

**Board of Director's Meeting
April 11, 2025
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 President, Sam Seely 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—Haley Klein, Commissioner
Lincoln County—Samantha Serna, Commissioner
Capitan—Minerva Davalos, Mayor
Cloudcroft—Timothy King, Mayor
Corona—Sam Seely, Mayor
Dexter—Ron Chambers, Councilor
Hagerman—Tony Garcia, Mayor
Hobbs—Kristalyn Seepersad, Planning Project Manager
Jal—Stephen Aldridge, Mayor
Lovington—Liz White, Commissioner
Roswell—Julianna Halvorson, Councilor
Ruidoso—Rifle Salas, Councilor
Ruidoso Downs—Israel Chavez
Tatum—Marilyn Burns, Mayor
Tularosa—Manuel Brusuelas, Trustee
Mescalero—Duane Duffy, Vice President

NON-GOVERNMENT MEMBERS-PRESENT

Chaves County—Jon Hitchcock

MEMBER GOVERNMENTS-NOT PRESENT

Lea County—Corey Needham, Interim County Mgr.
Otero County—Pamela Heltner, County Manager
Alamogordo—Susan Payne, Mayor
Artesia—Summer Valverde, Clerk/Treasurer
Carlsbad—Lisa Anaya Flores, Councilor
Carrizozo—Robert Hemphill, Mayor
Eunice—Billy Hobbs, Mayor
Hope—Rudy Sales
Lake Arthur—Lewis Wesson, Mayor
Loving—Rick Fuentes, Mayor

NON-GOVERNMENT MEMBERS-NOT PRESENT

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

A quorum was present with 17 of the 27 Member Governments represented. One Non-Government Member was also present. Ten Member Governments were absent. Three Non-Government Members were absent, and one position is vacant.

GUESTS AND VISITORS PRESENT

Steve Chavez, Roswell Fire Department
Derek Washichek, Roswell Fire Department
Donna Maestas-DeVries, Housing NMFA
James Townsend, New Mexico State Senator
Larry Scott, New Mexico State Senator
Candy Spence Ezzell, New Mexico State Senator
Fred Telling, Reno Air Races

SNMEDD/COG STAFF PRESENT

Dora Batista, Executive Director
Mary Ann Burr, SERPTO Program Manager
Pansy Moffitt, Office/Finance Administrator
Kristina Casaus, Administrative Assistant
Juan Fuentes, Consultant
Debi Lee, Consultant

4. PROGRAM—Legislative Review by Area Legislators: Senator Candy Spence Ezzell—2025 Legislative Session:

Senator Ezzell spoke about how they were outnumbered on the senate and house side. There were bills that went to a committee and passed the 1st committee, but didn't go any further. The progressive bills passed. Senator Ezzell states the committee she serves is the Senate Energy Committee which encompasses water, energy and wildlife. She also serves on the Senate Education Committee, and she was adamant on more local control through education.

One of the bills, SB 383, that she carried affects every municipality and county in the state. “RELATING TO MUNICIPALITIES; PROVIDING FOR THE ISSUANCE OF FLOOD RECOVERY REVENUE BONDS FOR REBUILDING, REPAIRING, REPLACING AND HARDENING OF MUNICIPAL PROPERTY DAMAGED BY A FLOOD; CREATING A MUNICIPAL FLOOD RECOVERY GROSS RECEIPTS TAX FOR THE PAYMENT OF FLOOD RECOVERY REVENUE BONDS; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY” and it was emphasized due to flooding in Roswell, Ruidoso and Ruidoso Downs. This Bill is applicable to the entire state. There is no net loss or gain to the state, the money stays there to help rebuild in case of a natural disaster. The municipalities and counties can make applications for a small percentage of the gross receipts tax from their area.

Senator Ezzell spoke about Senate Bill 280, the New Mexico Military Institute bill. NMMI can now be part of the public-school capital outlay funding for K-12 program. “RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS; ADDING THE NEW MEXICO MILITARY INSTITUTE TO THE PUBLIC-SCHOOL CAPITAL OUTLAY ACT AS ONE OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL SPECIAL SCHOOLS. BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO” the governor signed the bill.

Candy Ezzell spoke about how we need improvements on the road leading to Tatum. We have emergency vehicles driving on that road, businesses traveling, as well as school buses, oilfield industries, and agriculture. There are many purposes for that road to be improved.

Senator Larry Scott—2025 Legislative Session:

Senator Scott discussed that this legislative session was about statute our governors six years of executive orders which would make these public policies much more difficult to turn around.

The Energy Transition Act which mandates that we have net zero emissions by the year 2050 is affecting Economic Development.

Senator Scott spoke about certain bills that were passed by the legislators. They were able to defeat a large tax increase on NM citizens and businesses which is called Paid Family Leave Bill. That bill went to the Senate Committee where it did not have enough time to be heard before the session ended. Another bill that did not pass was the minimum wage increase.

A bill that would deal with the industrial revenue bonds. These bonds are now subject to the NM Prevailing Wage Act, which could largely eliminate financial advantages that recur with property taxes to industrial revenue bonds.

Senator Scott spoke about a bill that was passed, of which he did not agree. His colleagues believe that we can solve our crime problems with counseling sessions, Senator Scott does not agree.

Senator James Townsend—2025 Legislative Session:

Senator Townsend discussed that there were about 1,100 bills between the House and Senate. Around 500 Senate Bills and a little more than 600 House Bills were introduced. In Senator Townsend's opinion, this year was a horrible piece of legislation because it wasn't good for business, business development and an impediment to everyone doing things for their communities.

Senator Townsend spoke about three bills that were killed. House Bill 11 which was the family leave bill, Senate Bill 318 and 289, both gun bills.

“HOUSE BILL 11--RELATING TO EMPLOYMENT; ENACTING THE WELCOME CHILD AND FAMILY WELLNESS LEAVE ACT; CREATING THE FAMILY WELLNESS LEAVE FUND; PROVIDING FOR THE FAMILY WELLNESS LEAVE FUND TO PAY AN ELIGIBLE APPLICANT A PERCENTAGE OF THE APPLICANT'S WAGES TO ALLOW THE APPLICANT TO TAKE FAMILY WELLNESS LEAVE; CREATING THE WELCOME CHILD FUND; PROVIDING FOR THE WELCOME CHILD FUND TO PAY AN ELIGIBLE APPLICANT A REFUND UPON THE BIRTH OR ADOPTION OF A CHILD; ALLOWING AN ELIGIBLE APPLICANT TO TAKE LEAVE TO BOND WITH A BIOLOGICAL OR ADOPTED CHILD; LIMITING THE TIME ALLOWED FOR WELCOME CHILD AND FAMILY WELLNESS LEAVE; EXCEPTING CERTAIN EMPLOYEES; PROVIDING FOR ADMINISTRATION OF THE FUNDS BY THE WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS DEPARTMENT; PREEMPTING SIMILAR PROGRAMS; CREATING A TEMPORARY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

“SENATE BILL 318 : AN ACT RELATING TO FIREARMS; INCLUDING FIREARMS AND DESTRUCTIVE DEVICES IN THE UNFAIR PRACTICES ACT; EXPANDING PRIVATE REMEDIES FOR UNFAIR, DECEPTIVE AND UNCONSCIONABLE TRADE PRACTICES; MAKING TECHNICAL CHANGES. BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO”

“AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION; AMENDING MOTOR VEHICLE EXCISE TAX DISTRIBUTIONS. BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO: SECTION 1. DISTRIBUTION OF PROCEEDS.--The receipts from the tax and any associated interest and penalties shall be deposited in the "motor vehicle suspense fund", hereby created in the state treasury. As of the end of each month, the net receipts attributable to the tax and associated penalties and interest shall be distributed as follows: A. [fifty-nine and thirty-nine hundredths] ten percent to the general fund; B. [twenty-one and eighty-six hundredths] sixty five percent to the state road fund; and C. [eighteen and seventy-five hundredths] percent to the transportation project fund."] twenty SECTION 2. EFFECTIVE DATE.--The effective date of the provisions of this act is July 1, 2026.

“SENATE BILL 210 AN ACT RELATING TO WATER; INCREASING THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR A VIOLATION OF WATER LAW; PROVIDING FOR AN ANNUAL INCREASE IN PENALTIES FOR A VIOLATION OF WATER LAW TO ACCOUNT FOR INFLATION. BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO”.

The bill was referred as “criminalized stealing water.” If you’re stealing water and caught, you’re criminalizing that. There has been some of that going on in Southeastern New Mexico in the oil and gas industry. Water has become very valuable, and people have been getting a permit for livestock type issues with no farm animals in site and selling the water. Townsend believes that it’s wrong because it does two things, it takes water from all the communities that we desperately need, and if you own water, it will devalue it.

James Townsend met with the new State Engineer, Elizabeth Anderson, he feels that she will work with communities across the state. Townsend talked to Anderson about the water rights bill that he sponsored and asked for her help. Senator Townsend took his ideas and wrote into Anderson’s bill, SB 210, and got those tied together. “ SENATE BILL 195 NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, AN ACT RELATING TO HUMAN RIGHTS; PROHIBITING ANTISEMITIC DISCRIMINATION. BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO: SECTION 1. A new section of the Human Rights Act is enacted to read: "[NEW MATERIAL] PROHIBITING ANTISEMITIC DISCRIMINATION.-A. As used in this section, "antisemitic" means a certain perception of Jewish people, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jewish people, including rhetorical and physical manifestations that are directed toward Jewish people, or non-Jewish people who are perceived to be Jewish, and their property, or toward Jewish community institutions or religious facilities. B. A person, employer, labor organization, employment agency, public accommodation, public body or any officer, employee or contractor of a public body shall be prohibited from antisemitic discrimination and shall comply with the prohibitions on discrimination provided in the Human Rights Act. A person claiming to be aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice based on antisemitic discrimination may file a claim in accordance with the Human Rights Act." The Senate bill got through until the senate judiciary and got locked up. Both Anderson and Senator Townsend then created House Bill 348 “AN ACT RELATING TO WATER; INCREASING THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR A VIOLATION OF WATER LAW; PROVIDING FOR AN ANNUAL INCREASE IN PENALTIES FOR A VIOLATION OF WATER LAW TO ACCOUNT FOR INFLATION.” the same identical bill, but they wanted it to start in the house first. They got it through the House and two committees in the Senate and then it got tied up in the Senate Judiciary.

Overall, the legislators spoke about the budget and the last governor’s budget was only 4 billion dollars. This year, there was about 10.8 billion dollars spent, that’s almost a 50% increase from within the last ten years.

5. ACTION ITEMS:

a. **Approve Meeting Agenda for April 11, 2025.**

A motion was made by Stephen Aldridge to approve the agenda for April 11, 2025, it was seconded by Marilyn Burns. All voted aye, motion carried.

b. **Approve Minutes of February 4, 2025.**

A motion was made by Marilyn Burns to approve the minutes of February 4, 2025, and seconded by Manuel Brusuelas. All voted aye, motion carried.

c. **Review and Adopt 2023-2024 Audit Report—Patillo, Brown & Hill, LLP.**

The auditor wasn’t present, but he sent an email which was included in the packet saying we did receive an unmodified opinion which is the best opinion you can get. If we have a good audit that allows us to

become fiscal agents to the entities that have bad audits. We received the audit financial report, and the summary is on page 32. It states:

- There are no current year findings
- No material weaknesses identified
- It is an unmodified audit
- No noncompliance material to financial statements noted

A motion was made by Haley Klein to approve the 2023-2024 Audit Report, it was seconded by Samantha Serna. All voted aye, motion carried.

d. Review and Accept Financial Report.

Dora presented the Financial Report. Dora stated that we are at 55.5% of our income. Our membership dues are all in we had some of our grants that had not yet come in but now have so it is showing a zero balance. A couple of our EDA allocations are behind. They are understaffed; they had to freeze everything to see if projects needed to be cut, our projects were not cut. Pansy did a draw down back in January for \$100,000 and we are still missing it due to EDA being behind. That reflects why one is at 50% and the other is at 40%. Otherwise, we seem to be doing good. Regarding our expenses, we are 44% and our travel is high 85%, but that is expected because it pays for our hotels and traveling when we went up to Santa Fe for the 60-day Legislative Session.

The RTPO Financial Report was included in the packet, also included was the NM GRO list of checks. The auditor said that Pansy and Dora could be the ones to sign the checks without the use of one of our treasurers. In order to do that, every quarter we must present the list of checks that were written out during that time and have them approved.

A motion was made by Samantha Serna to approve the Financial Report, it was seconded by Tony Garcia. All voted aye, motion carried.

e. Review and Approve Membership Dues.

We have not raised our membership dues since 2016. We have been able to sustain ourselves with additional EDA, and DFA grant funding as well as grant administration. We received \$800,000 for GRO administration to cover two years. Based on disasters in Chaves and Lincoln County, many of our entities are struggling. We have been able to charge our contract labor to grants and provide additional services to our region. The dues enable us to operate and are vital to our budget. As long as we keep applying for technical assistance grants, we can provide additional services to our members.

A motion was made by Dara Dana to approve the Membership Dues, it was seconded by Stephen Aldridge. All voted aye, motion carried.

f. Review and Approve DFA Annual Work Plan.

The annual work plan is required by the Department of Administration. It lists our activities and functions. DFA requires COG board meeting minutes showing that the work plan is approved. DFA gives us \$99,000 a year to operate and the work plan shows all the information we are required to do under their agreement. A motion was made by Samantha Serna to approve DFA Annual Work Plan, it was seconded by Tony Garcia. All voted aye, motion carried.

g. Open Meetings Act Resolution.

Dora was going over items with our attorney, Zach Cook, he brought to our attention that we need to pass an Open Meetings Act Resolution. Any entity that receives public funding needs to have one, and he has reviewed the policy included in your packet. The Open Meetings Act Resolution states our public meeting schedule, where we publish notices, where we hold the meetings, ADA accommodations and those items required in an Open Meetings Act Resolution that each of the counties and cities adopt.

A motion was made by Marilyn Burns to approve Open Meetings Act Resolution, it was seconded by Samantha Serna. All voted aye, motion carried.

h. Professional Service Contracts.

The new Professional Service Contracts are all paid out of grants, they don't come out of the actual budget from the COG. HGAC Disaster Recovery Services and High-Water Mark, LLC contract is \$100,000 and \$60,000 which was paid by DFA Technical Capacity Grant. These contracts were to help the City of Roswell and the Town of Dexter after the flooding, so we hired experts to help guide them through the FEMA process. LGO Consulting, LLC contract, are funds from a previous unused contract we needed to assist with Fiscal Agent Contracts and NM GRO. We want to use the remainder of those funds for LGO Consulting. Lauren Groesbeck contract is to assist with grant management and clerk duties for the Village of Cloudcroft. The Village of Cloudcroft has had a huge turnover recently and she has been assisting.

A motion was made by Haley Klein to approve Professional Service Contracts, it was seconded by Marilyn Burns. All voted aye, motion carried.

6. PROGRAM AND ACTIVITY REPORTS

Dora Batista—District Activity Report:

Dora presented the 2025 legislative session has come to an end. Dora wants to thank our legislators for their hard work as well as the SNMEDD staff. Dora and our staff were in Santa Fe to assist with capital outlay and were able to see firsthand how our legislators work together to fund as many of our requests as they can with limited funds. Here are the results of the capital outlay funding:

- Chaves County \$14,481,176
- Eddy County \$10,470,000
- Lea County \$16,166,000
- Lincoln County \$4,850,000
- Otero County \$10,824,798
- TOTAL - \$56,791,974

We had several reauthorizations from our district. There are proposed new rules being considered regarding reauthorizations. They considered not allowing them this year. There was a lot of talk about capital outlay reform and reauthorizations as almost 6 billion dollars of unspent money is sitting idle. The Senate Finance Committee is planning to meet this summer and try to make changes in the process. Some of the ideas being proposed are all local capital outlay applicants shall apply for capital outlay under four categories: equipment, building repair and renewal, planning/design phase for major renovation and new construction, construction phase for major renovation and new construction.

All drinking water and wastewater related projects shall first apply to existing state mechanisms (ie: Water Trust Board, Drinking Water Revolving Fund, Clean Water State Revolving Fund) before applying for Capital Outlay. Evidence of denial of funding or documentation supporting the need for additional grant funding to complete the project must be included with the request for capital outlay funding beginning next year. This documentation shall be provided to the legislators and verified by the appropriate agencies.

One of the interesting items regarding our region's capital outlay requests was 40% of all requests were for facility renovation, facility rehabilitation or new facility construction. In prior years most requests were for water and wastewater projects. Dora states she believes this is reflective of our region's efforts over the past several years to upgrade our water and wastewater systems using Colonias, CDBG, legislative, Water Trust Board, etc. funding.

In HB 2 there was \$1,000,000 dollars for technical assistance and capacity building for municipalities and counties. The State divided these funds by the 7 COGS and awarded each COG \$142,857.14.

We are using a large portion of these funds to assist the City of Roswell and the Town of Dexter with professional consultants to help navigate the FEMA process.

We also are using our last year of EDA Disaster Recovery funding which ends June 30, 2025. We have used these funds to pay for FEMA experts, grant writers, estimators to assist the Village of Ruidoso and Lincoln County. These were the only areas we were allowed to spend these funds in.

We continue to act as fiscal agent for those municipalities/counties that had significant deficiencies on their audit. We currently have about 90 legislative grants we are acting as fiscal agent for. This entails reviewing the procurement process before they obligate funds, reviewing and signing off on pay requests before they are submitted to DFA for payment.

NMSU Cooperative Extension is working with us with providing assistance with our Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy plan that is due to EDA by June 30, 2025. Our Purdue data we obtained last year is certainly coming in handy for this project. You can find this data under Regional Plans on our website. There is housing, workforce, industry and other important data by county and by our five-county region.

The contract we have with the NMED Public Education Department was amended to add travel and a fourth employee. We are receiving a monthly 8% admin fee when we seek reimbursement. After conducting an estimation of our expenditures for the next quarter, it appears that our contract will have over \$140,000 left. PED wants to make an amendment for at least \$100,000 to move those unused funds to areas that are overbudgeted throughout the state.

Dora recognized Lincoln County for the Star of the Southwest award. This award is given by the Southwest Regional Economic Development Association which consists of the states Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico. Each year, we receive emails asking to nominate an EDA project and Dora chose to nominate the Lincoln County Rodeo Arena project. On May 7-9, Dora and a Lincoln County Commissioner will be presenting a PowerPoint at the regional conference in Las Cruces, NM.

Mary Ann Burr—SERTPO:

Ms. Burr reminded Board members that there were three entities (Carlsbad, Lovington, and Clovis) that recently made application for the federal programs: Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP); Recreational Trails Program (RTP); Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ); and Carbon Reduction Program (CRP). Awards are anticipated in April 2025.

The Board was informed that the Transportation Project Fund (TPF) application cycle is open, and 27 applications were received. Applicants from the region include Cloudcroft, Jal, Roswell, Carlsbad, Chaves County, Lincoln County, Tatum, Tularosa, Capitan, Carrizozo, Lovington, and Ruidoso. Ms. Burr explained to the Board that fewer applications were received this year due to a change made in the criteria, and the rationale was explained. The next steps within the application cycle are the final application deadline of April 21st, followed by the rating meeting scheduled for May 21st at the Ruidoso Convention Center.

The regional trails project should be complete in approximately a month. The Consultant has already prepared draft mapping and has shared the mapping with the primary contact of the local governments that participated. Ms. Burr added that she will be meeting with the consultant one more time, and mapping should be complete. Mapping will be added to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for a trail network section. Also, mapping will be shared and can be displayed in front lobbies of local governments and on their websites.

The annual mailing for SERTPO representatives will be out soon, for appointments/reaffirmations. Regarding planning grants, there has been a recent change within the CDBG program in that they are no longer funding planning grants. The COG and local entities will have to look at other funding sources for planning grants. The Lake Arthur Asset Management Plan has closed out, and there is just one active Comprehensive Planning grant (Village of Tularosa).

Paul Pappas—Project Coordinator:

Mr. Pappas was not present; his report was included in the packet and is as follows:

- 1) City of Carlsbad—Alejandro Ruiz Senior Center, remodel some existing rooms, construct additional bathrooms, and a vestibule to the front. Project is still in the design phase, but the previous environmental from the last phase of this project will be reused. The design should be completed in the next couple of months and will go out to bid for construction.
- 2) Village of Loving—This project will install gravity feed sewer lines along with a lift station. Design will most likely be complete in the next couple of months. Supplemental funds were applied for this project and were awarded \$603,214.
- 3) City of Lovington—Construct ADA sidewalks on 2nd street between the intersections of Avenue D and Central St. The RFP for design was published and the City Commission voted to approve the design to Pettigrew and Associates. Project is currently in design.
- 4) Otero County—CHINS (Children in needs of services) building renovation project is officially closed. This project renovated a large multi-purpose room and added a kitchen.
- 5) Town of Carrizozo—This project is a street and drainage project on 17th and 18th streets in Carrizozo. Construction is complete and we are gathering closing paperwork. We expect to have the final pay request, and the project closed at the end of April. Both Colonias and CDBG grants were able to complete this project.
- 6) Chaves County—The Chaves County Health Center building: This is an approximate 10K square foot new building that will provide health services. It houses the WIC (women-infant-children), Family Planning and Education, harm reduction/syringe exchange services, and vital records. Waide Construction is the contractor, and there are over 12 subcontractors on the project. Construction has begun, and the project is expected to be completed in April 2026.
- 7) City of Ruidoso Downs—Street and water line project on Valley View Dr. in Ruidoso Downs. We applied for supplemental CDBG funding and were awarded an additional \$482,000. Project design is complete, and construction bid opening was held on November 21st. Construction contract was awarded to La Luz, and actual construction is expected to begin in May.
- 8) City of Artesia—ADA Sidewalk Project: Went out to bid in late May, and only one bid was received and was substantially over budget. Artesia applied for the 2024 supplemental funds and was awarded an additional \$561,384. Project went out for rebid in February, and the city has awarded the project to Constructors Inc. Start date has not been finalized but expected to be in May.
- 9) Town of Hagerman—Lift station project; final design is almost complete and is expected to go out to bid in April. If the construction contract can be awarded, we anticipate construction to begin possibly in the mid-second quarter.
- 10) Village of Hope—Water System Improvements Project; the design is complete. The construction bid has been advertised, and the bid opening is set for the second week of April. If able to award the project, we anticipate construction to begin possibly at the end of May.
- 11) Town of Tatum—Water System Improvements project, involves looping water lines and additional fire hydrants. Design has been completed, and final plans are being forwarded to DFA for approval. We anticipate going out to bid in mid-April, and if able to award the construction bid, construction should begin in late May/early August.

- 12) Village of Tularosa—Rehabilitation of their lift station. Environmental has been completed and approved. The RFP for design has been advertised and sent out in late February and the village is in the process of scoring RFP and will be in position to award design this month.

DFA recently announced that there was approximately \$1.5 million dollars left in the 2024 CDBG funding. Current CDBG projects are allowed to apply for this funding if they have a documented need. We intend to immediately apply for this funding if any of our project's construction bids come in over budget.

We are also preparing to start 2025 CDBG applications. It's possible that applicants will be able to apply for more than the historic \$750,000 limit (possibly \$1M or more). We have started some of the early pre-selection hearings. If you have an interest in applying, please contact me or Dora so that we can start preparing your application. If the grant limit cap is raised, applications might be more competitive, and as always, we want to prepare and submit top quality applications.

Juan Fuentes—NM GRO:

Mr. Fuentes announced that 78% of the NM GRO grantees have submitted their 2nd Quarterly Report for the Fiscal Year Ending 2025 with 10% still pending to be received. As of this report, we have received five 3rd Quarter Reports which 3rd Quarter reports are due April 20th.

Juan stated that \$2,118,286.75 (35.78%) of total GRO Funds have been spent of which \$2,043,670.49 have been reimbursed to the entities with \$74,616.26 pending. New Mexico GRO balance remaining to be spent is \$3,876,329.51 which is around 64%.

New Mexico GRO completed and closed projects:

- Chaves County - \$400,000 : Funds were used to purchase and equip public safety vehicles
- City of Roswell - \$280,000 : Funds were used to purchase and equip public safety vehicles.
- City of Clovis - \$240,000 : Funds were used to purchase and equip public safety vehicles.
- Curry County - \$80,000 : Funds were used to purchase and equip public safety vehicles.
- Eddy County - \$80,000 : Funds were used to purchase combat ready hoses for the Fire Department.

These entities had funds that were provided for them for police vehicles or public safety vehicles and managed to apply the funds in a timely matter.

Mr. Fuentes discusses the highlights of activities reported by the grantees.

- Eddy County has obligated funds for K-9 training to advance skills and levels in patrol, drug detection, tactical obedience, tracking and other areas of need.
- The City of Lovington Senior Center purchased and installed running boards, emergency flashers to meal delivery vehicles and to resurface pool tables and purchased pool table equipment.
- Floyd Municipal Schools are planning to redo their FFA greenhouse that was damaged last year.
- Tatum HS has purchased a livestock trailer to haul animals to the county fair. The new trailer has pens built in for safer and efficient manners to transport animals.
- Goddard High School is planning to purchase new equipment for the Agriculture, Mechanics, and Welding shop.
- Eastern New Mexico University - Ruidoso used funds to expand the college's Natural Resources Program, purchase of equipment and hiring a part-time faculty.

- CASA of Lea County serves 148 abused and neglected children and has 57 volunteers assigned to children. During this period, it trained and swore 3 new volunteers and began training 4 additional volunteers.
- Big Brothers Big Sisters have made strides in developing new matches for BBBS. Southeastern New Mexico engaged with principals from the RISO school district, leading to the addition of Goddard High School, Del Norte Elementary, Washington Avenue Elementary, and Pecos Elementary to our program.
- The COPE of Otero County has submitted their first Request for Reimbursement in the amount of \$28,252.26 for salaries and benefits for staff who provided services. During this period, 51 adults and 11 children were provided with services.
- Historical Society for Southeastern New Mexico has submitted their first Request for Reimbursement in the amount of \$10,212.05. Services provided for this period included personnel and professional services for historical record archiving activities. Other items included community events and operation expenses.
- Flickinger Center for Performing Arts submitted their first Request for Reimbursement in the amount of \$13,000. Services provided during this period included two performances and security services.
- Additional activities reported included planning and design for road and lighting improvements, security, and IT upgrades to public facilities.

Juan mentions that DFA requested for the communities and COGs to provide them with how their NM GRO program was developed and what were the training tools we provided to the communities, so we developed a video. The video provides an overview of what was developed, how we implemented it, and what we are doing for the upcoming 2026 session.

Debi Lee—EDA CARES ACT Update:

Debi Lee stated Southeastern New Mexico has demonstrated resilience as communities have recovered from the COVID pandemic and are now recovering from the declared disasters of fires, flooding, and tropical storms in 2024. Debi discussed the economic snapshot which compiles data from sources such as the Taxation and Revenue Department, Department of Workforce Solutions, US Bureau of Labor Statistics, and US Bureau of Economic Analysis. She stated that her report provides trends in economic progress and declines for municipalities and counties combined. During the past eight quarters, the Matched Taxable Gross Receipts have consistently demonstrated an upward trend, with the retail trade sector remaining the largest industry by MTGR; however, Energy (Oil & Gas) are the dominate in Eddy and Lea Counties supporting the entire state with revenues.

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

Debi Lee reported that tracking demographic and socioeconomic data provides valuable insights into the characteristics of our region and can help inform a wide range of decisions and policies. It identifies emerging trends and patterns that may affect decisions for policymakers and business owners. She stated that it is important to understand the disparities such as income, education or health care across different groups in each of the communities. This information can be used to plan services and programs that meet the needs of our communities including schools, healthcare facilities, transportation and infrastructure. Debi Lee stated that to achieve economic growth in our southeastern region, it is essential to track demographic and socioeconomic data and to develop strategies that build on the strengths and opportunities that exist. She included a graphic that will be part of the revised Comprehensive Economic Strategy for 2025.

Debi participated in the 60-day 2025 Legislative Session assisting the legislators with the capital outlay process. She stated that she developed the list of project requests in our communities and said that Legislators expressed appreciation in our efforts to facilitate the selection process. She emphasized the importance of the project list for Legislators to collaborate effectively and maximize

funding. Organizing requests along with a detailed spreadsheet that was live on four computers saved time for Legislators and their assistants. The live spreadsheet allowed them to view each other's funding choices, which supported the complete funding of several projects. Overall, the 2025 Legislative Session was very successful with the legislators expressing their appreciation for assisting them through the capital outlay process.

Mrs. Lee stated that she continues to develop a newsletter every other week with funding opportunities and important information. It also included the process for submitting a capital outlay request, the list of funded capital outlay projects, and the list of approved reauthorizations. Debi stated that she received requests from entities looking for funding for projects and technical assistance to apply for funding.

The Economic Development Capacity Building Program was committed to addressing the needs of communities seeking support for local government operations. The Village of Cloudfcroft has faced numerous challenges and changes in leadership, prompting the newly appointed Mayor to seek assistance on various issues and under this program, we have been able to help them. We also worked with the City of Artesia and they are hosting a wrap-up meeting to discuss the outcomes of their recent strategic planning session.

SNMEDD is required to update and revise the EDA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) every five years. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is a regional document that attempts to set a broad framework for economic development across all the jurisdictions and stakeholders in the southeastern New Mexico Region. The CEDS also serves to communicate the Region's economic development goals to State and Federal agencies, specifically EDA. The CEDS is crucial for participating in federal grant programs and strengthens funding applications by outlining a clear plan for economic growth. Ms. Lee stated that SNMEDD is one of seven Regional Councils providing planning, coordination, and technical support to their communities. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) aims to facilitate regional development by improving infrastructure and support systems, while fostering community advancement. She stated that she will use information from the entities Comprehensive Plans to include their goals and challenges with comprehensive strategies. The revised CEDS will be provided to the SNMEDD Board of Directors at the next Board meeting.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INFORMATION SHARING:

Donna Maestas from the Housing NMFA announced a new program that NMFA is offering which is the zero-interest home builder program. Donna left fliers on the table for the board members to take.

8. ADJOURN:

Adjourned at 12:15 pm.

APPROVED:



Sam Seely, President

7-11-25

Date

ATTESTED BY:



Dora Batista, Secretary

7-11-25

Date