

**Board of Director's Meeting  
October 11, 2024  
Minutes**

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

The quarterly meeting of the Board of Directors of the Southeastern New Mexico Economic Development District/COG was called to order by Vice President, David Miranda at 10:00 a.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

The following Member Governments were represented by Directors or Alternates:

**MEMBER GOVERNMENTS-PRESENT**

Chaves County—Dara Dana, Commissioner  
Eddy County—Jason Burns, Public Works Director  
Lea County—Liz White, Commissioner  
Lincoln County—Rifle Salas  
Otero County—Pamela Heltner, County Manager  
Alamogordo—Debbie Osborne, Grant Coordinator  
Capitan—Minerva Davalos, Mayor  
Carlsbad—Lisa Anaya-Flores, Councilor  
Carrizozo—Bob Hemphill, Mayor  
Cloudcroft—Timothy King, Trustee  
Corona—Curtis Clough  
Hagerman—Tony Garcia, Mayor  
Hobbs—Todd Randal, City Engineer  
Hope—Rudy Sales, Public Works Director  
Lovington—David Miranda, City Manager  
Roswell—Tim Jennings, Mayor  
Ruidoso—Gary Jackson, Councilor  
Ruidoso Downs—Maria Gonzales, Administrative Asst.  
Tularosa—Manuel Brusuelas, Trustee

**NON-GOVERNMENT MEMBERS-PRESENT**

Chaves County—Jon Hitchcock

**MEMBER GOVERNMENTS-NOT PRESENT**

Artesia—Hayley Klein, Artesia Chamber  
Dexter—Ron Chambers, Councilor  
Eunice—Billy Hobbs, Mayor  
Jal—Stephen Aldridge, Mayor  
Lake Arthur—Ysidro Salazar, Mayor  
Loving—Rick Fuentes, Mayor  
Mescalero Apache Tribe—Thora Padilla, President  
Tatum—Marilyn Burns, Mayor

**NON-GOVERNMENT MEMBERS-NOT PRESENT**

Eddy County--Vacant  
Lincoln County—Coda Omness  
Lea County—Robbie Roberts  
Otero County—Vacant

A quorum was present with 19 of the 27 Member Governments represented. One Non-Government Member was also present. Eight Member Governments were absent. Two Non-Government Members were absent, and two positions are vacant.

## **GUESTS AND VISITORS PRESENT**

James Townsend, New Mexico State Representative  
Donna Maestas-DeVries, Housing NMFA  
Larry Scott, New Mexico State Representative  
Shawn Powell, President ENMU-Roswell  
Catherine Greseth, Village Clerk, Village of Capitan  
Jarrod Foster, Representative Randall Pettigrew  
Pam Randal

## **SNMEDD/COG STAFF PRESENT**

Dora Batista, Executive Director  
Mary Ann Burr, SERPTO Program Manager  
Pansy Moffitt, Office/Finance Administrator  
Paul Pappas, Project Coordinator  
Kristina Casaus, Administrative Assistant

### **4. Representative James Townsend—2025 Legislative Session:**

Representative Townsend spoke on the importance of Capital Outlay to everyone but especially the small communities. He encouraged people to ask what you need not what you want. Think long term and what your community needs.

He is concerned about the effort to redefine “New Money”. One of the issues is that every governor wants all the power of capital money. The distribution is typically 1/3 Governor, 1/3 Senate, and 1/3 House. There have been cases that the Governor wants ½ and the Senate and House get ¼ each. Make sure your legislators know how important Capital Outlay is to your community. Representative Townsend believes that distribution should remain 1/3 each. The amount of disposable income is being reduced thus making Capital Outlay money more important.

He asked for input from the Board Members on how to make the Capital Outlay procedures better. Mr. Clough from Corona Schools asked that Capital Outlay and the schools Capital Outlay be mixed for emergency situations. Jason Burns encouraged the larger entities to assist the smaller communities to help them spend their Capital Outlay. Mayor Jennings stated that it’s almost impossible to replace much needed water pipes and infrastructure in today’s economy.

Representative Townsend encouraged everyone to let your legislators know that you need Capital Outlay and how important it is and how much you depend on it. He explained the difference between PED funding and Capital Outlay. He stated that PED doesn’t follow the same rules as Legislative Capital Outlay and PED typically doesn’t fund infrastructure.

Representative Townsend talked about non-Profits leasing buildings from city and stated the projects need to be on the entities ICIP.

Representative Townsend emphasized that Capital Outlay funding is crucial for the smaller communities.

Representative Larry Scott stated that the State of New Mexico is currently “floating on an ocean of oil and gas revenues”. He stated that Legislators needs to find some way to get some of the money out of the state’s hands and back into our local communities and that HB440 attempted to do that last year. The legislators are going to try again in the upcoming session to get more money back to the communities. The Municipal League last year was neutral. The legislators are going to try again in the upcoming session.

## 5. ACTION ITEMS:

### a. **Approve Meeting Agenda for October 11, 2024.**

A motion was made by Dara Dana to approve the agenda, it was seconded by Rudy Sales. All voted aye, motion carried.

### b. **Approve Minutes of July 12, 2024.**

A motion was made by Bob Hemphill to approve the minutes of July 12, 2024, and seconded by Tim Jennings. All voted aye, motion carried.

### c. **Review and Accept Financial Reports & Budget Adjustments.**

Dora presented the Financial Report and Budget Adjustments. She stated that there are three budget adjustments that need action. The first adjustment is the addition of HB2 Legislative Capacity Grant for \$142,857.00 to be used for strategic planning training and grant writing. The second one was the City of Lovington's Mainstreet grant with SNMEDD as Fiscal Grant in the amount of \$350,000.00 this year. It is a zero-impact account. The third one is the addition of dues from the Mescalero Tribe membership in the amount of \$1,000.00. She also stated the GRO admin revenue would be \$800,000.00 adjusting the income budget with an increase of \$493,857.00. On the expense side, Dora stated that they are the same accounts. First quarter we received 42.5% of our budget due to grant money of \$150,000.00 coming in from the previous fiscal year. We also received \$800,000.00 for NM GRO in a lump sum. We have spent approximately 11% and moved \$300,000 to another account as working capital. Dora stated she will check with the Auditor to ensure that the transactions are reported in compliance with government standards.

A motion was made by Jon Hitchcock to approve and accept the financial report. It was seconded by Tim Jennings. All voted aye, Motion carried.

### d. **Approve Consultant Contracts.**

Dora presented three contracts for approval. The first one is with Dennis Dukes who is being contracted to assist in obtaining disaster funds for the Village of Ruidoso. The second one is with John Waters to make a special effort to build capacity with Eddy and Lea County entities. The last one is with Zack Cook who will provide legal counsel and review our legal contracts and RFPs to make sure everything is in compliance with the procurement code.

A motion was made by Gary Jackson to approve Consultant Contracts for John Waters, Zack Cook and Dennis Dukes as presented. The motion was seconded by Tony Garcia. All voted aye, Motion carried.

## 6. **Appoint Nominating Committee to Develop the 2025 Slate of Officers**

Officers are elected yearly; and Dora would like to change that every 2 years because of the hassle of paperwork for bank accounts. At this time President Sam Seely and Vice President David Miranda will be completing their first year. The Treasurer, Tony Garcia and Secretary, Dora Batista will remain the same. She also asked if anyone else would like to be considered, please contact her.

## 7. **PROGRAM AND ACTIVITY REPORTS**

### **Dora Batista—District Activity Report:**

Dora presented the 2025 Capital Outlay Hearing schedule for all five counties: November 7, 2024 Chaves County, November 8, 2024, Eddy County, November 13, Otero and Lincoln County, and November 15, 2024, Lea County. She announced that the Capital Outlay Portal opens October 17, 2024 and closes December 13, 2024. She requested that all requests with PowerPoints, photos, and other supporting documents be sent prior to the hearings so we can have copies available for our legislators.

All but three projects for the New Mexico GRO Grant have been completed and executed. Expenditure of these grants is anticipated in the upcoming quarter. A training on the NM GRO funds was held during the RFP process and a procurement and expenditure training after the grant agreements were signed.

SNMEDD was awarded \$320,000 for technical support and grant writing services to be included in our FY25 budget to include the grant administration. These funds are specifically for Eddy and Lea Counties.

We are looking to hire a consultant or contract employee to personally contact Eddy and Lea County municipalities listed in the grant agreement to see how we can assist them with capacity building funds. Juan Fuentes has prepared a separate NM GRO report and presented it for the Board meeting.

There was \$1,000,000.00 in HB2 for technical assistance and capacity building for municipalities and counties. These funds were divided by the State amongst the 7 COGS and each COG was awarded \$142,857.14. Dora advised those communities needing assistance in grant writing or capacity building to contact the District. The funds expire June 30, 2025.

This is the last year of our EDA Disaster Recovery Grant. The Village of Ruidoso, Lincoln County, and the Mescalero Apache Tribe have been offered up to \$60,000 each to hire a person or consulting firm to assist them with their disaster recovery efforts. Some of the technical capacity funds will be used to help with workforce housing, small business assistance and other disaster-related needs. So far, the Village of Ruidoso has found a consultant.

We are continuing to act as fiscal agent for the municipalities/counties that had significant deficiencies in their audit. There are approximately 90 legislative grants that we manage as fiscal agent. This involves reviewing the procurement process before the funds can be obligated, reviewing, and signing off on pay requests before they are submitted to DFA for payment.

SNMEDD sponsored a Chaves County Meet and Greet for the elected officials, incumbent and prospective new Legislators, on September 18, 2024. Chaves County will have two new Representatives and four new Senators, of which some of the past Representatives have been elected to the Senate. In attendance were the NMMI President Brigadier General McBurnette, ENMU-R President Shawn Powell, Chaves County Commissioners, councilors from the City of Roswell, Town of Dexter, Town of Hagerman, and Town of Lake Arthur; Superintendents from each of Chaves County's school districts, Chamber Presidents and other public agencies.

The ICIP's are expected to be published in mid-October on the DFA's website.

SNMEDD has signed an agreement with NM Public Education Department to serve as a contractor for their Community Schools Program beginning on July 1, 2024. This includes four employees. We will receive an 8% admin fee upon reimbursement.

Other upcoming projects are the Capital Outlay Hearings, a regional housing plan, and we continue putting out a semi-monthly newsletter with funding and other pertinent information.

**Mary Ann Burr—SERTPO:**

SERTPO met in the last quarter during the month of August at the Eunice Community Center. Two presentations were given, and copies of both presentations were provided as handouts at the sign-in table. The presentations covered the NMDOT Statewide Functional Classification Review and Right-of-Way 101. The statewide Functional Classification Review is in an open cycle for the receipt of

any requests from local governments. Entities must first submit their request for an initial review by the NMDOT Roadway Classification Manager. If approved during the initial review, the entity will then present to SERTPO for RTPO approval. The SERTPO meeting is a publicly noticed meeting that allows for public comment to the requested change(s), as well as comment from members. All functional classification requests will then be packaged and submitted to FHWA for final approval. Also, during the August meeting, a subcommittee was organized for the purpose of reviewing the Transportation Project Fund (TPF) scoring criteria, with a focus on its Maintenance category. The subcommittee met in the first part of October and formed recommendations that will be presented to SERTPO for review and approval.

Ms. Burr informed Board members that copies of the TPF Awards were also available at the sign-in table. Regarding the TAP/RTP/CMAQ/CRP Programs (federal programs), a Call-for-Projects is anticipated in November, with a timeline to be approved at a future SERTPO meeting. Additionally, the approved Timeline, Guides and forms will be posted on SNMEDD's website.

SNMEDD has submitted a request for trail network mapping. NMDOT is currently reviewing the application, and word is expected soon.

Regarding planning grants, the Hope Comp Plan has closed out; the Tularosa Comp Plan is very close to the submission of the Planner package to DFA for approval; the Ruidoso Downs Asset Management Plan is very close to closing out; and Lake Arthur Asset Management Plan's consultant is at 61.38% completion, with their plan expected to be completed in short time.

The next SERTPO meeting is scheduled for December 3, 2024 at the Roswell Convention Center. The meeting will focus on public transit prioritization. Ms. Burr plans to join Dora Batista and Paul Pappas in attending the New Mexico Infrastructure Conference later in the month.

**Paul Pappas—Project Coordinator:**

Paul announced that there were 12 active CDBG Projects:

- 1) City of Carlsbad—Alejandro Ruiz Senior Center, remodel some existing rooms, construct additional bathrooms, and a vestibule to the front. Engineering has begun.
- 2) Village of Loving—This project will install gravity feed sewer lines along with a lift station. Loving is in the process of securing an engineer to begin design and environmental is being finalized.
- 3) City of Lovington—Construct ADA sidewalks on 2<sup>nd</sup> street between the intersections of Avenue D and Central St. We will assist Lovington in getting an RFP prepared so they can secure an engineer and begin design.
- 4) Otero County—CHINS (Children in needs of services) building renovation is in the process of closing. This project renovated a large multi-purpose room and added a kitchen.
- 5) Town of Carrizozo—Streets and drainage/waterline project is in construction. A previous Supplemental Funding Grant was obtained and the full scope of their project included improvements to 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Streets.
- 6) Chaves County—The Chaves County Health Center building has been awarded the construction project. We are working with the contractor for a start date. This is approximately a 10K square foot new building that will provide health services to Chaves County residents. It will include WIC (women-infant-children), family planning and education, harm reduction/syringe exchange services and vital records.
- 7) City of Ruidoso Downs—Street and water line project design is complete. Construction has gone out to bid and opening is set for October 9, 2024. Supplemental funding has been applied for to include the pavement of the roadway. It is uncertain as to when the funding awards will be made.

- 8) City of Artesia—ADA Sidewalk Project. We had gone out to bid in late May, only one bid was received and was substantially over budget. Artesia applied for the 2024 supplemental funds in hopes they can go out for rebid to obtain adequate funding so they can go out for rebid and have adequate funding. It is unknown when the supplemental awards will be.
- 9) Town of Hagerman—Lift Station Project has secured an engineer and is currently in the design phase. We anticipate going out to bid this quarter.
- 10) Village of Hope—Water System Improvement Project has secured an engineer and is currently in design. The engineering firm Stantec has indicated that the design will be completed within the next 90 days.
- 11) Town of Tatum—Water System Improvements Project involves looping water lines. An engineer has been secured and is currently in design. The engineer is working on the surveying and expects the design to take a few more months.
- 12) Village of Tularosa—Wastewater System Improvement Project is currently working on reducing the scope as the Village was able to overlap some of the wastewater improvements on a separate grant. This project is improvements to the lift station pumps and other related improvements.

Because there are no 2024 CDBG applications this year we feel that 2025 will be a more competitive year.

#### **Juan Fuentes—NM GRO**

Mr. Fuentes announced that 93% of the NM GRO agreements have been executed and three are still pending. Two of the agreements are set for approval by the Hobbs City Commission on October 7, 2024. One is currently under review for the new Superintendent's signature of the Portales Municipal School District.

NM GRO training sessions were held on Tuesday, August 27, 2024, which covered an overview of the NM GRO Program, procurement, reporting and reimbursement process.

At the time of the Board Meeting no reimbursement requests had been received from the following:

- 1) Curry County—Purchase and equipment police vehicles using a Statewide Purchasing Agreement.
- 2) City of Hobbs—Finalized proposed budgets for Senior Center Services and upgrades to City Hall.
- 3) COPE of Otero County—is in the process of preparing their first reimbursement request.
- 4) SNMEDD collaborated with appropriation sponsors and entities to clarify the intended use of the funds several times.
- 5) Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Central New Mexico in SENM submitted their Quarterly Report of activities. This included an excerpt from the report: “During this quarter, we made significant strides in developing new matches for Big Brothers/Big Sisters (BBBS0. SENM engaged with principals from the RISD school district, leading to the addition of Goddard High School, Del Norte Elementary, Washington Avenue Elementary, and Pecos Elementary to our program.”

We anticipate the entities will begin submitting reimbursement requests in the second quarter.

#### **Debi Lee—EDA CARES ACT Update:**

Ms. Lee was absent, but her report was included in the Board packet.

This report stated that Southeastern New Mexico has demonstrated economic resilience recovering from the COVID-19 period. All entities, with the exception of the City of Hobbs gross receipts tax collections in FY 23/24 were greater than what was recorded in FY 19/20. Hobbs was still -13% below

what was received prior to FY 19/20. From all of the entities in the SNMEDD District, \$532,005,875.55 was collected in FY 23/24 representing a 46% increase from the amount from FY 19/20. Eddy and Lea Counties have been leading in increased revenues and job growth in the SNMEDD region. Otero, Lincoln and Chaves counties had cyclical trends. As a region, SNMEDD's region grew its total employment consistently and was better than the State of New Mexico.

Mrs. Lee included numerous graphs highlighting the economic summary for all 5 counties.

Technical services are provided to communities requesting assistance with grant applications, to include the Federal Matching Grant from NMDFA, Destination Forward Grant, Transportation Project Funding (TPF) and Keep NM Beautiful.

The Federal Matching Grant is an initial \$75 million appropriation grant designed to amplify federal funding opportunities for infrastructure, research, economic development, the energy transition, and other critical projects that will benefit NM. There are three Matching Fund Programs:

- 1) Matching Grant—intended for eligible entities that require additional funding to meet the minimum match requirement for a federal grant (at least 40% of available funds reserved for rural, frontier, and tribal governments).
- 2) Project Implementation Grant—for recipients of a Matching Grant that require capacity funding to fully implement the federally funded project associated with the Matching Grant (only available if awarded a Matching Grant).
- 3) Federal Compliance Offset Grant—for eligible entities that demonstrate higher project costs due to compliance with federal funding requirements, such as requirements related to work wages and sourcing American-made materials.

Destination Forward Grant is funded by New Mexico True. The City of Carlsbad submitted an application under Tier II B: Renovate and Modernize a building in the historic/cultural district. Carlsbad plans to renovate a facility to be used as an annex to the Museum in order to allow the collections currently stored away to be accessible to the public for research and viewing. This project was funded \$525,000.

Transportation Project Funding (TPF)—Debi Lee assisted five communities with applications and submitted them to NDOT for Design and Engineering Services for various roadways in the Town of Tatum, Town of Dexter, Town of Carrizozo, Town of Lake Arthur and the City of Jal with the Capacity Building Grant. Stantec Engineering worked with these entities to prepare a project estimate, map and project description. Chaves County, the City of Lovington, Mescalero Apache Tribe, the City of Portales, Otero County, Roosevelt County, Village of Cloudcroft, Village of Fort Sumner, and Village of Ruidoso also submitted applications and made a presentation to the NMDOT for final approval.

Keep New Mexico True—Clean and Beautiful Program – Debi Lee assisted the Town of Tatum in applying for this competitive grant to eradicate litter, reduce waste, and fund a community beautification project. This project was funded \$11,625.00.

Debi Lee prepared two economic evaluations utilizing the Purdue University data. The City of Roswell requested the economic evaluation to support needed economic development resulting from the impact that will occur with the upcoming Reno Races relocating to Roswell. A request for economic evaluations for RCCEDCC (Roswell-Chaves County Economic Development Corporation) and the City of Roswell has been completed. The Village of Ruidoso also has requested an economic evaluation for the recovery and rebuilding as a result of the fires and floods occurring in the summer of 2024 which was completed and submitted to the Village Manager.

Mrs. Lee continues to develop a newsletter every other week with funding opportunities and important information. It also included tips for submitting Capital Outlay along with the dates for the Hearings.

The Small Communities Economic Development Capacity Building Program is ongoing with the City of Artesia. Linley Daley from Leadership NM was contracted to conduct a strategic plan that will align with the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan. We are anticipating a final plan soon.

The need for housing was stressed as a high priority at the Economic and Housing Summit held in May. The counties and municipalities who still need to develop and adopt a housing plan were identified and have voiced interest in a Regional Housing Plan. A grant opportunity with NM Finance Authority will be available this fall to support the cost of contracting with a professional planner to assist with a Housing Plan.

**8. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INFORMATION SHARING:**

**9. ADJOURN:**

Adjourned at 11:45 am.

APPROVED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sam Seely, President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

ATTESTED BY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dora Barista, Secretary

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date