

**DRAFT**  
**MINUTES**  
**REAP BOARD MEETING**

January 12, 2017

11:45 a.m.

Front Range Airport, Watkins, CO

The monthly meeting of the I-70 Regional Economic Advancement Partnership was called to order at 12:00 p.m. by Gary Duke, who welcomed the attendees and called for introductions.

**The following Board Members were present:**

Wil Chase	Doug Claussen	Kristi Cranston	Gary Duke
Mark Harding	Kirk Holwell	Sandra Johnson	Steve Johnson
Robert Kiess	Frank Linnebur	Neal Mancuso	Robin Purdy
Glenn Rotkovich	Dave Ruppel	Kevin Schott	Jan Yeckes

**Board Members not present:**

Jeff Baker	Glenn Conser	Rick Cranston	Kathy Dean
Cyndi Delaney	Ivy Fischer	Michelle Gayeski	Mary Hodge
Al Holcomb	Monica Johnson	Norm Johnson	Gary May
Theresa NeSmith	Brad Pierce	Royce Pindell	Rich Pulliam
Matt Reay	Paul Rosenberg	Louis Salazar	Tom Turrell
Kent Vashus	Jeff Vogel	Becky Zierer	

**Guests attending were:**

Zach	Angotti	High Plains Bank
Rachel	Bacon	Adams County
Joeigh	Cardova	Byers School Counselor
Chris	Cary	Byers School Board Member
Kathy	Gebhardt	Lift One Lift All
Cynthia	Kiyotake	Arapahoe County Libraries
Grider	Lee	Town of Bennett Trustee
Josh	Liss	IREA
Jeff	Marck	Vogel & Associates
Connie	Moos	Guaranty Bank
Michelle	Murphy	Colorado Rural School Alliance
Trish	Stiles	Town of Bennett
Wayne	Walvoord	Consultant
Lori	Wisner	Adams County
Keith	Yaich	Bennett Schools

**Approval of the October 13, 2016 Minutes**

Minutes were approved as submitted.

**Chairman's Report:**

**Executive Director Report:**

Jack Keever made the board aware of a correction to the election of board members that was voted on at the November 10<sup>th</sup> 2016 meeting. Charles Bayley was an At Large member. Charles is no longer a Reap member and was replaced with Gary May which was not reflected correctly on the list. On a Motion by Neal Mancuso, seconded by Glenn Rotkovich, the correction was approved. It passed unanimously.

Jack asked Kathy Mahan to report on agritourism. Kathy reported that there are plans for two events in 2017 one in the spring and one in the fall. We are currently working on the transition of social media to Erin Brinkley-Burgardt with Hog Haven Farm. The Agritourism Committee will be meeting soon to plan the 2017 festivals.

**Guest Speakers:**

**Michelle Murphy, Executive Director – Colorado Rural School Alliance**

Michelle works closely with legislators to develop legislation and policies to address the needs of rural schools in Colorado. Input from the Colorado Rural School Alliance (CRSI) has led to the creation of bills and policies that directly benefit rural schools. Policy makers are beginning to turn to CRSI when they have questions regarding the impact of legislation or policies on rural school districts. Their goal is to increase the opportunities available to rural students in Colorado by working closely with industries and businesses to provide these new opportunities.

**Kathy Gebhardt, Executive Director – Children’s Voices**

Children's Voices is a non-profit law firm that advocates on behalf of school-age children in Colorado for equal access to a high-quality public education. Kathy works to change graduation requirements in schools to include industry certificates, career technologies and capstone projects in math and language arts.

Kathy and Michelle both tour Colorado rural schools to evaluate their needs and look for ways to forge partnerships with industries and students. They are looking for different pathways for rural children in Colorado, to keep rural kids rural. A 1 billion dollar budget cut has negatively impacted schools with a one size fits all approach. Rural schools with fewer opportunities feel the impacts more, sometimes forcing rural schools to consolidate.

Board Member Kristi Cranston talked about her husband’s experience growing up in a small town in South Dakota where consolidation of schools nearly destroyed the community.

Board Member Kevin Schott, Superintendent of Deer Trail Schools talked about the challenges that affect their District. Rural schools have the same requirements as large schools. He talked about the difficulty getting teacher positions filled and about a recent situation the District faced with trying to find a certified math teacher and couldn’t find one. Deer Trail is actively searching for grant funding to help build a new school in Deer Trail. The school will take 19 – 21 million to build. The District has 22.5 acres of donated land for the new school site.

**Other Business:**

The next Reap meeting is February 9, 2017.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.