

Sherri Cassidy, CPFO, Chief Financial Officer
&
Ryan Parsell, Chief Public Information Officer

Board of County Commissioners
Holly Williams, District 1
Carrie Geitner, District 2
Stan VanderWerf, District 3
Longinos Gonzalez, Jr., District 4
Cami Bremer, District 5

CITIZEN OUTREACH GROUP

Citizen Outreach Group - October 12, 2020

Members Present Via Virtual/Teleconference

Meeting: Stephanie Adams, Sarah Brittain Jack, Rafael Chanza, CheyAnne Clemons,
David Couch, Kelvin Dean, Ed Dills, Arthur Glynn, Fadil Lee,
Roland Rainey

Excused Members: Ross Robbins

Unexcused Members:

County Staff Present: Sherri Cassidy, Kenny Hodges, Ryan Parsell, Deanna Ruschioni,
Nikki Simmons

Commissioners Present:

Guests: Stephen Goodwin, Crystal LaTier, Susan Wheelan, Fadi Youkhana

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m.

Administrative Items

- 1) Stephanie Adams, COG Chairperson, introduced and welcomed Sarah Brittain Jack, the newly appointed District 2 member to the Citizen Outreach Group.
- 2) Members absent at the October 12, 2020 COG meeting: A motion was made to accept the absence of Ross Robbins as an excused absence; the motion was seconded and all present were in favor (10-0), with one member absent.
- 3) A motion was made to approve the August 17, 2020 meeting minutes as written; it was seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously by all members present (10-0), with one member absent.

2021 Preliminary Balanced Budget & Critical Needs; 5-Year Financial Roadmap 2021-2025

Nikki Simmons, County Controller, provided an overview of the 2021 Preliminary Balanced Budget presentation which was presented to the BoCC on October 6, 2020 during the 2021 Budget Hearing Meeting #1. This presentation can be viewed on the El Paso County website at:

<https://assets-admin.elpasoco.com/wp-content/uploads/Budget/BudgetHearings/2021BudgetHearings/2021PreliminaryBalancedBudget/2021-Preliminary-Balanced-Budget-Presentation.pdf>;

CARES Allocation / Budget Update

All CARES Budget Updates, and Monthly CARES Spending Reports can be viewed on the El Paso County website at: <https://admin.elpasoco.com/financial-services/budget-finance/covid-19-cares-funding/>;

COVID Business Relief Grants

Crystal LaTier, Executive Director of Economic Development provided an update to the COVID Business Relief Grants. The El Paso County Regional Business Relief Fund's objective was to respond to the economic disruption due to COVID-19 in our small business and nonprofit community. Through the CARES Act Allocation, they set up a competitive grant application program. The presentation went before the BoCC on October 6, 2021 and can be viewed on the El Paso County website at: <https://assets-admin.elpasoco.com/wp-content/uploads/Budget/COVID19CARESFunding/EPC-Individual-Assistance-Grants-and-Regional-Business-Relief-Fund-October-6-2020.pdf>;

- Offers up to \$20K grant assistance to small businesses and nonprofits as employers in El Paso County - grant capital that they do not have to pay back
- Application Collection: Application opened 8/12/20; application closed 9/7/20; announced awards 10/7/20; and distribution of funds will be on 10/15/20
- Over 1,045 small businesses and nonprofits applied
- Partnered with CO Enterprise Fund –assisted with the marketing, application collection, and online platform and portal
- Application Evaluation 3-tier Process: Submission; Colorado Enterprise Fund Team (CEF) evaluates using evaluation rubric for first round of scores for applications; these scores then went to the Economic Development Oversight Committee (EDOC) for further evaluation & they recommended 864 applicants to receive a grant award
- Provide an Economic Impact Report & Pulse Check Reporting Overview
- Support Services: SBDC – Leading Edge Series, and Pikes Peak Workforce Center – referrals to the Business Relations Division
- Up to \$14M to 864 businesses & nonprofits as employers

COVID Response / Public Health

Susan Wheelan, Public Health Director for El Paso County provided an update regarding the COVID-19 response. In 2019, the Board of County Commissioners supported the vision the Public Health department had in building the critical public health infrastructure, and the ten addition full-time employees were the first ones to be leveraged in the COVID-19 response.

COVID-19 Response and Recovery Efforts

- Public Health has a statutory responsibility of leading our County in the COVID19 pandemic response and recovery
- First Covid-19 confirmed case reported on March 6th
- First death of the County and State recorded on March 13th
- The El Paso County Board of County Commissioners declared a local state of emergency on March 14th
- 78% full time Public Health employees were reassigned and deployed to work on infectious disease emergency response and recovery efforts
- Public Health staff worked with first responders and were required to be trained in the National Incident Management System since 911
- Activated Incident Command structure February 14th
- Since March 11th Public Health has been operating under unified command with the Pikes Peak Office of Emergency Management

- Led the charge in organizing and mobilizing partners and resources from government, for profits, nonprofits, as well as volunteers and the community - setting up staffing, an Incident Command System, an Emergency Coordination Center, a Joint Information Center which includes the Pikes Peak Communication Network and activating their agency's continuity of operations plans.
- Launched an innovative and interactive public COVID data dashboard – the Public Health Office of Data and Analytics have been developing models and projections working actively with hospitals, researching and studying COVID guidance and science to inform the citizens through data & analysis and research. Working with cross sectors from businesses, K-12 schools, higher education, long-term care facilities and more.
- Translating Public Health orders, policies, and guidelines
- Providing low barrier COVID testing and strategies to quickly identify positive cases, investigate and conduct contact tracing, issue isolation and quarantine recommendations, and coordinate with clinical operations with health care partners.
- Established a regional recovery council with the Economic Development and Chamber, and together they help businesses obtain approval from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment to expand business operations through leading variance approvals and mitigation plans.

CARES Funding / Plans

- El Paso County Public Health received \$8.4M from El Paso County through the CARES Act
- Susan then elaborated on the use of these funds and plans

COVID data updated through a demonstration of Public Health's data dashboard

- Public Health's Chief Scientific Strategist, Stephen Goodwin, and Fadi Youkhana, Epidemiologist, provided an update and overview of the data dashboard

Preparation of COG Annual Report to BoCC

COG members reviewed the Annual Report to the El Paso County Board of County Commissioners which Stephanie Adams and Roland Rainey will present to the BoCC on October 22, 2020, and this report can be viewed on the El Paso County website at:

<https://assets-admin.elpasoco.com/wp-content/uploads/Budget/BudgetHearings/2021BudgetHearings/2021CriticalNeeds/Citizen-Outreach-Group-Presentation.pdf>;

It was decided in the October 12th COG meeting to cancel the meeting scheduled for November 16th, and after the Final Direction on the 2021 Budget from the BoCC on November 17th, Nikki will provide the COG with a summary of any changes from the 2021 Preliminary Balanced Budget to that budget. Once the final documents are together after the December 8th Budget Hearing meeting, she will provide those to the COG as well.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:00 a.m.