

Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc.
Board of Directors' Meeting
March 28, 2024, 3:30 p.m.
Neighborhood Center Card Room/Zoom Conference Call

Members present: Kate Anderson, Dannai Clayborn, Susan Geise, Andy Hunthausen, Trever Kirkland, Jerry Loendorf, Erin Lyndes, Bob Mullen, Daniel Pocha

Members absent: Bruce Day, Jen Gursky, Teri Lilletvedt, Niki Redford, Lindsey Richtmyer, Eric Schindler

Others present: Hayden Behm, Mindy Diehl, Diane Edgar, Steven Ferriter, Joanna Halland, Taya Hovan, Lori Ladas, Jean Leischner, Jim Marks, Kathy Marks, Ashley Peña-Larsen, Tom Robel

Call to Order/Roll Call: The meeting was called to order by Trever Kirkland at 3:31 p.m. and a quorum was present. No public comment was received.

Approval of Minutes

Daniel Pocha made the motion to approve the February 29, 2024, Board of Directors' meeting minutes and the January 25, 2024, Finance Committee meeting minutes. Andy Hunthausen seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report – Lori Ladas

Lori reminded all Board members that Board Self-Evaluation forms were included in packets this month and should be returned to Diane Edgar by April 15. Lori invited all Board members to Rocky's CDBG Open House, which will be held at the Neighborhood Center on April 4 from 9:00 a.m. until noon. This event will present options for the Neighborhood Center building determined through the city's planning grant. Kathy Marks and Steven Ferriter provided information regarding Rocky Presents Chopped. The event netted around \$25,000 this year, an increase over last year. More income was brought in through sponsorships and ticket sales this year, but staff time was a large expense. Also, the cost of food increased over previous years. The event seems to be gaining traction in the community and is becoming a signature event for Rocky. Emma Ramirez from Citystack Catering won the Chopped competition.

Lori spoke about Rocky's recent state monitoring, noting that this monitoring visit included a more extensive financial review than previous years. Rocky received positive feedback in Weatherization, where the Rocky program was acknowledged for outperforming the state in two categories. There were no findings in the CSBG or ESG programs. One finding in the LIHEAP program and others in Weatherization have all been corrected. The monitoring report included several suggestions, including a reminder that a needs assessment must be completed in 2024. Three board members who were absent during the meeting earlier this year when Lori provided Board training will require a follow-up session by the end of October. Several fiscal policies were recommended, though Lori noted that many are policies Rocky already follows due to Uniform Guidance. Providing additional financial reports to the Board was also recommended, and Lori noted that those reports will be developed in collaboration with WIPFLI.

Lori then addressed the topic of the board structure under the Bylaws. This conversation began at the January Board meeting, after a question from Broadwater County Commissioner Lindsey Richtmyer asking if a representative of the commission could be appointed to attend Rocky's Board meetings, due

to scheduling conflicts with present meeting times. At that time, several Board members expressed their opinion that attendance by commissioners was very important. Lindsey also shared that their county attorney advised her that commissioners should not serve as voting board members, only as liaisons. Lori discussed this advisement with the state during monitoring and they felt there was no conflict of interest with a commissioner serving on the Board of Directors. After discussion, the Board recommended that no changes be made to the bylaws at the present time regarding this topic. Lori noted that a bylaw review is required every five years, and this topic may be reviewed again during bylaw review.

Lori asked Kathy Marks to provide information regarding the United Way's plan to purchase the Helena Inn. In discussion with Jeff Buscher from the United Way of Lewis & Clark County, Kathy learned that the United Way has a \$4 million buy/sell agreement for the property and plans a fundraising campaign with a \$5 million goal. United Way staff asked Lori about the possibility of Rocky providing property management services for the site. The challenges of managing a building Rocky doesn't own were discussed. Board members were asked for their thoughts about it and expressed a lack of interest in pursuing this opportunity, citing their concern for staff's current workload.

Lori provided an update on the Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church housing project. A draft buy/sell agreement has been received, and Lori highlighted a few items from the draft. Several restrictive covenants were included, such as requiring that a representative of the seller be present at project meetings and that quarterly written progress reports be submitted. The development of Horseshoe Bend, a connecting road necessary for the project, was initially agreed to as a joint investment between a group of property owners referred to as Scenic Developers and Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church. Per the buy-sell documents, the Scenic Developers group has involuntarily dissolved. As a result, it would be the responsibility of the buyer to see if the property owners will honor the original agreement to split the cost of the construction of Horseshoe Bend. Lori will continue to provide updates as further developments arise.

General Fiscal Update – Lori Ladas

Cash balance today is \$2,360,613, and the accounts payable balance is \$36,938.50, which is current. Lori noted that the audit, which was approved by the Board at the February meeting, is considered final after a few non-substantive housekeeping edits. The audit completion will meet its deadline of March 31. Property audits and financial reports are nearly complete. Lori provided an update on the WIPFLI onboarding process. Four meetings have been held since the engagement letter was signed, and Rocky's fiscal staff have been involved in these meetings. One initial proposed improvement regards the month-end fiscal closing process, where WIPFLI recommends using a balance-sheet driven approach. This should lead to a more efficient year-end closing process. Other potential areas for improvement include financial reporting, the creation of a replacement for the crystal ball budget document, and system automations.

Executive Committee Update – Trever Kirkland

Trever highlighted a few key points from the Executive Committee meeting with Nate McCarthy from WIPFLI. He explained that the onboarding process is logistical and is a time for WIPFLI to attain needed access to Rocky's systems. The cost for WIPFLI's services is a monthly fee of \$11,000. WIPFLI requested a one-year commitment, which includes a 60-day check-in meeting to assess how the partnership is working. Rocky can terminate the agreement at any time with 30 days' notice.

Andy Hunthausen made the motion to approve the March 7, 2024, Executive Committee meeting minutes. Jerry Loendorf seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Personnel Committee Update – Jerry Loendorf

Jerry confirmed that the minutes provided in Board packets accurately reflected the conversation of the committee during its March meeting.

Jerry Loendorf made the motion to approve the March 7, 2024, Personnel Committee meeting minutes. Andy Hunthausen seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Jerry reminded the Board of its duty to monitor the Executive Director, and encouraged all Board members to complete and return their performance appraisal forms to Joanna Halland.

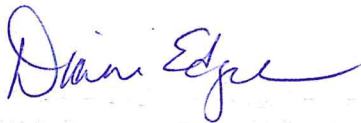
Head Start Director's Program Report– Ashley Peña-Larsen

Ashley reported that the Policy Council did not meet this month. She spoke about the Heart of Helena Art Auction, benefitting St. Peter's Cathedral and supporting Head Start families. She spoke about the collaboration with St. Peter's and how Head Start has used funds received through this partnership to assist families in ways not allowable through federal dollars. Ashley highlighted new partnerships, specifically in the communities of Whitehall and Townsend, and was commended for her work in these communities. Ashley will be attending the Early Childhood Education Summit next week. A major topic of discussion will be new preschool options offered through OPI which are expected to double preschool enrollment. Ashley hopes to partner with the school districts and will continue efforts to keep Head Start in our communities. Head Start is receiving a push at the Federal level to focus on high needs populations, especially those affected by homelessness. Ashley mentioned an expected budget increase for Head Start, including a COLA. The Head Start application process will be changing, and new requirements for Board involvement with Head Start will soon be introduced. The reduction amendment is currently at the Federal office for review. No Head Start budget was prepared for this month's meeting, due to a planned absence by the program budget analyst.

Daniel Pocha made the motion to approve the Head Start Director's Program Report. Erin Lyndes seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Diane Edgar
Executive Assistant

Approved by the Board of Directors:

Trever Kirkland
Eric Schindler, Secretary/Treasurer

5/14/24
Date