

MINUTES

PUEBLO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

JUNE 27, 2019

A meeting of the Pueblo Area Council of Governments was held on Thursday, June 27, 2019, at the Pueblo County Department of Emergency Management, 101 West 10th Street, 1st Floor Conference Room. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Dennis Flores, Chairman, at 12:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Those members present were:

Ray Aguilera
Ed Brown
Mike Cafasso
Denis Flores
Terry Hart

Terry Hart
Frank Latino
Judy Leonard
Ted Lopez
Chris Wiseman

Those members absent were:

Mark Aliff
Larry Atencio
Crystal Breckenridge
Terry Kraus

Chris Nicoll
Ted Ortiviz
Garrison Ortiz
Bob Schilling

Also present were:

John Adams
Joan Armstrong
Bob Jagger
Nick Gradisar

Cynthia Mitchell
Louella Salazar
Kallene West

CONSENT ITEMS:

Chairman Flores requested that Consent Item No. 3, "A Resolution Supporting Funding for the Westbound Widening of U.S. Highway 50A from Pueblo Boulevard in Pueblo County Identified by PACOG as a Priority Project in the Pueblo Area Planning Region During the Development of a 10-Year Development Program" be removed from the Consent agenda to the Regular agenda for more discussion.

It was moved by Mike Cafasso, seconded by Terry Hart, and passed unanimously to remove Consent Item No. 3 from the Consent items to the Regular items.

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

Chairman Flores 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 Ed Brown, seconded by Mike Cafasso, and passed unanimously to approve the three Consent Items listed below:

- Minutes of March 23, 2019 Meeting;
- Treasurer's Report (Receive and file May 2019 Financial Reports); and
- A Resolution Appointing a Member of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) of the Pueblo Area Council of Governments (PACOG) Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) for the Pueblo Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to Fill the Term of Michael Klaus.

REGULAR ITEMS:

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING FUNDING FOR THE WESTBOUND WIDENING OF U.S. HIGHWAY 50A FROM PUEBLO BOULEVARD IN PUEBLO COUNTY IDENTIFIED BY PACOG AS A PRIORITY PROJECT IN THE PUEBLO AREA PLANNING REGION DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A10-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Mr. John Adams, MPO Administrator, stated a resolution was drafted by the PACOG Attorney and staff. Both Mr. Hart and Mr. Thiebaut reviewed it and made comments. The resolution before PACOG today is the final version. He stated the funds will be coming from Senate Bill 17-267, which was adopted in 2017. In December 2017, the State Transportation Commission adopted a two-year budget on those SB 17-267 funds. At that time, the U.S. 50 50A project was identified as the project to be budgeted between Fiscal Years 2018 and 2020. The Commission took action in 2017 to budget that project for \$35.5 million. The resolution states PACOG is supporting the decision that the Tier 1 project should be funded with those SB 17-267 funds, as long as it doesn't impede the progress of implementing the I-25 from City Center Drive to 13th Street project. The resolution states this is still PACOG's No. 1 priority. He asked PACOG to adopt the resolution.

Mr. Hart stated at the last PACOG meeting, staff was instructed to draft a resolution. He stated the draft language was taken to Mr. Thiebaut. Mr. Hart stated this resolution allows PACOG to obtain the money which has been set aside for the Highway 50A project. He stated Mr. Thiebaut modified the language from the original draft, not to change the substance of the original draft, but to make sure we get the money for the Highway 50A project and making sure that the I-25 project remains a priority. The language was drafted in the terminology used by CDOT and the Transportation Commission. There may be an opportunity to get more than the \$35.5 million currently allocated to this project. The current value of the project is approximately \$40 million.

Mr. Hart stated the transportation projects in Colorado greatly exceed the amount of money available. The need is currently in the \$9 billion range and growing. He stated Mr. Thiebaut's strategy is to work with his fellow Commissioners throughout the State and identifying the top needs. He would like to cobble together the most money he can get for our projects. I-25 and Highway 267 (the Lamar reliever route) are the two top priorities for Southern Colorado. With all the needs, there is not enough to do the next phase of I-25 unless we work on it at a different capacity. He is seeing if we can get as much of a commitment for the I-25 project as possible. He is working to identify potential grant funding sources outside of the State of Colorado or federal grants. He is also working on

the legislative side. With all of his efforts, he is hoping to get the funding needed for the next phase of I-25, which is \$228 million, noting this amount is only going up. He is currently working with the population centers in Denver to make sure we are balancing the money out of Northern Colorado to be used for the I-25 project in Pueblo.

Chairman Flores stated that Section 1 of the resolution indicates that CDOT and the Colorado Transportation Commission does not negatively impact and further delay the reconstruction and realignment of I-25: City Center Drive to 13th Street (Phase of the New Pueblo Freeway). This means there should be no impact on the funding of the next phase. He stated if PACOG isn't unified, this \$35.5 million could go to El Paso County. He felt we need to support this resolution. Mr. Brown agreed that PACOG needs to be unified.

Mr. Hart stated if any jurisdiction has any internal conflict and discussions that go up to the State level, you will lose your project to somebody else. People who have a united effort and united voice are the ones getting money for their projects.

Chairman Flores asked if there is something PACOG needs to do. Mr. Hart replied if PACOG adopts the resolution, this would be a big help. He stated Mr. Thiebaut indicated if the other PACOG jurisdictions would pass similar resolutions, this would be an enormous help. He stated Mr. Thiebaut is working with the dynamics with the other Transportation Commissioners, as well as CDOT staff, to line us up to have the greatest advantage we possibly can. Resolutions coming from individual governments have a huge impact on the discussions that happen at CDOT. If anybody is interested in passing a similar resolution as PACOG's, this would help him in his internal dialogue.

It was moved by Chris Wiseman, seconded by Ed Brown, and passed unanimously to approve "A Resolution Supporting Funding for the Westbound Widening of U.S. Highway 50A from Pueblo Boulevard in Pueblo County Identified by PACOG as a Priority Project in the Pueblo Area Planning Region During the Development of a 10-Year Development Program".

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:

(A) Lunch Appreciation

Chairman Flores thanked the Town of Boone for providing lunch for today's meeting.

MANAGER'S REPORT

There was no report.

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONER/CDOT REGION 2 DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Chairman Flores reported there were no comments from Mr. Bill Thiebaut, the State Transportation Commissioner for the Pueblo region. Commissioner Thiebaut indicated he will be in attendance at the July or August PACOG meetings in order to discuss the new direction the Transportation Commission is undertaking for the coming Fiscal Year 2019-2020.

Mr. Dan Dahlke, CDOT, reported Mr. Bill Thiebaut is the new chair of the Colorado Transportation Commission and Mr. Rocky Baker of Colorado Springs is the new vice chair.

Mr. Dahlke stated the grand opening of the I-25 project (City Center Drive to Ilex) was held today. There is still landscaping, which is being worked on and should be finished by the end of July.

Mr. Dahlke stated that Highway 50C from 4th Street to Baxter (Salt Creek to Baxter) will be paved by the 4th of July.

Mr. Dahlke stated paving will also occur on Stem Beach to Colorado City.

Mr. Dahlke stated paving from 4th Street to Salt Creek will occur after the 4th of July and go into August.

STATE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (STAC) UPDATE

Mr. Terry Hart, PACOG STAC representative, reported the last STAC meeting was held on June 21, 2019 in Denver. He stated Mr. Bill Thiebaut was elected as the new chair for the State Transportation Commission. It is a huge opportunity for our community. He felt Pueblo has a good opportunity to get things done, especially since the Legislature elected Pueblo representatives as its leaders. Mr. Thiebaut is trying to change the philosophy on how we do transportation planning and make a positive effort on all of the areas of the State. He is looking at a new method of divvying up the money so it isn't a dogfight for those outside of the Denver metropolitan area with those in the Denver metropolitan area.

Mr. Hart stated the Transportation Commission is in the process of doing a series of road trips. A date has not been determined when they will be visiting Pueblo. Staff will advise PACOG when the date has been determined.

Mr. Hart stated an update was given from the General Assembly. The General Assembly has a number of interim committee issues dealing with transportation so they are going to be going around the State.

Mr. Hart stated there was a lengthy conversation about the transportation planning reset. They have a survey that is on CDOT's webpage, "Your Transportation Plan". CDOT is asking that everybody weigh in on what you would like to see in transportation. It is our opportunity to vote early and often.

Mr. Hart stated there was a conversation about transit funding. There was a conversation about shifting to a top down approach and away from the bottom up approach. CDOT and the State have indicated they are not doing that, but there is a lot of concern about this.

STATUS ON SOUTHWEST CHIEF PASSENGER RAIL

Mr. Hart, PACOG's representative, reported the Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission meeting was held in Fort Collins on June 14th. The Commission is moving around the State and is slated to be in Pueblo on August 9th. An RFP is being crunched now to determine who the contractor will be to put together the

plan for the design and build of a Front Range passenger rail system. He stated representatives from Cheyenne, Wyoming, have been coming to these meetings. The Commission is talking about going back to the Legislature to amend its charter to let them know the idea has always been for the rail system to be from Cheyenne to Albuquerque, New Mexico. He stated this has an enormous effect on getting Federal attention when there are three states working together.

Mr. Hart reported discussion occurred on the thru-car effort, which is the Southwest Chief component. The players are helping to identify the costs and who has the various responsibilities to make that happen. The thru-car concept is a train going from Chicago down to Los Angeles, which would have a car or two at the end of the train. When it comes to La Junta, it would be taken off and hooked to another engine. The other train goes ahead and that train comes to Pueblo. There is a return route where it goes back when the train is coming from Los Angeles back up to Chicago. Our cars go back to La Junta and get hooked back in. He stated PACOG has been participating in the project. Pueblo County has also participated in this, noting it is a 1A project. The meeting has not been scheduled yet, but could tentatively be held at the Union Depot. There is a possibility of a tour at TTCI.

MPO STAFF REPORT

(A) Minor Changes to the Transit Asset Management MOU

Mr. John Adams, MPO Manager, reported a few months ago PACOG passed a resolution adopting the State's Transit Asset Management MOU. He stated the State and its lawyer realized there were two minor errors in the document. The errors do not change the substance of the document. The first error was on Page 1 and it deals with a misclarification on a regulatory status coming out of the FAST Act. The second error was on Page 2. The Transit Asset Management MOU had been sent out late by the State, which caused the placement of a date that already had passed. The date was changed and what has been established is at the first of every calendar year that PACOG needs to determine whether it is going to accept and adopt the State's target measures or create its own. Staff is looking at updating the Long Range Transportation Plan, which has a performance based plan. He stated he is only notifying PACOG of the two minor changes.

Chairman Flores asked legal counsel if the modifications could be made informally. Mr. Bob Jagger, representing Mr. Dan Kogovsek, PACOG Attorney, stated it would be beneficial for PACOG to clean it up. Chairman Flores asked if there was a timeframe. Mr. Adams was unaware of the time limit. He stated staff could note in the file that there were minor changes to the MOU and then maybe next month a resolution could be adopted on the changes. He noted it does not change the MOU and it does not change anyone's responsibilities on the performance issues.

This being an information item, no formal action was taken.

(B) Transit Relocation Study Update

Mr. John Adams, MPO Manager, reported a year ago the Unified Planning Work Program was amended to include some funds to participate in the relocation of the Transit Administration and Operations building. It is currently located on Alan Hamel Avenue. It is

in a prime development location. The property is becoming very valuable because it is located near the Historic Arkansas Riverwalk of Pueblo (HARP). The building is 40 years old and it has been outgrown. This morning, the master plan was finalized. The site location has been chosen. The final master plan will probably be brought to PACOG at its next meeting. It will also need to go to the Federal Transit Administration for its approval.

Chairman Flores asked about the status of the funding. Mr. Adams replied it is his understanding there was a committed funding from Senate Bill 267. At that time, it was estimated at \$40 million of State funding coming into the area. A 10-year plan was developed and approved. Within that plan, there is funding at the State level for it, and there has to be a 50% match. Last week, staff made application to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for half that project, which is estimated at \$15 million or \$7.5 million, noting the City of Pueblo will be contributing \$1.5 million as the local match because it is an 80/20 program and \$6 million will be provided from the Federal government. The other half will be coming from the State. Staff will probably not know until this fall if the funding from FTA has been approved. Chairman Flores asked if the money includes razing the existing building. Mr. Adams responded this has not been discussed. Once the property has been sold, all of this money will be going into the new project.

Mr. Hart stated we have put too much into the project and don't want to lose the funding. Mr. Adams stated the communication from the Division of Transit and Rail is "dicey at best". Last Friday at the staff meeting, they informed staff before they passed a resolution on how they were going to split up Senate Bill 1 funds for multi-modal projects. He stated this was never discussed beforehand. He stated there is not enough communication with the local level before making decisions regarding funding. Mr. Hart stated he spoke with Mr. Thiebaut about this and was told the Transportation Commission had understood that this was basically the recommendation from the STAC subcommittee. Mr. Thiebaut stated we need to do whatever we need to do, such as letting them know that they need to reset and redo the formula with the STAC's involvement. Mr. Adams stated he looked back at the Transportation Commission's packet and the memorandum did indicate that it had been approved through STAC.

This being an information item, no formal action was taken.

(C) Update of Pedestrian/Bike Plan

Mr. Bart Mikitowicz, MPO Transportation Planner, reported the last update to the Pedestrian/Bike Plan was done in 2010. A couple of years ago, the Public Participation Plan (PPP) Update was approved. The PPP addressed such things as environmental justice, accessibility, using new technologies, and non-traditional outreach methods. Stakeholders were used to develop the plan. After using the stakeholders, an update was done to the bike map. While staff was doing the bike map, staff did assessments and they were awarded with a bronze award for a bike friendly community. The assessments helped staff find out where they were lacking and were able to bring them into the bike and pedestrian plan. He stated staff applied to the Road to Zero grant and was approved for \$1,500. He stated the assessments showed there was a breakdown with the neighborhood stakeholders and citizen stakeholders and their organizations within their neighborhoods. He stated working with the City, County, Pueblo West, and Don Vest, lines were developed based on census tracts, which allowed them to track the data better. He stated with the meetings with the stakeholders, a citizens' workbook was developed.

The workbook was broken into different sections. An outreach process was done by staff to try and reach all the different plan zones. A survey was developed from this process. The survey was placed on the PACOG website and flyers were placed around town and distributed by email. The idea is to feed all of these different resources to the PACOG website through Survey Monkey, and into the plan as efficiently and cost effectively as possible.

Mr. Mikitowicz stated signs were bought for the City buses. There was a lot of word-of-mouth done. An article was done in the newspaper. Once the flyer was ready, staff pushed it out using Facebook. Responses were received from the different planning groups. It is hoped that these groups start communicating with each other. The application Peach Jar was used, noting this application is used by schools. The flyer was sent to the local schools through Peach Jar. He stated with all the different events there are date stamps on the responses. This allows staff to look at what is effective and ineffective in the strategies.

Mr. Aguilera asked why the response was so negative by the businesses in the area around the Dennis Maes Judicial Building (West 5th Street). Mr. Mikitowicz replied you want buy-in from the businesses when you are doing a project like this. If they are gathering against you, it doesn't seem like the buy-in process was executed as it would be desired. The actual design guidelines that were used were incorrect, noting they measured not from the edge of the gutter but where the curb was so the bike lane was too small. It is a one-way street and you are doing a counter flow bike lane down a one-way street and there is no signalization through the traffic lights and this is dangerous.

This being an information item, no formal action was taken.

(D) MPO Current Planning Activities

Mr. John Adams, MPO Manager, reported at the next PACOG meeting a copy of the scope of work for FYs 2020 and 2021 will be provided. This is the program that funds the MPO and is called the Consolidated Planning Grant. It outlines the work staff will be doing over a two-year period, noting there could be amendments during the second year because things change.

Mr. Adams stated they are also going out for a RFP for the Long Range Transportation Plan update. He stated they want to be consistent with the State Long Range Transportation Plan.

This being an information item, no formal action was taken.

(E) Other Transportation Matters

Mr. John Adams, MPO Manager, reported Ms. Rebecca White, the State Director of Transportation Planning, came to Pueblo for a visit. There was some discussion of possibly trying to do something August 8th to help with the outreach of the State's Long Range Transportation Plan. He stated they would like to do this in concert with the Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission.

This being an information item, no formal action was taken.

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN ACTION TEAM (SPAT), "GROWING WATER SMART:
INTEGRATED WATER AND LAND USE PLANNING WORKSHOP"

Ms. Laura Getts, Energy Coordinator, Pueblo County Economic Development & GIS, reported the Pueblo Board of Water Works approached her about an opportunity to attend a Smart Growth Integrated Water and Land Use Planning workshop, which is being held September 11-13, 2019, in Estes Park. It is helping communities plan in a more resilient fashion anything from future climate pressures to rapid population expansion and growth. It pertains to smart planning and how we can better look at land use. There is a critical nexus between land use planning and water. A lot of communities are finding themselves in a crisis mode. Pueblo is in a beautiful position to plan in advance of some of these pressures. The Board of Water Works is interested in participating in this workshop to get some guidance and tools. It is a nice forum for land use planners and water managers to come together and establish a more formal way of communicating as they move forward.

Ms. Getts stated you have to apply to attend the workshop. They are looking for 5-7 individuals from a community. They are looking at water utility and water resource managers, land use planners, elected officials, planning board members, public works staff, town or county staff, regional planning organizations, and developers. She stated there are entities on board who have expressed interest such as the Board of Water Works, Pueblo West Metropolitan District, and County Planning. No response has been received to date from City Planning. She asked if there is anyone interested from PACOG who would be interested in attending. She stated the application has to go out tomorrow (Friday) by the end of business. Mayor Gradisar asked if it could be sent out electronically. Ms. Getts replied yes.

PLAN OF ACTION FOR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

Mr. Frank Latino reported he has announced he will not be seeking reelection on the School District No. 60 (SD 60) Board of Directors. His last official meeting as SD 60's representative to PACOG will be October 24th. He stated he hoped that this would continue to be on the PACOG agenda because he felt it is of importance to community and school safety.

Mr. Latino felt it was going to take a unified effort, a grassroots effort, and all of us working together in a spirit of cooperative and open communication. He stated in a recent survey which was done by SD 60, safety was a priority. SD 60 is a wonderful school district. He hoped that people understand that before you say something to make sure you know what you are talking about. There is not a school in the district that he is not proud of. There is a hardworking teaching staff, hardworking support staff, and administrators. Curriculum is not an issue. He stated there were 38,000 mailings sent out by SD 60 and only 2,700+ responses were received. He stated student voices need to be heard. He encouraged Mayor Gradisar to develop a youth council. This could be done by getting representatives from each high school, including School District No. 70, and talk to them at least quarterly.

See what they tell you about the perception of their community. He stated he has had communications with the top 25 students for years, who are leaving Pueblo to get an education. He asked them if they would like to return to Pueblo and their answer was "yes, but they have to earn a living". This is why we lose our best and brightest. We don't have opportunities for them to stay. Will they retire and someday come back--probably so. He stated we need to do something in this community in a collaborative model. The four high schools, which the survey has recommended, are not going to be comprehensive high schools. For example, one could be health curriculum and another could be IT curriculum. The parameter by the survey consultant indicated there had to be a parameter of 7-18% return. SD 60's survey return calculated at 6.6%. He stated the SD 60 Board will be meeting. He felt the Board needs to approach the community for a bond. He stated schools Statewide, as well as nationwide, have problems, noting public schools were built in the mid-1950s. He felt SD 60 is at a crossroads. He felt they are heading in the right direction. He stated they need to get a dollar figure that could be sold to the community in the bond issue. Education is a priority and our youth are a priority. They deserve the best education that they can receive and the best facilities. He stated as far as where they go from here will depend on the ballot question and if the City of Pueblo will support a bond for new schools. He stated they need everybody's help to make this happen. He stated that SD 60 was graded at a "C", "D", and "F". Does this mean that the curriculum programs are "C", "D", and "F"? He stated "absolutely not". They have a great curriculum. He stated Pueblo is a great community and has great resources and great opportunities, but we need to keep our best and brightest here and we need to develop a job market. He stated on-line curriculum has taken 43% of the students. He stated what you miss with the on-line education is the socialization.

Mr. Latino stated this community needs a strategic plan of where we are going. He felt the community hasn't recovered from the different layoffs and downsizing of employment, but felt that we could still move in a positive direction. We need to come together as one.

Mr. Latino reported the Pillars of Unity held their 3rd annual summit. It was sparsely attended on Saturday. It had an excellent agenda dealing with mental health and recreational marijuana use. He wondered how do we get people to attend such an event.

Mr. Wiseman stated it was a good conference and a lot of information was provided. The two speakers set the tone on how we can do our own future. He enjoyed it. He stated there was a small amount of people and he hoped something could be built on for next year. He stated the one common thing he heard was image and how we feel about ourselves in Pueblo, and this is what the speakers were trying to talk about. He encouraged the Pillars of Unity to do it again next year and maybe we can help you increase the numbers.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no future items for the next PACOG meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further regular business before PACOG, the meeting was adjourned at 1:26 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday, July 25, 2019, at 12:15

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p.m., at the Pueblo County Emergency Operations Center, 101 West 10th Street, 1st Floor
Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Louella R. Salazar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L".

Louella R. Salazar
PACOG Recording Secretary

LRS