



Town of Parachute | City of Rifle | Town of Silt
Town of New Castle | City of Glenwood Springs
Town of Carbondale | Garfield County
Roaring Fork Transportation Authority
Colorado Mountain College

Board Meeting Minutes: Friday, May 13th, 2022, 12:30 p.m.

(In-person at the CMC Spring Valley Campus)

Board members attending

RFTA: Chair, Jason White
City of Glenwood Springs: Shelley Kaup We don't need to label an alternate when he/she is acting as a voting member
CMC: Sean Nesbitt
Garfield County: Tom Jankovsky
Town of Carbondale: Ben Bohmfalk
City of Rifle: Sean Strode

Board members not present

City of Glenwood Springs: Vice Chair, Ingrid Wussow
Town of New Castle: Secretary, Bruce Leland
I don't think we need to note the absence of alternates
Town of Silt: Keith Richel
Town of Parachute: Travis Elliot

Affiliate members present

Holy Cross Energy: Jenna Weatherred

Others attending

CLEER: Alice Laird, Maisa Metcalf, Stefan Johnson, Erica Sparhawk
RF Leadership Team: Leah Weiss

Call meeting to order:

Jason White called the meeting to order at 12:43 p.m.

Roll Call and Approval of agenda:

Jason White conducted roll call.

Jason White invited changes to the agenda, there were none.

Tom Jankovsky moved to approve the meeting agenda, Ben Bohmfalk seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Board Member and Public comment:

Jason White invited comments from the Board and Public.

Consent Agenda:

Approval of March 11th, 2022 minutes

March & April Financials

Tom asked questions related to the ReEnergize funding, which the staff helped clarify.

Tom added that the organization had spent 173% of the initial budgeted line item for Energy Management related to purchasing new software and hardware for building energy data. Tom asked if there was a need to increase the budget to reflect that.

Erica said she recommended that the board approve an amended budget before the end of the year. Then all amendments that might occur over the calendar year would be in one amended budget. Alternatively, the board could approve an amended budget at board meetings throughout the year.

Tom Jankovsky moved to approve the Consent Agenda, Ben Bohmfalk seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Program Updates and Information:

Partners in Energy Plan Update

Maisa said the CLEER team hosted the first public meeting in a scheduled series on Wednesday. It has been five years since GCE adopted the initial Partners in Energy plan, so it's good timing to update it. There has been excellent coverage of the update and the process in local media. Public attendees commented on the vision and goals at the first meeting.

ReEnergize Update

Maisa said that over 90 families have applied for the program since it launched in March, which is a substantial number of applicants. In addition, the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) has just started performing energy audits, and the updated financials at the July board meeting will reflect the progress of the projects receiving funding rebates through the program.

Additionally, Maisa said that many families had qualified for programs like WAP and CARE without tapping into the funding for ReEnergize from Garfield County.

Maisa said the team would do another big marketing push for the program in the Fall as people are starting to think about Winter and heating needs.

Maisa shared examples of projects that involved health and safety measures.

Maisa also provided other projects involving energy efficiency measures, such as whole home insulation and new appliances like boilers.. In addition, NWCCOG always performs a combustion appliance zone test to ensure there are no health & safety issues in the home.

Maisa said that NWCCOG is delighted with the ReEnergize program. They operate in other counties as well, but Garfield County's demand is much higher because the other counties don't have a community-based organization like GCE marketing the program and raising awareness. NWCCOG noted that they had 25 homes apply and qualify for WAP last year in Garfield County; this year, they already have 47 homes.

Jenna said that Holy Cross Energy (HCE) had allocated \$1 per meter in service territory for LMI programs, which might be an area for collaboration between HCE and GCE.

Maisa said that the success of ReEnergize is leading other counties, including Eagle and Summit, to reach out to CLEER, seeking to follow our example and implement similar programs in their areas.

Maisa added that the participants in ReEnergize are widely distributed throughout the geography of Garfield County, so the team is very pleased with this robust participation from all regions.

Maisa said that Heidi with CLEER has also been performing many commercial walkthroughs for GCE and working with GCE members to ensure they are on the proper utility rate after a rate change with Xcel. Moving to the appropriate rate has helped GCE members save dramatically on their electricity bills, in some cases as much as 60-80%.

Upcoming Events

BikeThere

Maisa said that this year the BikeThere program is partnering with the Library District to promote Bike to Work Day on June 22nd. Each library branch in the County will be allowing people to sign up to win an eBike in a drawing another organization I work with learned that they can't hold a raffle without state licensing. So we have drawings instead. . There will also be breakfast stations at RFTA Park and Rides in Glenwood Springs and Carbondale.

June 1st: Mountain Fleets are Going Electric Webinar

Stefan said CLEER would host a webinar on commercial fleets with vans and shuttles. Jason White said this would be a significant opportunity for RFTA's fleet since they have many staff/utility vehicles in this category. Stefan noted that one big theme emerging in the coming years will be 3rd party contracting for EV fleets, where a company provides the infrastructure and vehicles for a monthly subscription. This minimizes financial and technical risk for the fleet operators. Sean Nesbitt said that CMC had been approached by one such company about this business service, called BlueDot.

COSSA Event on Rural Solar & Economic Development

Maisa said the CLEER team is working with Colorado Solar & Storage Association (COSSA) and Club20 to host an event to educate local governments on community and utility solar details and economic benefits in their regions. The event's purpose is to address concerns emerging from neighboring counties about the compatibility of solar with agriculture, and end-of-life recycling procedures for used equipment, among other matters. Maisa said the CLEER team hopes to have Tom Jankovsky attend and participate as a keynote speaker for the event.

Charge Ahead Grant Window

Stefan reminded GCE Members that the next grant window for funding for EV Charging stations runs from 5/23 through 6/24. Stefan is working with Frank Coberly to apply for a grant to get new EV Charging Stations for the Garfield County Admin building in Rifle and would be happy to work with any other GCE members to pursue funding.

Navigator Update

Alice thanked all the board members for the work going into the update and transition for hardware and software for advanced Energy monitoring. All utility data is now being transferred to the company EnergyCap, and Mike Ogburn and Heidi McCullough are going to various locations with the company NET to fix the associated hardware.

Jason said he would be trying to figure out the right RTFA staffer to include regarding this process.

CLEER Staff Update

Alice announced that CLEER hired a new staff member, Christina Matzl, who lives in New Castle and just graduated from Colorado Mountain College with a Bachelor's degree in Sustainability Studies. She is helping lead the organizing around the updated Partners in Energy Action Plan update.

Strategic Planning for 2023:

Jason introduced Leah Weiss, the Facilitator for the Strategic Planning Session.

Leah shared that she is now working with the RF Leadership Council.

Leah said the desired outcomes for the meeting were the following:

- Review and update GCE's Vision & Mission
- Review existing Goals and update as needed
- Review Budget and establish board working groups for certain topics.

Ground Rules

Leah asked the Board about ground rules to guide the session, and the board came up with the following.

- No Politics (Tom)
- Do your best to see other perspectives (Jason)
- Consider views of GCE members not present, including Parachute, New Castle, and Silt (Alice)

Review of GCE Results to Date

Maisa said it was important to remember how far the organization has come since 2009. Cumulative results include the following.

- 1500 homes assisted
- 400 business assisted
- \$2 million in savings
- \$500K in loans from DOE Revolving Loan Fund Program

Erica said it was important to note that all loans have gotten paid off and that the loan fund started as only \$300K, so it has been a successful example of a growing, revolving loan fund.

Erica also said there is an increasing desire for design assistance in connecting affordable housing with high-performance construction.

Jason asked how many households and businesses there are in Garfield County.

Maisa said there are approximately 24k households in Garfield County.

Erica said the number of businesses is tough to pin down, particularly differentiating between brick and mortar businesses and businesses operated from the home/remotely.

Renewable Energy Results for Solarize 2021

- 400 Participants in Solarize
- 110 installed systems
- 32 homes included battery storage
- Total of 858 kW

Transportation

Alice said she had participated in many statewide calls, and the State and the Colorado Energy Office and other participants were frequently impressed with the amount of EV Charging stations in this rural region, mainly due to GCE and CLEER.

Economic Development

- \$2.4 million in energy cost savings per year
- Jason pointed out that GCE budget is dwarfed by annual savings.

Review and discuss Vision, Mission, and Goals

Leah said the Organization's Vision should generate images of the future and poised the question, "Does the GCE Vision still resonate?"

Jason said that he thought equity should be included in the statement and that "diversity" could refer to economic diversification and demographic diversity.

Tom asked what the shared definition of equitable was. Jason said it meant inclusive of all, regardless of income.

Alice said there is much talk in the City of Aspen and Pitkin County about climate and the REMP Fund, but this conversation often fails to include a holistic consideration of the region. Tom said that Garfield County is the human services and affordable housing agent for the Upper Valley, and the bottom line is that equity has always been foundational to GCE.

Sean Nesbit said he thought "Collaborative" was a keyword that underpins everything the organization does. However, he said he also wonders what it means to be a "national" leader and asked what the group's benchmark is.

Shelley said regional collaboration is what the group is about and makes it somewhat unique in its role with government, utilities, and industry.

Jenna asked to look at the Mission Statement and said that even if rebates are available and accessible to all, it does not make them truly equitable.

Ben said that his primary concern is what happens in our community, irrespective of what happens in the whole country.

Sean Strode said he thought "Innovative" seems a great descriptor applicable to the organization.

Erica said the organization has always been an innovator, not shying away from unusual strategies or pursuing new technologies, such as CNG, several years before electric transportation was on the rise.

Leah asked the group if it still made sense to include "Alternative Fuels" in the Mission.

Tom said he thought it still made sense with "electrification" included under Alternative Fuels. Shelley noted that Hydrogen could be an emerging alternative fuel, so she agreed it should still be included.

Leah said that at the next board meeting in July, there would be an updated draft of Vision and Mission reflecting the day's discussion.

Tom said he felt the word "innovative" was vital.

Maisa said she would nominate Bruce Leland to wordsmith the updated Vision and Mission as he is excellent with language.

Ben asked if the Mission statement needed to include "businesses" in addition to households.

Tom asked if "government" should also be included in the Mission statement.

Sean Strode asked if "tourism" also should be included or mentioned.

Sean Nesbitt expressed that he thought "resiliency" was vital and applied to more than just the economy. It's about having resilient communities, especially after the Lake Christine Fire.

Ben mentioned that he would be hesitant to move away from the emphasis on "economy" in the Mission statement as that component had been critical in keeping the organization together for so long.

Tom said he thought Alice had embraced the economic lens and considered the essential role of natural gas in the County's economy. Tom noted that Garfield has a very diverse economy compared to Eagle or Pitkin, which are almost exclusively reliant on tourism.

To sum up the conversation, Leah captured the following key takeaways.

- Broaden resiliency beyond the economy
- Don't de-emphasize "economy."
- Include more than just residents (businesses, governments, tourism)

Shelly asked if the group was ready to include reducing Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) in the mission statement.

Tom said that natural gas would be here for the next 100 years.

Alice said that the group has always valued a common ground to achieve results over the risk of potentially divisive language.

Tom said that the inclusion of the word "Environment" could be a good addition. Maybe language about a more resilient economy and environment.

The rest of the board members supported the inclusion of the word "Environment."

Report on quantitative progress towards goals from the Garfield County Energy Action Plan process

- 20% Efficiency above baseline for 2030

Shelley asked if this metric should be on a per capita metric to account for population growth.

Jenna said that HCE does an energy per capita calculation and total energy use for the region metric.

Jason said he was wary of getting caught into specific percentages as they are hard for the public to understand and hard to measure.

Sean Strode said it is still good to have benchmark targets.

Jenna said energy efficiency is difficult to track and that it would be good to look at how Xcel tracks energy efficiency.

Overall, there was broad agreement that this goal would have to be re-worked significantly.

Erica said that maybe the goal should look at the percentage or number of homes and businesses that received assistance with energy efficiency throughout Garfield County.

Shelley said that we knew there was an increase in energy use for the County and a more significant increase in population growth, so maybe a simple per capita measurement would be good.

Stefan said that the metric would also have to account for an increase in electrification for buildings and transportation, which will skew electricity usage data for efficiency.

- 25% reduction in petroleum from baseline by 2030 (versus 2009 baseline)

Jason said that vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is essential, especially regarding the employment-housing ratio.

Stefan said it would be tough to track total petroleum usage, but it would be straightforward to follow the County's breakdown of alternative fuel vehicles. Stefan asked about the ability to collect DMV data to get the total number of registrations in the County.

Ben said he liked tracking the number and fleet percentage of alternative fuel vehicles in Garfield County.

Stefan said that he felt like including the VMT/transit/walking/biking piece of transportation was still really important.

Erica said there could be a goal around helping RFTA and the transit service in Parachute to increase ridership.

- 35-50% Renewable Energy by 2030

Alice asked if this goal should mirror the energy goals of the utilities in the County.

Ben said this goal should be tied to the Solar + Storage Plan (number of MW installed, for example). Maybe a goal for rooftop solar, a goal for utility/community scale, and a goal for storage.

Jenna asked for all goals to be SMART goals: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.

Ben said that these goals should be shaped to what is in control of GCE members and not to factors far outside of GCE control—for example, focusing on municipal fleet electrification versus industrial policy to help with battery supply constraints, focusing on local solar + storage developments, not Xcel's energy transition across their entire service territory.

Erica said that it could also be good to set a goal related to new construction building codes.

Background information on budget trends

Alice said that GCE transitioned from starting with a Block grant to a self-sustaining entity, and this model has been very successful for a long time. However, while successful, it's still been very challenging to sustain. The original idea was a cost-share model to fund a collaborative entity like GCE.

Alice said it's been huge to add an affiliate contributing board member in HCE, but the organization's funding has been roughly the same (\$315k) for a long time.

Tom said that the funding has been going downhill, accounting for inflation. Tom said finding more partners like HCE or re-adding the Library District could be promising avenues to secure more funding. Tom noted that Garfield County would likely be coming back with \$300k for GCE in 2023. Tom added that the organization's self-sustaining structure for over ten years should be celebrated.

Discussion on updating funding approaches and establish a working group

Sean Nesbitt said that showing the cost-savings benefits is crucial for pitching to boards and CFOs regarding an increased conversation to GCE. Sean said a 5% increased contribution from CMC was possible, and he would talk to his finance director about this possibility.

Ben said that he agreed with Sean and that the ability to show benefits to the various boards is essential for getting higher contributions. However, Ben added that he thought it made sense to base the contribution on a percentage of the municipality's budget versus just the population.

Jenna said that Walking Mountains Science Center in Eagle County has its Clean Business program, which is a nice revenue stream. Jenna said GCE could look into that example.

Alice said she would love to work with a working group to improve the organization's funding structure.

There was agreement that the Finance Committee (Jason, Ingrid, and Tom), plus hopefully Ben, would meet to make up the funding committee.

Identify topics for July strategic planning session

Revised vision & mission statement in July

CLEER staff will revise draft program goals

Board committee discussion on funding

Adjournment

Tom Jankovsky moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:01 p.m.; Ben Bohmfalk seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

GARFIELD CLEAN ENERGY COLLABORATIVE

DocuSigned by:
Jason White
By: _____
Jason White, Chairperson

DocuSigned by:
Bruce Leland
ATTEST: _____
Bruce Leland, Secretary

These minutes were reviewed and approved by a vote of the Garfield Clean Energy Board of Directors at its meeting held on July 8th, 2022.