Minutes of the Board of County Commissioners Meeting, held on August 5, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. in the Commissioners Chambers, Alamosa County Services Center, 8900 Independence Way, Alamosa, CO 81101.

Members Present: Darius Allen, Chair
Marianne Dunne, Vice-Chair
Mike Yohn, Commissioner
Gigi Dennis, County Administrator
Jason Kelly, County Attorney
Brittney DeHerrera, Chief Financial Officer
Belina Ramirez, Deputy Clerk

Call the Meeting to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

Approval of the Agenda

Delete Board of Equalization hearing due to them requesting an administrative denial, add Special Events Permit fee waiver, and addition of ratification of CDPHE Amendment for Task Order #4.

m/s Dunne/Yohn motion to approve the Agenda of August 5, 2015 with amendments
Motion was approved unanimously.

Approval of General Business/Minutes

Regular Minutes-July 22, 2015
Public Hearing—Michael & Immaculate Wesley

m/s Yohn/Allen motion to approve the Minutes of July 22, 2015
Motion was approved with Dunne abstaining due to being absent

Public Comment

Approval of Consent Agenda

MOA Rio Grande County STEPP Tobacco Program
Ratification of CDPHE Amendment for Task Order #4
Airport Manager/Emergency Manger Appointment

m/s Yohn/Dunne motion to approve Consent Agenda
Motion was approved unanimously.
Public Hearing

Gary Tuttle and Rachel Baird were present. Applicant Auror Solar Brian Walsh

Commissioner Yohn: This is pretty straightforward but he has a concern of roads put in the second part as a waiver. Why are we including this?

Gary Tuttle: They asked for it and we agreed because they have had discussions with Road & Bridge Supervisor and are in agreement to repair during and after project. This was specific and it would handle the needs of roads.

Rachael Baird: It would be written into the permit itself so it will ensure the condition of roads. They received a letter from Road & Bridge that outlines what roads need to be addressed. It is not a portion of application because it is a term of the permit itself like a Special Use. They will have to agree to it for a valid permit.

Brian Walch: He did work with Tim DeHerrera. They came up with a plan to turn left on County Lane 6 and to 106. It is better and we agreed to it. This is pretty standard with all their projects. They video tape the roads before and after so it returns to as is or better than before.

Commissioner Yohn: Previous it has been that way and it turned out good.

Commissioner Dunne: That was her concern too. She had a question about solar he stated they are at 98.6 production time which she was concerned with the rain it hasn't affect that much.

Brian Walch: They are still getting diffused light, still getting sunlight. It has been efficient and exceeded what they estimated in what it has generated. Tri-State went out with an RFP and Xcel requested PUC for an RFP and were denied because there was a solar garden plan more favorable. They are hoping it will go through this year. Tri-State did go forward with an RFP and they were chosen in Eastern Colorado where they were approved for a wind project. They are struggling with transmission problem. They are working to help make this happen. This is the largest problem. They need more capacity out of Alamosa.

Commissioner Dunne: We are aware of the transmission problem.

Commissioner Allen: He would encourage their employees to go down paved roads to avoid dirt roads to avoid dust to the houses there. What have you heard on transmission?

Brian Walch: He heard they will reconductor where it would provide a little load constraint. He is not sure what the timeline is but it will help. Best solution is to bring in from north or east. This would involve replace towers. It is long and time consuming to build a transmission line. The best solar source is in the Valley.

Commissioner Dunne: He did mention redundancy what could you recommend to us if something happened to us in Poncho Pass that we were cut off someway so we could be solar sufficient in the Valley.

Brian Walch: You do generate more than you use. It is conditional to daytime and weather. Need baseload for evenings.

Commissioner Dunne: The technology for storing isn't there.
Brian Walch: Lithium ion batteries are out there for storage. It is coming along. They lose the ability over the years. There is also the flow battery that is emerging.

Gigi Dennis: You said sufficient for the Valley but you meant for Alamosa.

Brian Walch: Yes not enough during the summer for irrigation. If all 5 projects came on we would have enough power for irrigation.

List of Exhibit

1. Staff report completed by Gary Tuttle

m/s Yohn/Dunne motion to approve the waiver request for Aurora Solar LLC
Motion was approved unanimously.

Special Events Permit

Melanie Woodward and Catherine Brown were present.

Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust has applied for a liquor license for their annual fundraiser event. This will be held September 13th from 1-5pm at the Gilmore Ranch.

Rachel Baird: Every year we waive the application fee of $120 for their annual fundraiser event. They would like you to do this again.

Commissioner Yohn: This is a great event and good fundraiser. He appreciates all the work to get it done.

Commissioner Dunne: She appreciates the work you do with Headwaters and Trust. This is our small token of appreciation of waiving the permit fees.

Catherine Brown: They are a nonprofit based in Del Norte. They work with private landowners to help them conserve their land and water through a Conservation easement. They have a recorded deed that buys the development rights and dissolves it so the land can never be subdivided and the water cannot be sold. It is preserved for scenic beauty, wildlife habitat, and agricultural productivity. It cannot be sold. They have 35 easements. They have a Rio Grande initiative to conserve acres around the Rio Grande. They are excited to celebrate this. They have a silent auction, The Drifters play, and have great local food.

Commissioner Allen: What is your goal for the event?

Catherine Brown: They have a “Save the ranch campaign” it costs $25 an acre to save a ranch. Last year we funded the Rainbow Trout Ranch. They are going to try and raise $25000. They already have some matching pledges. They meet a lot of new people.

m/s Yohn/Dunne motion to approve Liquor License with fee waived for Rio Grande Headwaters
Motion was approved unanimously.

They started on electronic death system. There are a few hiccups but they are getting through it. Their Conference will be held September 15th & 16th for motor vehicle and the Secretary of State will be here. They have it at the Inn of the Rio Grande.
Gigi Dennis: What does SOT stand for?

Melanie Woodward: Specific Ownership Tax. Fees on vehicles are based on the weight and the taxable value. The taxable value is where the SOT comes in. Trucks are more expensive because they weigh more and are harder on the roads.

Gigi Dennis: This revenue collected does this all stay in county or does part go to state?

Melanie Woodward: Part of it goes to the State. A portion of license fees, ownership tax, marriage license, death records, motor vehicle fees, and SOT goes to the State. The only thing that stays here is website fees and recording fees.

m/s Dunne/Yohn motion to accept Clerk & Recorder’s report
Motion was approved unanimously.

CCOERA

Jake Kuijper Executive Director was present.

A CCOERA packet was presented and reviewed. We are in the third quarter of 2015. The Board has authorized a fee waiver. They have been able to offer this for the last 4-5 years. This amounts to $650,000 in the aggregate. Over the years as they have grown they have to fund managers and lobbying for the best mutual fund. They introduced fee cap which is currently $175,000 from both plans. You have 20 plus members who benefit from that. Hub International offers other products. The biggest one that is utilized other than health is the dental product.

Participant elected board of 7 board members and 5 county elected. Independent tax counsel is Holland & Hart. Independent record keeper is Empower Retirement (JP Morgan and Great West merged and formed Empower). Independent investment advisor is Innovest Portfolio Solutions.

Commissioner Yohn: The 457 voluntarily only has 15% participant would it be beneficial to them to get in?

Jake Kuijper: They struggle is with young people with the 1 year wait eligibility they get their wages then they see 4% removed. They live paycheck to paycheck. They cannot voluntary put money into it. It is best to get in the plan right away because if they wait it makes it a little bit tougher. Some employers offer incentives for long time employees such as offer of 1% added to their 457.

Gigi Dennis: We have a lot of nurses on contract are they eligible for the 457.

Jake Kuijper: He will look into it.

Department of Human Services

Personnel Adjustment Request

For the LEAP program they have a seasonal LEAP worker that starts around October and finishes in the middle of May. The Department receives an annual LEAP allocation to administer the program. In the years past the allocation has been $61,169 for administrative costs. The seasonal worker has been paid on an hourly basis with no benefits. She would like to transition this to a full time position. This would enable us to use this position for the gear down and the ramp up process of LEAP after May 1st. This
would also enable us to use this position to handle a small caseload of Medicaid cases. That portion of time would be billed to Medicaid. Currently we are pulling another staff person and the supervisor to do the gear and ramp up process for LEAP. The LEAP Program is 100% federally funded position. In this current Fiscal year I am estimating that we will have spent $39,580 leaving approximately $11,450.49. If we don’t use the entire funds they go back to other counties. It basically is use or lose.

Commissioner Yohn: How do you track employee’s time for Medicaid and LEAP?

Catherine Salazar: They do a timesheet that they track the time to the respective programs.

Commissioner Dunne: Does La Puente do LEAP as well or is it through your office.

Catherine Salazar: La Puente has a different program Colorado Energy Outreach where citizens like ourselves can donate towards this and they distribute the funds. Ultimately they try to draw down the federal funds first then refer them to La Puente if they do not qualify for LEAP.

Commissioner Yohn: The LEAP position some people like to work part time are you going to be able to find someone.

Catherine Salazar: She is going to offer this full time position to the seasonal worker Leroy Sanchez but he may not take it. She does have several employees within the department that are interested.

m/s Yohn/Dunne motion to approve personnel Adjustment Request
Motion was approved unanimously.

Rocky Mountain Counseling Group

A few months you signed this contract for Nurturing parent program with San Juan House but that individual closed her business so Alyson Combs and Casey Garcia that worked with her formed their own business called Rocky Mountain Counseling Group. They had to adjust contract to 11 month contract because they already paid one month to San Juan House.

m/s Yohn/Dunne motion to approve Rocky Mountain Counseling Group
Motion was approved unanimously.

Rocky Mountain Counseling Life skills

m/s Dunne/Yohn motion to approve Life Skills Program
Motion was approved unanimously.

Core Services Plan 2015-2016

The biggest changes are if the allocations increase. They have received an allocation of $12,342 increase.

m/s Yohn/Dunne motion to approve Core Services Plan 2015-2016
Motion was approved unanimously.

MOU CDHS
This is between Alamosa County and the State Department of Human Services. The last MOU was for two years. This is for annually. This is to administer Colorado Works and Child Care Assistance Program. It is a statutory requirement to have a MOU.

m/s Yohn/Dunne motion to approve MOU CDHS
Motion was approved unanimously.

WORKSESSION

Alamosa County Surveyor

Dan Russell was present. He settles disputes of county boundaries. He provides assistance through Land Use and the Assessor more than anyone else. He is available to public. He reviews plats for part of the County process. He checks for accuracy which normally he doesn’t research intensively unless he is aware of an issue. He looks for mistakes in maps. Having a checking tool is the most important thing for the County. He is active in the State Surveyor Association.

Gigi Dennis: How much time do you put in a month?

Dan Russell: He is on call full time. 1 to 2 plats a month which involves a couple of hours so maybe total involvement less than 20 hours a month. Actual survey work for Alamosa County is not funded for office, survey equipment, or vehicles. The County sometimes hires his private office for work but you probably go through Reynolds Engineering more than him. It is a busy year they have seen a lot more than any other year. That is a good sign.

Gigi Dennis: Do you have only old plats that belong to the county. They are looking at some properties.

Dan Russell: He should have digital images of every plat.

Alamosa County Fire Protection District

Greg Higel was present.

Alamosa County had an MOU with the City of Alamosa but in 1991 they formed the Fire Protection District. The County is split into two districts. Alamosa Fire covers everything 3 south of the north side of the river and south of the river. Mosca-Hooper covers the rest. The District has a MOU with Zapata for 15 years and this year they wanted to cancel it. They went into agreement with them for a tanker truck if they took care of it and it exploded so they decided not to go with us. They have a 5 member board split into the districts. They are concentrating on upgrading the equipment. They pay cash for their equipment so they have no debt.

Commissioner Allen: They coordinate with Carmel District real well.

Greg Higel: They work with all districts real good. They respond very well, if any problems it is usually dispatch.

Commissioner Allen: You did good job for the Town of La Jara.

Gigi Dennis: Are you all volunteer?
Greg Higel: Mosca-Hooper is all strictly volunteer. Alamosa is paid. They are not responding to so much fires anymore but auto accidents, extractions, and rescues. The board works real well. It takes the stress away.

Commissioner Yohn: What a difference a moist year makes. It is a better position we are in.

Greg Higel: They talked about this last meeting with all the weeds they are gearing up for fires in the spring.

Gigi Dennis: She asked if they are going to put up a sign for their future Rio Grande Water Conservation building.

Gigi Dennis: Is that something you would like?

Gigi Dennis: With the Commissioners working on the 1 cent sales tax they have had feedback with the 12th judicial that people think we are already building it.

Commissioner Allen: If you can put up something that says the “future home of Rio Grande Water Conservation”. You can even put up a picture of the future building.

La Puente

Lance Cheslock and John Reesor were present. La Puente started in 1982 and it was the first rural shelter in the 50 states. That is very unique. Over the years the community has supported their needs. Emergency needs, looking at rehabilitation, and development services. On the emergency side they have the shelter and the food bank. They develop families to be more self-sufficient more sustainable resources for people through Adelante. They have Valley Education garden where they are trying to get children to reach for nutritional foods. Before they were helping 1,000 people when we started the prevention program we saw the numbers drop to 600-700 people. They currently help 1200 families for the year.

PALS Children’s Program is an outgrowth of a family program. Great partnership with Department of Human Services who refer most of these kids to this program. They engage children who are homeless or open DNN cases to stabilize and offset active hardship in the child’s family.

Adelante they help 14-15 families. They are predominantly from Alamosa but are from around the valley. Most are referred through DHS or coming out of La Puente.

They have a strong partnership with DHS and SLV Behavioral Health.

They have a new initiative emerging with people living out in the dirt roads of southern part of the valley that live in homes with no electricity or no water. They are trying to provide a safety net for them.

La Puente is primarily supported by donations, the coffee shop, and churches. 70% of funding is federal and some is from AmeriCorps with 65-70 hours of volunteer service. It is tough recruitment because we don’t have a full staff. AmeriCorps at the State level only support projects that improve graduation rates so they pulled poverty off the table so it is hard to recruit people now. They are trying to strengthening their program. There is a tide shifting about homelessness being hard to motivate. There is some entitlement issues as well.

Food Bank
John Ressor was present. Thanks for the allocation of money that has been given to the Food Bank. In 2014 they had 12,260 people in the San Luis Valley that are helped through their network. 60% of these were children. Only 12% actually use the maximum limit allowed. They allow people to come in 6 times a year. In the last 9 months they helped 3,858 people for Alamosa. Their greatest needs is they see a nutritional deficit so they need to increase the nutritional value they are giving the people. Funds they receive are go to buying more nutritional food. They are looking to partner with farmers to meet that need.

Lance Cheslock stated the warehouse distributes food for the other counties in the Valley. They use the warehouse for holding for emergency situations. The Food Bank was active in the fires for La Jara and the Salmonella outbreak. They got a confirmation that they will be getting blankets and hygiene kits for emergency needs. If they have things available they assist. They helped provide food for those that were searching for the missing teenager.

John Ressor: With the teenager missing they provided 700 energy bars for the rescuers.

Lance Cheslock: They like to tell people about how the Food Bank warehouse came about. How it was built with many help.

Commissioner Yohn: Do you coordinate with DHS with LEAP. Are you servicing the same client?

John Ressor: Our program is the Energy Outreach Colorado where they get a grant of $500,000 a year for utility assistance. They are able to help individuals that don’t qualify for LEAP because their income is high but their income isn’t high enough to pay their bill. They do help people that receive LEAP but still are not able to pay the entire amount. They communicate with DHS if they have a question or if a person is eligible or not.

Commissioner Yohn: You could be helping the same person?

Lance Cheslock: They look for the denial from LEAP. They do help some who have arrears. They do turn people away. They are supported by people who donate through Xcel and they are the vendor for this.

Staff Updates

Adjourn

There being no further business, the Regular Meeting of the Board of Alamosa County Commissioners was adjourned.

ATTEST:

Belina Ramirez, Deputy Clerk

Darius Allen, Chairman

Marianne Dunne, Vice-Chair

Mike Yohn, County Commissioner
Minutes of the Public Hearing for 1041 Permit Waiver Request for Auror Solar was held on August 5, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. in the Commissioners Chambers, Alamosa County Services Center, 8900 Independence Way, Alamosa, CO 81101.

Members Present: Darius Allen, Chair
Marianne Dunne, Vice-Chair
Mike Yohn, Commissioner
Gigi Dennis, County Administrator
Jason Kelly, County Attorney
Brittney DeHerrera, Chief Financial Officer
Belina Ramirez, Deputy Clerk

Gary Tuttle and Rachel Baird were present. Applicant Aurora Solar –Brian Walsch was present.

Waiver Request for Submission Requirements
In the Blanca Vista Application for a HB 1041 Final Permit the applicant has requested several waivers of submission requirements, in addition to the waivers which are normally granted to solar energy plants. These waiver requests are for information normally required in Section 6.303(2)(a) of the HB 1041 Regulations. The applicant contends that these requirements are not applicable to their PV solar facility.

The following Final Application submission requirements are at issue:

6.303(2)(a)(iv)(A-C) Description of need for project
A. Describe briefly why the public convenience and necessity require the facility of the size and nature proposed be constructed and the site proposed.
B. Sources of demographic and economic data and methods of analysis.
C. Market function (i.e. what user needs and patterns will be project fulfill).
Comment
The market need for this project will be based on the future power purchases of large scale power utilities, such as Xcel Energy. Obtaining an interest in the land and having the HB 1041 permit will put the applicant in a better position to respond to a future Request for Proposal from a utility. Staff agrees that a market study is not applicable.

6.303(2)(a)(ix) Description of socio-economic environment (impact area)
A. Characteristics of the existing population
B. Current Employment
C. Inventory local governments and special districts providing services in base areas.
D. Housing
E. Existing transportation network
Comment
The socio-economic and infrastructure environment of Alamosa County is adequate to support the construction and operation of this solar energy facility with no impacts to the present citizens, as shown by the existing solar energy facilities. The applicant is in discussions with the County Road Supervisor regarding the condition and maintenance of access roads to the site during construction. A permit condition to address this issue will be presented to the Commissioners at
the hearing. The staff agrees that this inventory and analysis of the socio-economic environment is not applicable.

Staff recommends you waive these two submission requirements.

In 2009 the Board also waived these same two submission requirements.

Rachel Baird: It is pretty basic. They know our demographics so we don’t need Iberdrola to research this for us.

Brian Walch: We own and operate SLV Solar project that is adjacent the proposed solar project. They did request these requirements waived in 2009 and were granted then so we are asking you to grant them again. The project is 50mgw adjacent to the existing project. Why we are expanding is because we have existing transmission so lower impact to existing line and additional site control over land they didn’t use for existing project. Xcel was the driver for the expansion. we have had great success with our existing project.

Commissioner Allen asked if anyone is favor of or opposition to this waiver

No comment was made.

There being no further business, the Public Hearing for 1041 Permit Waiver Request for Aurora Solar was adjourned.

ATTEST:

Belina Ramirez, Deputy Clerk

Darius Allen, Chair

Marianne Dunne, Vice-Chairman

Mike Yohn, County Commissioner