

**DRAFT**  
**MINUTES**  
**REAP Meeting**

February 8, 2018

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 Chairman Gary Duke, who welcomed the attendees and called for introductions.

**The following Board Members were present:**

Wil Chase	Gary Duke	Mark Harding	Mary Hodge
Al Holcomb	Kirk Howell	Frank Linnebur	Christina Pastori
Glenn Rotkovich	Tom Turrell	Jan Yeckes	Becky Zierer

**Guests attending were:**

Don	Ament	Former Agriculture Commissioner
Sara	Aragon	Town of Bennett
Craig	Curl	SBDC
Jeff	Hopkins	Front Range RV
Julio	Iturreria	Citizen
Ronnie	Johnson	FAN
Jack	Keever	Reap
Zach	Magaley	Wave
Kathy	Mahan	Reap
Tim	McCawley	Bennett-Watkins Fire & Rescue
Tom	McEniry	Kazmira
Megan	Mosher	Ft. Morgan Community Hospital
Peg	Otto	Ranch owner
Aaron	Rotkovich	Lead Valley Range
Bob	Stewart	Hillside Country Homes
Rachel	Summers	Town of Bennett
Steven	Vetter	I-70 Publishing
Kathy	Wisner	Morgan Community College
Jennifer	Woods	Adams County

**Approval of the January 11, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

Minutes were approved as submitted.

**Chairman's Report:**

No Report

**Executive Director Report:**

Jack reported that Reap is working on a new website and it should be live in a month or two. At the March 8<sup>th</sup> meeting will be about renewable energy with Xcel Energy. On the 12<sup>th</sup> of April we will be getting an update from Conoco/Phillips. At the June 14<sup>th</sup> meeting Adams County is sponsoring a business town hall.

**Guest Speakers:**

**Don Ament, former State Agriculture Commissioner** came to tell us a thing or two about agriculture. Agriculture contributes 41 billion in economic activity and is the second contributor to the Colorado economy. Over 34,200 farms and ranches employ 173,000 people. Beef is the number one agriculture industry in the state contributing 4 billion to the economy. Several large operation dairies in the state have herds of up to 5,000 cows.

These operations operate 24/7 and the cows are milked three times a day. Other agricultural products are corn, hay, wheat and hemp. There are 5,000 acres in hemp which creates challenges with water. The Feds don't allow water from federally funded facilities to be used on hemp or marijuana. People on the average spend 7% of their disposable income on groceries which is much less than other countries. 90,000 acres of water goes down the South Platte River basin to support endangered species in Grand Island Nebraska as part of the Endangered Species Act. Agriculture is very water intensive and we need to develop ways to store and use less water. Agriculture is important for quality of life and important to the state's economy. Other issues rural areas face is the need for transportation and schools. Labor force is another important issue for rural areas. Sakata Farms is no longer growing corn and moving their operations towards crops that are less labor intensive because they are unable to find the workforce to work in the fields.

**Tim McCawley, Assistant Chief EMS Division – Bennett-Watkins Fire Rescue** – The Bennett-Watkins Fire Rescue services a 325 square mile area and provides mutual aid assistance to other surrounding departments. Calls have increased from 600 annually to 1,200 over the past 5 years. As the community continues to grow the District faces increasing demand for emergency services, staff and equipment. Currently the District has 4 fire stations and 2 stations are staffed full time. It's more difficult to service rural areas due to the lack of hydrants, so water has to be brought on each call. The District would like to see a stand-alone 24 hour ER facility in the Corridor. A trip to an ER is a 2 hour turn-around time, leaving the Corridor short on emergency services. The District responds to fires, medical emergencies, technical rescues and clean-up of hazardous waste spills.

Craig Curl – Would an ER be required to have a heliport?  
Yes

Julio Iturreria – Does the fire department work with surrounding water districts to fight fires?  
Yes the District can use any available water; it takes from 25,000 – 50,000 gallons of water on average per call.

**Other Business:**

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.