**CDC Meeting Minutes**

**June 10, 2019**

**Chamber of Commerce conference room**

**Board In Attendance:** Jodi Scarpa, Matt DeGuise, Chris Smith, Ron Maes, Neal Johnson, Jim Garrett

**Guests:** JR Ford – Forest Health Timber Products, Bob Lynch – LPEA, John Finefrock – Pagosa SUN, Laura Lewis Marchino – Region 9, Mary Hunt – member, Mary Jo Coulehan – administration

A quorum was determined and the meeting called to order at 5:32 p.m. by president Jodi Scarpa.

There was no public comment

**LPEA & Biomass Presentation:** Bob Lynch & JR Ford

* LPEA started working on biomass as an alternative energy source six years ago. Ran into a number of roadblocks.
* **Current LPEA status** 
  + Tri-State contract 95% of power locally generated; 5% consumed by other alternative energy projects.
  + LPEA has a contract with Tri-State until 2050
  + LPEA interested in a buy-out from Tri-State either partially or in whole
* **Future LPEA status**
  + Board moved to see a change in the electric makeup goal of 50% carbon-free by 2030 and to keep rates low
  + Tri-State has a new CEO
  + The state of Colorado has a more aggressive alternative energy goal; however, they have calculated theirs from 2005, LPEA started theirs in 2018
  + There is buy-out pressure from not only LPEA but other co-ops
  + The LPEA by-laws were amended to reflect that there can be a partial buy-out at 50-80%.
  + Can receive electrical transmission from a variety of sources thereby cutting out the middle man and passing on the cost savings.
* Neal asked how they would finance the buy-out. Probably through a hedge fund which would work as a “cash deal”.
* Jim wanted to know what local groups could do. Bob indicated that Archuleta County has 3 reps on the LPEA board. Support looking at alternative buy-out, support resolutions by Town and County when an action needs to be taken.
* JR explained that his project started out as a forest restoration/fire mitigation project. However, found that they were needing to offset the high power from the machines that was being generated. They originally were producing 150 tons/day and 5 mega watts of power. Due to the delay of Tri-State buying the power, they have now scaled back to 30 tons/day and produce only 2.5 MW. LPEA’s main transmission line is right by the batch plant and it would have been perfect for an electric transmission tie-in.
* Numerous counties in Colorado can benefit from the fire mitigation and electric generation. Have identified 22 counties they could set up plants in. Distance in transport is a big key to profitability.
* Now they would build a gasifier to create biochar and brickets.
* Difference between Biochar and Charcoal: Charcoal is 40% volatile, biochar has 100% of the volatility removed. Can put it into the soil to prevent leeching. You can feed it to animals. The biochar binds the heavy metals and returns it to the soil and cleans the gut of the animal. There are tests going on now to add biochar to soil products and bring biochar back onto the market.
* This Pagosa plant would be the largest biochar plant if it can come online. There is a potential for 13-16 jobs.
* CDC could write a letter of support to help move the air quality permitting up the food chain and expedite the process.
* Right now they are testing biochar on 2000 head of cattle in Canada and 500 head in Nebraska. The results should be in soon.
* Neal moved that Jim prepare a letter of support for the work JR’s company is doing. Chris seconded. There was a discussion about the type of letter to be drafted. Chris withdrew his second and another motion was made. *Neal moved that Jim prepare a letter of support about the fire mitigation techniques for economic advantage that Forest Health Timber Products utilizes. Chris Smith seconded. Motion approved.*

**Consent Agenda**

Chris moved to approve the consent agenda, Ronnie seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

**Data Analytics**

Chris reported back out on his conversation with Mike Heraty. He feels strongly about conducting a detailed survey obtaining information about the people visiting our town to be used to attract the best people to town to enhance our economy. Ronnie suggested going back to the original reason we wanted the survey. Chris is to get with Jennie Green to see what kind of data she might have access to, what – if anything – they have done so far, and speak with Mike to see if he has suggestions or cost estimates.

**Board Nominations**

Deferred to next board meeting.

**Economic Outlook Luncheon Report out**

Mary Jo gave a general overview of the luncheon. We had about 47 people at the luncheon and we are waiting for the final online sales numbers. There will be money to give out. Jim motioned to split the profits between Rotary and the Arts Council, Neal seconded. There was discussion. Jim withdrew his motion based on the discussion. *Neal moved to split the profits 2/3 to Rotary and 1/3 to the PSAC, Jim seconded. Motion approved unanimously.*

**Broadband**

Since there were not any representatives from the BSM, the update was deferred until July. Chris asked if both parties carried liability. No one knew. It was determined that the contract should be amended to include each party carrying liability insurance. Laura Lewis Marchino will look at some templates and send to Jim. Jodi will speak with each party to inform of our decision about liability insurance.

**Region 9**

Laura gave an update on the discussions with the private sector and their intent to hire an economic development director with their best interests in mind but also working with the CDC. Laura has proposed several options. She will present these to the Town and the County at their joint meeting on June 25. She feels eventually that this position will come under the CDC with shared funding from the government and private entities.

**New Business**

Neal noted that he is still on the account at first Southwest Bank as is Jason Cox. The bank needs verification of current authorized signatures. *Chris moved to remove Jason Cox and Neal Johnson from the 1st Southwest bank signature card and add Jodi Scarpa and Jim Garrett. Ronnie seconded. Motion approved unanimously.* Mary Jo will work on getting the signature changed.

With no further business Chris motioned to adjourn, Matt seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

**Action Items**

* Letter of support regarding fire mitigation techniques supporting Forest Health Timber Products – Jim Garrett
* Final financial update for Economic Outlook Luncheon and disbursement of funds – Mary Jo Coulehan
* Speak with Jennie Green about data analytics findings so far and future plans – Chris Smith
* General liability templates to send to Jim Garrett – Laura Lewis Marchino
* Work on revising signature cards with 1st Southwest Bank once meeting minutes are approved in July – Mary Jo Coulehan