

MONTEZUMA COUNTY BOCC 9/18/17

Brief summary of this days County Commission meeting. These are not minutes and contains the views of the author, for legal minutes, go to the County website and read the minutes. Also you can watch it live on computer via the website or watch edited re-broadcast on Mesa TV Channel 30.6 Saturday mornings 9 a.m.

COURT HOUSE is done and being “moved into”. Still some little “fixing” things for the next couple of weeks

ROADS reported that they are doing gravelling on the scheduled projects and finishing up Chip Sealing roads CC & 10. There has been increased winter X-Country skiing use on FS roads in the Chicken Creek area. County road 41 was getting more use causing county snow plows problems. The FS agreed to open up an area for skiers to park just inside their boundary. The Road Shop is switching to using LED lights and have found a \$900 savings already from April-August in Electric Bills.

FEDS were represented by the BLM only today. Parking lot for Sand Canyon was in question as the recent proposed addition was to provide for only a small handful of vehicles, not relieving the safety issues. Why was not the plan to provide more space? Because there might be some archaeological issues requiring a full mitigation, costing lots of \$\$\$\$. So, old “stuff” is more important than today’s human lives and recreation opportunity, apparently. RANGE allotment and use in the Monument is STILL having EA work done, after nearly 5 years still trying to “dot the i’s and cross the t’s to please the environmental corporations so they won’t sue the BLM (us). How much longer? They don’t know. Pretty bad when the environmental corporations have more control over our

government and the management of our resources than the State and County does. It was brought out that in a recent meeting in Washington that for the BLM to accomplish any project, takes an AVERAGE of 6 years in planning, even little things like a parking lot. All because of the environmental laws/regulations that serve no valid purpose. It was noted that several western state County's had experienced the federal agencies working hard to make management & work projects worse, to make the current White House administration look bad. *This is the result of politicizing land and resource management back in 1976.* There had been a request by a local family to donate 160 acres to Mesa Verde Nat. Park for better access to Yucca House Ruins (a satellite of the main park, SW of the Cortez Airport). The recent County Resolution for "no net loss" of private property was conflicting the proposal. The BLM said they could not be of any help, and the NP said they have no authority to dispose of any lands into private. It was noted that much prior to the resolution, the BOCC had agreed to the possible land donation or purchase to resolve the access issue, so the BOCC approved supporting the Donation on the grounds that it had preceded the Resolution. However specifically noted that there have been no other agreements so there will be NO further support for land donations, sales, etc. to the federal government without equal federal sales back into private tax base in the County. The Donator now has to seek Congressional action for it to happen.

DPW manager reported on wildlife issues in the region has been keeping them busy. Durango is dealing with a LOT of bear problems. Several bears have had to be put down, and many trapped and moved way out, but within 30 days were back in town. Several roadkills also. Problem is NO FOOD in the forests, ALSO in conducting some new

bear studies they have discovered that there are 2-3 times as many bears than they thought. *The enviro's don't want them hunted and managed, exacerbating the problem. Well maybe if those in Durango get their places raided by the bear they will change their minds?* The Invasive Mussel problem is still being worked on and praise was given locally for how local sportsmen/recreationists have been cooperative and understanding, at least for the most part. There will be new signs going up at the lakes better explaining the regulations. It was noted that the use of gas powered motors on boats is the one that is of concern regarding the mussel, NOT electric motors. Any restriction on electric motors is due to the reservoirs water rights holding irrigation or other owner, not the state. A Sportsmen Council is meeting next week to discuss funding sustainability for inspections. Question was asked about who can inspect. The state had contracted/trained mostly one organization, however could consider others. It was noted that the local marina could likely do it for ½ what the current cost is. That will be explored.

SOCIAL SERVICES will be planning for moving their operations into the Old Court House facility once the 22nd Judicial is fully out and in their new building.

MANCOS CONSERVATION DIST. explained their work projects and how they are working to reduce the irrigation water salinity into Mancos Creek. They are piping the main artery irrigation ditches. As a side note they will be experiencing changes to the aesthetics of the valley as the Cottonwoods along the ditches die off due to their water being cut off.. They would like to County to become a regular partner and contribute 3% of the Dist. budget needs, approximately \$15,000 in the coming year. Budgets are coming up soooo.

COUNTY ROAD MAP continued hearing was held. At issue was how to show the roads in the Summit areas on Roads 35.6, 36.9 and associated roads in the subdivision. It was noted that those subdivision roads were never constructed to County Standards, and were never proposed to be County roads, but have always been maintained by the subdivision owners. The problem arose due to the BLM wanting to install a gate to provide public use for equestrian and hiker use of the Public land there, likely a "pet project" for some? Local concerns was over WHO would maintain the road as they have been doing it themselves and at their own expense. The road is inadequate for passing other vehicles especially in the winter snows. The road will sustain damage from heavier use. Will the BLM put in a parking lot, or will there be illegal parking on the road and trespass on private lands? It was brought out that there were two issues at this time, one was how to designate the roads on the County Map, and second what to do about the BLM opening access, using the "private/public access" roads. The Planning and Roads Depts. Had proposed "Clarification" to the two roads designations of Red signed roads being Private with no County involvement and Green Signed roads being County owned and maintained. Question has always been What is Maintained? New proposal would further designate "surface" type and maintenance. A green road may be PAVED, GRAVEL FULL MAINTENANCE, GRADED ONCE A YEAR BUT NO WINTER MAINTENANCE, and PRIMITIVE, NO MAINTENANCE WINTER OR SUMMER. After good discussion the new road legend designation was adopted and the roads in question would be re-designated as green signed roads with surface of PRIMITIVE, NO MAINTENANCE, thus allowing the County to provide gravel to the subdivision for them to spread, helping in their cost. It was suggested

that the County should be looking for funding to bring the road up to standards that can be maintained for the public access and use. Also signage will need to be installed.