola. There are trucking companies that will go on I-70 into Denver and then come down I-25 south in order to totally avoid Highway 50. There are prohibitions by the trucking companies because the roads aren't adequate and it is too dangerous for their drivers and their assets. If the four lanes would be created, you would alleviate some of the pressure on I-70 and we would become a major transportation hub. He felt this could be monumental for our community. We could be a major distribution center. It is something we really need to push.

MPO STAFF REPORT

(A) Tentative Project List for Ballot List

Mr. John Adams, MPO Manager, reported the ballot initiative is critical to our area. Denver is talking about doing a Regional Transportation Authority and taxing themselves to do some of their improvements. If that ever occurs because something doesn't get done on a Statewide basis, it is going to be extremely difficult for other parts of Colorado to actually get any infrastructure improvements and adequately maintain existing structures. He felt the legislators need to know that transportation is critical and the lifeblood of Colorado.

(B) Next Generation Mobility Systems - Loop Global Presentation

Mr. Bart Mikitowicz, PACOG Transportation Planner, introduced Mr. Steve Moraco, who is a board member of Loop Global and an advisor to the company. He stated Mr. Worthington was not able to attend.

Mr. Steve Moraco presented a PowerPoint presentation on tube transportation. He stated road transportation is very dangerous. Hyper-loop is a new type of transit. The idea is to have very high speed rail in a vacuum tube. They are working with car-sized capsules in a vacuum tube. The purpose of a vacuum tube is to get rid of friction, there is no air resistance, and you can move at high speeds with low energy costs. Loop Global Systems' hyper-loop system is very low cost compared to other transit solutions. While

other hyper-loop companies are proposing \$400 million a mile high-speed rail type things, Loop Global System is about the width of a sidewalk and half the cost of an interstate mile-per-mile. It is a big win for communities because of this. It is affordable and very high capacity and high speed. Loop Global Systems is beginning its first construction in the world in the U.S. in Colorado. The idea is you could get from Pueblo to the Denver International Airport in 15-20 minutes for \$5. This would be a huge win for every city in the Front Range.

Mr. Moraco stated Loop Global Systems is looking at privately funding the system so it is not a burden on the taxpayers. He stated they don't know what the return economically would be yet, so it makes sense to go with private funds, or at least the first portion of the route until they have the figures for taxpayers to see and decide if they want this as a part of their community.

Mr. Moraco stated we are wasting a lot of time in traffic and it's not great for the earth, and we can probably do better from an energy cost standpoint and from a time standpoint. The idea is that loop capsules can carry cargo, people, utilities, parcels, etc. The capsules seat six people. The capsule doesn't feel much different from a movie theater or from a car seating area. There is levitation technology that allows the capsules to travel through the tubes with low friction, or about \$1 worth of energy to get these up to speed. They don't slowdown on their route. He stated this is a low energy cost, noting if you compare this to trains or trucks mile-for-mile or ton-for-ton, we are looking at 1/10th of the energy cost.

Mr. Moraco stated there are six other companies commercializing in this enterprise. None of these companies have plans to build anything other than test tracks in the U.S. anytime soon. He stated there are test tracks in Los Angeles, Las Vegas, etc., which are built and being opened by Loop. They are looking at beginning construction hopefully in Colorado Springs sometime this year. The conservative goal to open the commuter route along the Front Range is in 2025, which includes 2 or 3 cities. He stated this is why they are going around to local governments and making the presentation.

Mr. Moraco stated as much as 80% of the system between cities could be federally funded so long as they get private funding for the other 20%. He stated their first hyper-loop passenger will be sometime this summer at a test track which is being built in Fort Collins. They are looking at beginning construction of the first route which would open to the public immediately thereafter.

Mr. Moraco stated the proof of concept (Phase Two) is being done this year. The demonstration would be open to the public in 2021. The city-to-city connection would be in 2024. He stated they have advisors from all over the world helping to design this and it is something that the community builds for its own edification. He stated he would like the community to help them design something that would be beautiful and beneficial for Pueblo whether that be putting in stops downtown or at the mall or neighborhoods. He stated they would like to integrate with the city so that it looks beautiful and inviting.

Mr. Moraco stated Phase 3 includes a 3-mile system which goes 400 miles per hour. It is projected to bring in \$10-\$12 million annually. It is a \$30-\$50 million economic development project which different companies are looking at funding. He stated they are

still deciding on where to put the 3 miles, noting they are looking at Pueblo, Denver, and Colorado Springs.

Mr. Flores asked how Pueblo could position itself to be selected. Mr. Moraco replied Pueblo could definitely be selected. He stated he is from Colorado Springs and he is making sure that all of the cities on the Front Range get included in this plan. He stated the way this architecture is built, it is like an interstate and you can put stops in wherever you want. When you get on, you would select on your phone where you want to go and go straight to your destination. He stated there will be multiple stops in Pueblo. Mr. Flores asked if Pueblo would be considered for the demonstration project. Mr. Moraco replied that the demonstration project is still in early conversations. They are figuring out who funds it and that will basically decide where it goes. They have had conversations with Ryan McWilliams who is doing a big redevelopment by the train tracks and owns 15-16 miles between Pueblo and Colorado Springs, and who said they could build on. The key for the demonstration system is they want about 100,000 people to see it over the course of the year and use it. It is about an \$80 ticket. They are looking mostly at Denver right by the airport, at Colorado Springs somewhere in the city, and Pueblo is also under consideration either on Ryan McWilliams's land or somewhere in town, noting all of these conversations are still new. Mr. Flores stated it is also a demonstration project that would serve as a tourist attraction. He felt that Pueblo would be the perfect place because of its location between I-25 and Highway 50.

Mr. Schilling stated tubes going through a neighborhood would look pretty ugly. Mr. Moraco replied the hope is that it would be underground in metropolitan areas where it would be interfering with people's neighborhoods. Mr. Schilling stated then everything would have to be buried in the cities. Mr. Moraco replied something like a subway. It is much smaller and cheaper and much easier to tunnel. Where it would be going through the plains above ground, then it is one-third of the price of tunneling. Mr. Schilling asked about their costs as compared to others and how is this accomplished. Mr. Moraco responded it is the materials. The cost of the tube itself increases as a cube of the diameter of the tube. When you make a tube that is otherwise 5' diameter width and make it 10', you are not only doubling the cost but tripling and quadrupling not only materials but the thickness of the tube and so the cost goes up.

Mr. Montoya asked about the preliminary research in terms of the layout from Pueblo to Colorado Springs and how much it would cost, and whether people who own that property would give it up. Mr. Moraco replied Mr. McWilliams stated he knows everyone who owns land between Pueblo and Colorado Springs. He is very optimistic about acquiring an easement on the land. Those landowners would get paid. He stated it is quieter than a power line and there are solar panels on it to give power from their grid and back to the owner's property. The pylons are drilled into the ground. If you need to reclaim it, the pylons are undrilled and padded with your foot. They have talked to CDOT about using the interstate right-of-way and they are excited about getting it built. There is also a possibility of a tunnel under the interstate or the right-of-way.

(C) Other Transportation Matters

There were no other transportation matters presented.

PLAN OF ACTION FOR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

Mr. Frank Latino stated safety in the community and schools are important and he has made it a priority throughout his career. He stated we can never let our guard down when it comes to safety. He felt Pueblo needs to be more proactive. The community has a wonderful law enforcement and first responders. He stated he has been actively involved from a District 60 perspective for a long time, noting he attended a Serious Habitual Offender Direct Intervention (SHODI) conference in 1985. It happened to be in Aurora and the keynote speaker was the police chief from the Chicago police department. He stated that "he worked in a building where we are armed and we know how to use those arms." The general public work in places where they don't have that security. He stated that the committee, created in the mid '80s, were ahead of the curve. When he was principal at Centennial, they had SROs part-time in 1991-1992 and in 1993-1994 became full-time, noting they became staff members. This occurred five years before Columbine happened. The more aware and knowledgeable we are, the better prepared we are.

Mr. Latino stated the Pillars of Unity will be conducting their 2nd annual Community School Safety Summit on June 16th at Pueblo County High School. The keynote speaker will be Mr. Frank DeAngelis, who is on the National Speakers Bureau for School Safety and was the principal at Columbine High School. He stated when he was principal at Centennial High School he wrote Mr. DeAngelis a card which said, "I'm a principal colleague. I can't imagine what you're going through." When Mr. DeAngelis was in Pueblo a couple of years ago, he let him know that he would never forget that card. Mr. Latino strongly encouraged the PACOG members and audience to attend the summit and listen to him. Mr. DeAngelis stated he never thought that Columbine would happen because 88% of their students go on to college, comparing it to Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, where the February 14th school shooting took place. Mr. DeAngelis in his presentation stated that his close friend, Mr. Dave Sanders, who was a teacher at Columbine, prevented him from dying as well as another 60-80 students who were behind Mr. DeAngelis coming down the hallway. Mr. DeAngelis had a ring of keys in his hand and if he would have fumbled with the keys there would have been more casualties. The key that he picked out opened the door and allowed the students to flee. He stated he would never recover from what happened at Columbine. Mr. Latino questioned what has been done as a nation after Columbine. He stated the parents and students from the Marjory Stoneman Douglas school shooting are on a mission to let it never happen again. He stated President Trump entertained a group yesterday at the White House regarding school shootings. Mr. Latino added there is a possibility of contacting Mr. Andrew Romanoff, who used to be the Colorado Speaker of the House. He heads an agency in Colorado pertaining to mental health issues. Mr. Latino stated that laws have to change, noting it is not a political thing when it comes to school shootings. He introduced Mr. Mark Salazar, who runs Hard Knocks program.

Mr. Mark Salazar showed a three-minute video on Pueblo gangs. He reported he was a former Pueblo gang member. He stated at a young age he always knew he was going to end up in prison, but didn't know what for and how long. During his time in prison, he decided to leave the gang lifestyle behind. He reformed and is now helping those who are struggling in the gang culture to get out of it. He went back to school. He stated his role models when he was growing up were gang members. He stated the evidence-based curriculum he uses addresses the criminal's needs as well as their criminal behavior. He

has been working out of the Patrick Lucero Library four days a week. In 2015, Hard Knocks was established. He stated he has worked with 230 children from the schools of Bradford, Parkview, Risley, and East. He stated recently there has been an increase in activity across from East High School from the Aces and Dukes gangs. He stated he has reached out to the principal to extend his service there. These gangs are prevalent in the community again in the middle schools. He stated they utilize the Phoenix curriculum, noting it targets the criminal's needs and their high risk behaviors (i.e., anti-social behavior, anti-social peers, substance abuse). The gang culture has a longstanding history. He stated the vast majority of children he is working with are raised by their grandparents because their parents are either incarcerated or strung out on drugs or alcohol. He stated their program has had some positive impact on a handful of individuals. He stated they have been in collaborative effort with Ultimate Performance and Jackson's Boxing to get these children off the street. He stated the children that are problematic are those that they need to reach and because of their poor choices get kicked out of schools and the library, and there is nothing else but the streets to embrace them. He stated he has seen a select few who have fallen into substance abuse. He stated their program also addresses the bullying issue. He stated the gang situation is a community problem and it takes a community effort. He stated he needs the help of community leaders. These children need to be involved in recreational activities so they can release their testosterone to deal with other skills.

Chairwoman Leonard thanked Mr. Salazar for his commitment.

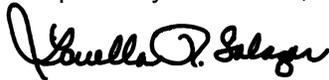
FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no future agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further regular business before PACOG, the meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday, March 22, 2018, at 12:15 p.m., at the Pueblo City-County Health Department, 101 West 9th Street, in Conference C on the 3rd Floor.

Respectfully submitted,



Louella R. Salazar
PACOG Recording Secretary

LRS