



## **Southern Colorado Economic Development District**

121 West City Center Drive, Suite 200, Room 200B  
Pueblo CO 81003 • (719) 545-8680

**Call to Order** – Wednesday, December 22, 2021 at 1:03 pm (Terry Hart, Chair)

**Attendance, Board** - Diana Armstrong, Blaine Arbuthnot, Marla Akridge, Carlton Croft, Debbie Bell, Caroline Trani, Jane Fraser, Kevin Keilbach, Ron Cook, Charles Bogle, Jake Rishavy, Kim MacDonnell, Tom Grasmick, Roy Elliot, Kevin Day, Terry Hart, Spike Ausmus, Rob Obquist, Donald Oswald, Danelle Berg

**Attendance, Ex Officio** - Stephanie Gonzales, Cindy McLoud

**Attendance, Staff** - Brent Frazee, Cheryl Sanchez, Eric Gubelman, Jacqueline Armendariz, John Fulton, Michael Yerman, Miriam Neff

No Proxies were submitted

**Introductions** – Cheryl Sanchez, Leslie Mastroianni, Jacqueline Armendariz

**Approval of Minutes for September 8 and September 22, 2021** (Terry Hart, Chair)

Ron Cook, motion to approve Minutes; Kevin Keilbach, 2<sup>nd</sup>; all approve

**Financial transition to VenturePack for bookkeeping** (Jane Fraser, Treasurer)

Report to board regarding executive committee meeting in November. An audit is being rescheduled to early 2022 while VenturePack brings SCEDD in line with new expectations and grant funding sources.

No board action required.

**Grant Reports** (Eric Gubelman, Executive Director)

**EDA Broadband grant** – Received, April 1 likely start date. This is a \$500,000 grant; will underwrite support for a broadband coordinator for 12 months in addition to middle mile implementation; an additional \$300,000 grant from the Colorado Trust for broadband has also been received. Eric offered an open call to board to participate in the hiring process of a broadband coordinator; it is important to be aware of the needs of individual counties while maintaining a regional approach.

**Build Back Better – Denied, went to Innosphere on Front Range.** This was a \$500,000 planning grant. Even though we didn't get the award, Trent Thompson, our contact with the EDA, is committed to helping SCEDD piece together projects SCEDD proposed through other grant cycles.

**SBA Community Navigator – Received, started December 1.** This is a \$1M award SCEDD applied for in August. Original timeline was that organizations would be notified in late August,

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with a proposed start date in mid-September. Instead, grant announcements were made in November, with a Dec 1 start date.

**Custer County EDA Broadband** – SCEDD has taken responsibility for submittal. SCEDD has been assisting Custer County since May 2020 on their grant application for the 6 towers project. The project is down to nitty gritty technical issues as well as legwork. With Leslie arriving, SCEDD has capacity to assist with final leg details. SCEDD is committed to submitting a solid grant in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week of January.

**Custer County Part Deux** – a complementary effort by Custer County BOCC and municipalities to apply for a USDA Connect grant to fund fiber connections. It is possible SCEDD will be involved in bringing together these related projects.

**CHFA and OEDIT grants** - \$45,000 in total grant award received for RLF study. These combined grants will fund a study project with CDFI to assist loan capacity and need in the SCEDD region.

**Potential \$1M grant to SBDC for Revolving Loan Fund for City of Pueblo.** Mayor has talked to SBDC head about giving SBDC \$1M from ARPA funds to loan out. It's unclear at this point if the fund would be strictly Pueblo focused or focused on the four member counties that Pueblo SBDC office serves. SBDC wants to be involved but they do not want to do loan processing. SCEDD is interested but coming in at the beginning stage of a process to see if we can or should start a RFL in this area. Eric, Brian Estrada of SBDC and Pueblo Mayor will be meeting next week. There is potential this could be a pilot program under Community Navigator with CDFI and mentorship from Kevin Wilkins, Eric's counterpart in the San Luis Valley. Eric will come back to the board in January with additional information. Board members interested in helping guide this should reach out to Eric.

**Huerfano Grants** – Huerfano is pursuing 2 EDA grants; one tourism grant focused on Fox Theatre, and an incubator grant. Both applications are on track to meet submittal deadlines.

**State of SCEDD and Budget Presentation** (Eric Gubelman, Leslie Mastroianni, Jacqueline Armendariz, Cheryl Sanchez, Michael Yerman, John Fulton)

Please refer to PowerPoint deck included in board packet

**2022 Preliminary Budget** (Eric Gubelman)

Jane Fraser, motion to approve budget; Caroline Trani, 2<sup>nd</sup>; all approve

**Board moved to closed session at 2:49 pm**

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**Board moved to end closed session at 3:13 pm**

Treasurer Jane Fraser directed to carry out negotiations as instructed.

**Meeting adjourned at 3:18 pm**