

DRAFT
MINUTES

REAP Business Meeting

October 14, 2021

12:00 p.m.

Zoom Meeting ID#761-014-5598

The monthly meeting of the I-70 Regional Economic Advancement Partnership was called to order at 12:05 p.m. by Chair Kirk Howell, who welcomed the attendees and called for introductions.

The following Board Members were present:

Jeff Baker	Ivy Craig	Michelle Gayeski	Kirk Holwell
Kevin Hougren	Gary May	Glenn Rotkovich	Tom Turrell
Becky Zierer			

Guests attending were:

Tracy	Carter	RE/Max
Kip	Cheroutes	Reap
Loretta	Daniel	Arapahoe County
Nick	Eagleson	Adams County
Lori	Hague	Colorado Air & Space Port
John	Igbokwe	CMMC Practice Consulting
Kathy	Mahan	Reap
Ryan	Nalty	Adams County
Whitney	Oakley	Anythink
Wes	Price	Reflective Wellness
Justin	Reyher	Beacon Real Estate
Jayson	Reynolds	Arapahoe County
Gretchen	Ricehill	Arapahoe County
Ferdinand	Rouse	
Kathy	Smiley	I-70 Publishing

Shannelle	White	Arapahoe/Douglas Works
Lynette	White	Town of Bennett
Caroline	Woodhouse	
Eric	Zacharias	Anythink Library
Erin		

Approval of September 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes:

Minutes were approved as submitted.

Chairman Report:

Executive Director Report:

There was a memo I sent along with my invoice, so if anyone wants to see what I was up to in September, please get a hold of that summary from Kathy. It showed a wide breath of opportunities going on in the Reap Corridor. I have 4 key initiatives or projects I want to pursue immediately. I don't want to wait for a Reap Board meeting to discuss plans for 2022. I want to get cooking on this as quickly as possible. Number 1 Reap does have an agriculture committee. Kathy and I want to get a good handle of who is still out there in the corridor. After COVID who is still willing to be a tourism destination? Who gave up and who left town? So Kathy has put out a questionnaire survey to the know agricultural contacts we have out there. Kathy how many people got that survey? 28 people. The questions out there, are you still out there do have plans for 2022? What would you like Reap to do? So that is going to give us a good sense of data. Possibly starting next month, we can start a robust 2022 initiative. Once we get that information we can start with some direct marketing. According to Kevin Hougen with the Aurora Chamber there are 9 military units in the Aurora area. These are units associated with the Buckley Space Force. These are units with associated families, so maybe there is a way to connect up military families with agritourism. Is there a military family day at the farm? Is there a military day at Becky's farm, alpaca place? Becky, you had a tremendous Denver Post pictorial on your alpacas. I sent that out to 8 people so far, friends, media contacts, it was a wonderful pictorial and that's the kind of energy I want to bring into this. So we will be reaching out to those military units to see if they would be interested in a family military day at the farm. Number 2, in Byers Colorado there is now a major enterprise in operation. Apex Agricultural is the name of the LLC that operates in Byers at May Farms. They are currently finishing their 2021 hemp harvest. 300,000 lbs. of biomass are being harvested, flower and fiber. It's more than just a hemp crop. It is a hemp crop that is envisioned to start plug a higher end industrial campus off I-70 at Byers. You will see greenhouses, you will see vertical farming, research and development. This is an entrepreneur enterprise. The reason I'm bringing this up is we have a governor who is super excited about possibilities around hemp enterprises. The governor's office is already aware of Apex Agriculture and is aware of our activities. In 2022, the Colorado Department of

Agricultural will be interviewing, inspecting, and choosing statewide hemp enterprises that could make for candidate hemp ventures that the governor is proposing for next years budget. There is going to be a beauty pageant of hemp enterprises that is starting to go on now with the Department of Agriculture. The Governor's office special advisor gave me a complete run down of where we are going and how long it's going to take timelines and all of that. So, we are going to make Apex Agriculture a high advocacy project, with the goal being to win this beauty pageant and be one of the Governor's spotlight candidate enterprises. It's more than just hemp, it's hemp that leads the way for a whole array of other agriculture production. Number 3, on all my research on transportation funding that's coming down through CDOT to the counties, something kept popping out at me. There will be energy vehicle (EV) charging stations. What do these stations look like? Where will they be and how many plug ins will there be? None of those questions have answers yet. CDOT will be coming up in 2022 and 2023 with answers to where are they going to be and what are they going to look like. It seems to me because we have a long stretch that goes out to the eastern plains of Colorado perhaps Deer Trail would be a candidate for EV station location. Deer Trail is far enough away from the Denver Metro Area and other EV charging stations. E-470 for example, already has ideas in their mind EV stations along E-470. We want to get further to the east so that motorist coming in from Kansas may have an opportunity to charge up in Deer Trail Colorado. What can you do with an EV station? Like transit-oriented development, is there a possibility of an EV station oriented to development, could you find a retail operation that could surround an EV charging station? Think of this as the 2021 version of rest stops. Can there be rest and refreshments? I think Deer Trail would be a good location because it is a municipality, it has a town and there is good local control here. On my list of things to do is to start to put my crazy idea together to see if there is a feasibility of doing an EV charging station in Deer Trail. The 4th initiative or project is an expanded communications operation out of Reap. Yes, we have monthly meetings where we have spectacular speakers come and tell us about what is going on in their various jurisdictions. But maybe we could expand that through the power of zoom. Can we get national experts, can we get other national experts to tell us about rural development and hemp development? I would like to start scheduling, planning, and executing Reap sponsored zoominars to draw in leaders, community leaders, people who would be interested to know what is going on with the industries, activities, and communities that Reap represents. That is a quick 4 pack of ideas I want to explore and get cracking on as soon as possible. Individual Reap members, directors please let me know. Next week I see we meet in person out at Front Range restaurant or send a message to Kathy with questions or concerns, drop me a line. I want to start filling in these gaps of ways to go. Now is an important time where both Adams and Arapahoe Counties start developing their economic development budgets for next year. In that time comes separate grants to economic development entities. We are fortunate that we get from both Adams and Arapahoe Counties a chunk of change, but it is our responsibility to provide them with a return on investment on how we are going to use this money, what are the metrics we are setting aside for each of these projects, so I'm currently putting together a memo for both Counties Reap's 2022 activities, plans, metrics and that whole thing. Commissioner Baker you and I will talk about this in greater detail tomorrow at coffee. Any questions or comments I would be happy to take.

Ryan Nalty: If you are looking a rural or regional development, I know just the organization I would love to put you in touch with. They are a rural assistance partnership if you haven't heard of Reap before. They focus mainly on water infrastructure, but they have moved into broader economic development, and they have a good national reach, their western office use to be here in Denver so I know the lead on that, and I would love to help you guys out there.

Kevin Hougen: Also, a reminder that Denver is building Spur at I-70 and the old Western Stock Show area being redeveloped and there is a big hydra program for water. They are moving the veterinarian school at CSU down and it's going to be 20 minutes from Gary May's farm. I think we have an even greater opportunity to expand the partnership with the Spur facility being built around agriculture and of course around water. It's a wonderful opportunity to connect with the veterinary school and all that is going on around the I-70 Corridor.

Kip Cheroutes: I see partnerships with CSU. With the local school districts, formal education with K – 12 , vertical production, hemp production offers new curriculum to these kids. There will be a need for technical schools for a different focus on agriculture , yes on hemp and vertical techniques but especially forming techniques that address greenhouse gas emissions. The State of Colorado is going to be under a brand-new set of greenhouse gas reduction rules that CDOT is coming out with. These are going to be massive new rules. Even in the farm community, greenhouse gas reduction is going to be a major driver of economic decisions I predict in 2022 and beyond. So how do we educate the future farmers, ag producers of the future supply chain of new agriculture techniques under a new greenhouse regime.

Tom Turrell: I'm the school superintendent of Byers and everything you have said is very interesting and intriguing and I just wanted to mention I would like to see my kids be on ground for possible internships and exploring those things. We see our kids leave this area and they never come back. The thing I do get kids sticking around here for is the agriculture culture that they grew up with and they stay home and continue to farm, and I think this is an opportunity. Sometimes in the past our internships are difficult for our community because you are talking about our juniors and seniors, and you barely get them trained and they leave so it's a constant training cycle. I see this as an opportunity for my younger kids starting as freshmen starting to track them through their internship all the way through high school into technical school through their post-secondary, so I think this is a great opportunity for the area and for the students. I would like it to be know that Byers would like to be in there for that opportunity.

Kip Cheroutes: Certainly, you have always been the greatest in my mind. Internships, a terrific idea. Maybe we could host a zoom meeting for high school kids about job opportunity and career opportunities of the new way of ag. I think that is an appropriate direction for Reap to go as an economic development initiative the next generation.

Tom Turrell: The principal, counselor and I have been talking about internship opportunities and reaching out to Front Range Airport because I do have some kids that are interested in aviation.

Kip Cheroutes: Okay so we will talk again soon.

Kevin Hougen: Tom another great opportunity is paid apprenticeship program grants. The governor has got money to put into paid apprenticeship programs. The Colorado Department of Labor under Joe

Borella, they have some money out there so there might be a way to pay these students for internships instead of free.

Guest Speakers:

Ryan Nalty, Economic Development Director - Adams County

Ray has been pulled away today for an interesting conversation with Tri-County Health. I have Libby Tart and Nick Eagleson as part of my team here with me today so I will ping pong with them a little bit. I want to go over a little bit about what Adams County sees as important along the I-70 Corridor. I think one of those you guys have heard a little bit about is our Advanced Adams, our Comprehensive Plan. I will let Libby give a brief update as we enter the final phase of that.

Libby Tart: We are about half-way or two thirds of the way through the phase II portion of the campaign. We have finished off with the mass majority of our community outreach that's in the form of public meetings and we are in the throws of developing future land use categories and future land use map that will be an update to our 2012 Comp Plan. We do have a new survey going out through the month of October and we are asking people about scenario planning and that's out there to the public on our website, it also includes Parks and Transportation and it's about a 5 -10-minute survey. Can you advocate to your groups and yourself to take this survey? We can provide you with a November update.

Ryan Nalty: We want to make sure the voice of the eastern part of the county is being heard and taken into , with the Comprehensive Plan. We want to make sure your voice is heard in the Comprehensive Plan moving forward. I do have an update from our public works team on the transport side. One of the things that we are working with Arapahoe County about some interchange improvements at I-70 and State Hwy 70 exit south of Bennett and the other one is Arapahoe, the County and CDOT are talking about an interchange study on I-70, I'm still trying to figure out the details on that. Do the interchanges out on I-70 fit the needs and usage patterns we see in that area. We will have more info on that moving forward. There is a lot of development happening out in the Colorado Air & Space Port (CASP) area. I will hand you over to Nick about the sub-area plan and master plan we are doing specifically at the Space Port. We are talking to Aurora City Government right now about coordinating the effort. A lot of the development is going to need utilities, municipal water and others, so we want to make sure we are all on the same page as we are working on the development. We will be coming out to you guys for stakeholder outreach as we start moving forwards.

Nick Eagleson: To give you a recap of the sub-area boundary it's 72nd out to the north, Hudson Road to the east and Harback Road to the west and I-70 to the south. This will be a guide to review any future development proposals, looking at details like looking at land use, infrastructure but mainly focused on land use in landing areas. We received approval from the Planning Commission back in August and is going to the Board of County Commissioners on November 2nd for ratification. So we are getting really close to the finish line.

Ryan Nalty: We are also doing a Space Port Master Plan right now and it's moving into it's final phase. You will be getting outreach as necessary as external stakeholders. More broadly CASP Dave Ruppel has retired as the Director of CASP. We are in the process of getting a new director in place right now. I've

seen through some potential candidates. We have some very impressive people looking at the job. Hopefully that will move rather quickly. We are having a little bit of a leadership change. As you drive by CASP a lot of dirt is being moved in the area around the Space Port. We have the Port Colorado Project which is about 7,000 acres and then Rocky Mountain Rail Park. Both are starting to move on their own developing internal. They are not on CASP property but directly adjacent to it, so we are partnering with them on a lot of the aspects they are looking at. The City of Aurora is working on the port side, and we are helping Rocky Mountain because they are on unincorporated parts of the County. We are going to put fencing around the entire Space Port. We are one of the largest GA aviation locations in Colorado that does not has security fencing, so we are going to rectify that. We have received some Federal dollars and we are going to be putting in general funds to put a fence around the entire CASP. That doesn't only help with security TSA and FAA requirements but also gives reassurance to people as they bring in larger equipment, very expensive corporate jets they would have the level of protection that they are looking for. We do have a lot of interest from companies which some I can't talk about right now because it's not common knowledge. We have Dawn Aerospace Kiwi Company have signed a MOU to work with us. They have been doing a lot of testing in New Zealand and they will be looking to bring that testing to the US operated out of CASP. PD Aerospace, which is the Japanese Company we have been working with are moving forward with their testing in Japan. Probably in the next year or two they will be bringing their technology over to the US to get FAA certification in. We have a lot of other companies looking at CASP, individual usage, corporate usage, and traditional aerospace. We have seen some companies talking about cargo operations. We are really lucky to have that UP rail line running to the south. We are working on an economic development strategy the first one we have ever had. Kip we would love to talk to you about that because marijuana and others is one that sits within our department, and it would behoove us to have that conversation and a broader conversation because I think we should look at that as a county government but would love Reap's involvement to bringing that back to bear. And we are looking at broad recovery efforts because COVID was hard on a lot of folks, so we are still in a longer-term recovery. That's were ARPA the recovery plan, Act money comes to bear which we should be getting out here. The first payment should be going out at the beginning of the year.

Kip Cheroutes: What are the public comment deadlines?

Nick Eagleson: The comment period has already taken place, that was part of the outreach and planning process before it went to the Planning Commission a couple of months ago. We are drawing close to the finish line.

Kip Cheroutes: One thing I will make a comment on. I testified in a course in FAA on behalf Adams County for the Space Port license in the first place. My comment was favorable. I also asked about the infrastructure needed for fuel, now you will have jet and rocket fuel. What are the emergency procedures and policies you need to deal with now that your have 2 fuel farms? Does that complicate things or is one fuel farm the same as the other? I'm still interested in that as a county safety issue. The other is a county safety issue is to the east as vehicles will fly to the east, I hate to use this expression but a crash zone, over the fields of Bennett and Strasburg. Is there something in that plan that takes into

account that possibility? Buckley does have a Space Port with F16's and they do have a crash pad off the base. Is there plans if something goes drastically wrong to the east?

Ryan Nalty: As part of getting the FAA certification we actually needed a safety zone and you need to let all the landowners in that safety zone know what it is. We are not looking at technology coming into the Space Port which creates a strong hazard. A lot of the horizontal capabilities we are looking at Space Port operate like aircraft. It's a runway to low earth orbit type of scenario. None of them are working with complex or difficult fuels so it wouldn't be more than you would have with a jet. Some of them are working with hydrogen peroxide as do not take as much of environmental concern. We are putting together how all that safety will move but we are also making conscience choices not to get into certain subsets of the space industry that require a lot of safety. The Town of Bennett and Space Port actually have a strategic agreement if emergency services are needed. We are looking at technology where it's not a dramatic change from a corporate airport.

Kip Cheroutes: You can expect from Reap support letters just tell us where and when.

Development Updates:

Justun Reyher: I'm working on a project near Strasburg off of I-70 and Comanche Crossing. There is a first and second filing for residential and we are working on the third filing. We have the zoning complete, and we are making good headway on the final plat applications. We hope to have everything addresses and submitted by next week. Hopefully we will have our approvals by the end of the year.

Gary May: I want to go on to take the Apex to the next level. It isn't just a hemp operation we are also trying to produce food on a local basis. Trying to do things on greenhouses and working on developing more locally sustainable food system that will work in conjunction with this expanding group of population that's coming into our region. Also working on things like water technology, technology in farming and agriculture as well as taking advantage of different energy situations that can come from the hemp product. Hemp product as we have defined it will be more of a fiber product and that should affect most of the agricultural people in the eastern part of these counties. To the Adams County people, we would like to be able to add another rotation into an agronomic reason that farmers could use less chemicals to control weeds. The weed issue for the farmers is becoming major because these weeds become tolerant of the products, we use on them. We have also found that there are certain insects that are attacking our wheat crops that even if they could genetically make a product that will detour such things there will be another come possibly tomorrow which will be just as deadly. It's going to be more than just a hemp project. The hemp fiber is a biodegradable product that can be used in so many ways to integrate into our lives. When you think of Apex, think of different things we can do in the way of technology in agriculture and energy.

Other Business:

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:55 p.m.