

## Hickenlooper Opens CCI Annual Winter Conference

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Governor Hickenlooper received the REAL Colorado seal of approval from REAL Colorado Chair and Weld County Commissioner Barbara Kirkmeyer.

Commissioners and councilmembers from sixty of Colorado’s sixty-four counties were in attendance for Governor John Hickenlooper’s opening address at CCI’s Winter Conference. Governor Hickenlooper began by acknowledging the close working relationship he and his staff have with CCI.

He then stressed that the number one priority for his administration is job creation. He touted Colorado’s 8.1% unemployment rate and the recent success Colorado has had in adding jobs to the economy. Arrow Electronic, a global provider of electronic components and enterprise computing solutions, recently announced their move to Colorado. Governor Hickenlooper explained that one of the reasons why Arrow Electronics moved to Colorado is because the state branches government work together better than other states. He referenced the passage of last year’s budget with bipartisan support to illustrate how

well we do work together.

Governor Hickenlooper updated attendees on the implementation of Executive Order 5: Establishing a Policy to Enhance the Relationship between State and Local Government. In implementing this executive order, Colorado Department of Human Services’ Executive Director Reggie Bicha and his staff identified over 800 rules for repeal and an additional 2,000 rules that need to be revised.

He also spoke about the Colorado Benefits Management System (CBMS) and how it fits into the larger Health Care Exchange conversations. Governor Hickenlooper explained that some of the federal health care dollars can be used to improve and modernize CBMS. However, he further stated that CBMS needs to be rebuilt. Users – including county departments of human services – should not have to deal with a clumsy system.

The Governor then turned his attention to oil and gas development in Colorado. In light of increased exploration along the Front Range, state and local regulations are in the news again. He stressed that finding balance between state and local regulations is essential and cited the recent Gunnison MOU process as one positive example of that balance. He further explained that while Colorado needs oil and gas development for economic development, the state must also maintain the strongest environmental protections in the nation. Arapahoe County Commissioner Rod Bockenfeld requested that the state use the increased revenues coming from oil and gas development to hire more well inspectors. The Governor agreed that more inspection would be beneficial and the state could hire more in the future.

Governor Hickenlooper concluded by appealing to attendees to apply for state boards and commissions. He said his goal is to ensure geographical representation on state boards and commissions. That goal, however, can only be achieved if local leaders and their constituents submit their names for consideration.

# Colorado Blueprint: An Adaptable Plan for Economic Development



Mr. Ken Lund, the Executive Director for the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT), joined conference attendees at their lunch on Tuesday, November 29<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Lund has served in this role since late June and has focused on executing the local, regional and state-wide economic development plans developed in the first half of 2011.

Director Lund presents OEDIT's Colorado Blueprint six state initiatives.

Mr. Lund highlighted the six state initiatives outlined in the Colorado Blueprint. Those six are: I.) Build a Business-Friendly Environment; II.) Retain, Grow and Recruit Companies; III.) Increase Access to Capital; IV.) Create and Market a Stronger Colorado Brand; V.) Educate and Train the Workforce of the Future and VI.) Cultivate Innovation and Technology. Each initiative includes a series of tactics. Mr. Lund elaborated on some of them to illustrate the work that is being done to foster a more competitive Colorado that will drive job growth. For example, under initiative II., the Governor and Mayor Hancock will lead an economic development trip to California and will visit with companies that have a strong presence

in Colorado. The Governor and Mayor will be looking at how to grow these relationships and how to connect California's innovation technologies and venture capital with Colorado. Under initiative VI., the Governor recently announced the Colorado Innovation Network (COIN). COIN's objectives include pursuing capital for project funding, establishing Colorado as the most innovative state and creating a workforce with the right talent and job skills.

Mr. Lund emphasized that the Colorado Blueprint is a living document that will change. Input from throughout the state has helped make the blueprint stronger and more relevant. The current version clarifies leadership roles and accountability. It also specifies timelines and measureable outcomes. OEDIT will publish updated versions on an annual basis.

Mr. Lund concluded by stating that he is committed to "increasing the metabolism of government" and that he is confident the state can do better at building faster, effective and efficient systems. He also acknowledged the heat he has taken for reorganizing OEDIT without better advance notice. Under this plan, OEDIT will rely on the skills of the Department of Local Affairs field representatives to support their work.

## CCI Legislative Reception

Colorado Counties Inc.  
Legislative Reception  
Thursday, January 19, 2012  
5 – 7 p.m.

CCI  
800 Grant Street  
Suite 500 (5<sup>th</sup> Floor)  
Denver, Colorado 80203

Please plan to attend this informal reception for  
Legislators, County Commissioners, Mayors & Councilmembers.

# District Meetings

## Eastern District

The first order of business in the Eastern District was the re-election of Yuma County Commissioner Trent Bushner to serve as the Eastern District Board Representative. Congratulations Commissioner Bushner! Washington County Commissioner David Foy has completed his service on CCI's Board of Directors. Thank you Commissioner Foy for your leadership and service to CCI over the years!

Elbert County Commissioner John Shipper spoke about the water project that Mr. Karl Nyquist was proposing earlier this year. While the proposed project has been withdrawn, it garnered a lot of public and media attention earlier this summer and fall. In summary, there were two aspects to the proposed project: 1.) ditch water from Prowers County would be pumped to Elbert County and 2.) water in Elbert County would be pumped and sold to the Cherokee Water District in El Paso County. In response to this experience, the Elbert County Commissioners have hired water experts to advise the board and have passed a resolution stating that no decisions on water supply matters will occur for 12 months.

Washington County Commissioner David Foy led a discussion about health care costs in jails. He explained that Washington County, Logan County and Morgan County have collaboratively hired a single company to provide medical services to their jails over the last three years. Costs, however, have continued to rise. So, Washington County will contract with a new company that has said it can help the county reduce their health care expenditures. Lincoln County explained that they contract with the local hospital for health care services in their jail and Kit Carson County indicated that they rely on local doctors to provide their health care services.

Yuma County Commissioner Robin Wiley updated the district on the status of the Bonny Reservoir. Water from the reservoir is currently being released and the reservoir is expected to be dry in Janu-



Washington County Commissioner David Foy makes a point during the Eastern District Meeting.

ary 2012. Yuma County is currently researching the possibility of owning and maintaining the facilities and campground associated with the reservoir. The county commissioned a business plan which emphasized the need to replace the water sports with other activities, like horse and ATV trails, that would attract visitors. While conversations are ongoing with state, Yuma County is adamant about the fact that the former reservoir and its facilities must cash flow itself if the county is to own it.

Representatives of EAGLE-NET, an intergovernmental entity operating a cost-sharing consortium in Colorado to provide high-speed broadband infrastructure, also joined the Eastern District. EAGLE-NET received \$100.6 million in federal funding to deploy broadband to 234 schools, libraries and community colleges throughout the state by August 2013. EAGLE-NET's goal is to provide the 'middle mile' of broadband infrastructure. The 'middle mile' is the segment of telecommunications network between the network's backbone and the last mile (think beanpole project) connection to a home, business or other individual end user.

## Front Range Meeting

The Front Range District meeting was called to order by President Sallie Clark, El Paso County Commissioner. Introductions were made and there were 34 commissioners, administrators and staff from all ten front range counties.

President Clark then conducted an election for the district board representative and Commissioner Jack Hilbert, Douglas County, was elected to be the representative.

Nick Boudreau, an environmental protection specialist with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), then gave a presentation on the waste tire program. Nick spoke of HB10-1018, a bill dealing with waste tires that have been illegally dumped or abandoned, and explained that the bill created a program designed to provide grants to counties and municipalities for expenditures related to the disposal, recycling or reuse of waste tires. CDPHE is in the process of compiling a statewide inventory of illegally dumped waste tire piles to be used to prioritize waste tire pile cleanups throughout the state. He urged anyone knowing of an illegal waste tire pile to fill out the Colorado Illegal Waste Tire Cleanup Grant form at <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/oeis/wtprog/>

[wastetire.html](#). Nick Boudreau may also be reached at 303.692.3459 or [nicholas.boudreau@state.co.us](mailto:nicholas.boudreau@state.co.us). For further questions.

Commissioner Barbara Kirkmeyer, Weld County, then gave the treasurer's report. She stated that CCI is trying to increase non dues revenue by exploring partnerships with non-profits, establishing a corporate associate program and increasing event sponsorships.

Commissioner Don Rosier, Jefferson County, then initiated a discussion of oil and gas regulations and the current state of the industry in Colorado. There were numerous issues brought up by the various counties who are grappling with the role of county commissioners, their legal and civic responsibilities, and their duty to the public in dealing with the oil and gas industry and the current state of affairs. Specific issues that were addressed included fracking; well cleanups, including water use and reclamation; economic impact on counties; health and land use issues; and how to educate citizens and county staff as to possible impacts of the increased activity in the metro area. There were also suggestions that commissioner's work with the Colorado Oil and Gas Association (COGA) to improve and update regulations on drilling.

The question was raised by President Sallie Clark as to how CCI can communicate better and lobby as a group regarding current regulations. Chip Taylor informed the group that CCI has scheduled meetings in the past but there was low interest: however, since there has been increased activity, the CCI summer conference may be a proper venue for such a meeting. The attendees suggested that CCI needs to increase involvement and communication with industries. Also, that a task force should be formed within CCI to discuss similarities and differences in the state and that the task force should include both urban and rural representatives. In addition, working groups with industry and citizens should be established to deal with the issues. Since there are so many issues coming forth with increased activity by the industry, President Clark urged board members to ask the CCI board for formal subcommittee designation to deal with the fracking and oil development issues that have recently come to light. This should also include use of natural resources, land use, restoration of impacted roads, water issues, influence of TABOR on tax structures and other attendant issues that counties are experiencing.

The meeting continued with commissioners giving accounts of what is happening in each of the member counties.



Pitkin County Commissioner Rachel Richards listens during the Mountain District meeting.

## Mountain District

Mountain District President Commissioner Nancy Stuart of Grand County presided over the CCI Mountain District Meeting on November 29 during the CCI Winter Conference in Colorado Springs. Representatives from twelve of the thirteen counties in the district were present at the meeting.

Commissioner Thomas Davidson (Summit) was elected to a second term as

Mountain District Representative on the CCI Board of Directors. Congratulations, Thomas!

Commissioners heard a presentation from Shana Baker and Brian Gaboriau of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) on the state's Illegal Waste Tire Cleanup Grant Program. The program is part of an effort by the department to create a statewide inventory of illegally dumped or abandoned waste tire piles and prioritize the piles for cleanup. The program provides grants to local governments for expenditures related to the disposal, recycling or reuse of waste tires. The grants are available on a year-round basis. Fremont County used the program to help clean up an illegal tire dump that had more than 10,000 tires.

Commissioner Stuart led a roundtable discussion on economic development efforts in the region. DOLA Executive Director Reeves Brown set the stage for the session when he noted that "It is not the role of government to create jobs. Our job is to facilitate the discussion and create an environment that is friendly to business. **They** are the ones who create the jobs."

A number of counties discussed the success of the Pro Challenge bicycle race last year, which held a series of stage races throughout the state. The event was a huge success, resulting in a boost in tourism and sales tax revenue. Several counties in the Mountain District are vying to host race stages at next year's Pro Challenge. Park County also feels that the success of the race will help spur interest in their plan for a multi-county regional bike path.

There were a wide number of creative economic development efforts detailed at the meeting, including:

Grand County has started a marketing campaign encouraging residents to do their Christmas shopping locally. In addition to buying traditional gifts from local stores, the campaign also suggests purchasing gift certificates for various services (oil changes, massages, etc.) in lieu of gifts.

Custer County has included an emphasis in its land use master plan on economic development and support for small town businesses.

Eagle County noted that the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments has formed an economic development district which will allow the region to avoid federal red tape in its grant applications.

Park County has been working with an entrepreneur to open a wild game processing business that would serve the large number of hunters in the county. Commissioner Mark Dowaliby noted that the Town of Alma is producing the “strongest medicinal marijuana in the country.”

Summit County is increasing their artisan and historical tourism offerings, in the hopes that this cultural experience will appeal to non-skiers, thus help expand their tourism season into the summer. A water taxi service has also started at Dillon Reservoir.

Teller County is working with the City of Colorado Springs’ utility to provide them with woody biomass to be used as fuel. The county is also working on streamlining its permitting and plan review process to stimulate new building and economic development.

Pitkin County is working on a runway lengthening project at its airport which could increase air service to the region. They also have an energy efficiency retrofit program which is creating new jobs and are acquiring new open space parcels to protect and enhance the region’s livability.

Eagle County worked with CDOT on a \$5 million dollar highway widening project that created safer road shoulders for cyclists.

A number of other counties voiced frustration with federal government agencies, especially the U.S. Forest Service, for impeding economic development opportunities. Jackson County noted that the Forest Service environ-

mental regulations are preventing logging in the area, which hurts the local sawmill. Their hunting economy has also been impacted by regulations that are impeding hunters’ ability to drive into an area to remove their kill. Gilpin County had sought to move a cell tower to a higher elevation on some Forest Service land in order to increase phone reception in the region, but was denied.

The next meeting of the CCI Mountain District is tentatively scheduled for June 5 in Keystone at the CCI Summer Conference.

## Southern District

Southern District President, Scott King, Huerfano County, called the meeting to order where fourteen of the fifteen counties were present. The first order of business elected Keith Goodwin as the new CCI Board Member for the district. Andy Karsian, CCI staff member, gave a summary of PILT and Secure Rural Schools (SRS) payment information and legislative updates. Congress did not act to reauthorize payments for SRS and PILT payments will occur for one more year. Congress is looking at legislation that would reauthorize SRS and PILT for the coming years, but the bill has a long, difficult road to passage.



Mineral County Commissioner Chuck Fairchild and Saguache County Commissioner Linda Joseph listen during the Southern District meeting.

The majority of the district meeting centered around regional conversations concerning transmission line development. Counties in the district grouped themselves into regional areas comprising of the eastern plains, eastern valley/I-25 corridor and western valley. The regions discussed the different land use codes for transmission line applications currently in place and where opportunities may arise for streamlining the process. Currently, the entire process for transmission line development varies to reflect the individual values of the county. Historically, this has not presented challenges, except in extreme situations, however, historically transmission line development only crossed a few county lines at a time. With ambitious transmission line build out expected in the future, many

more counties are now involved that had not been involved in the past.

## Western District

Commissioner Kellie Hotter was unanimously reelected as Western District CCI Board of Directors representative. There were fourteen of the sixteen counties present with 50 commissioners, administrators and guests at the meeting.

Commissioner Hotter was asked by the district members to do three things as their board representative:

- Revisit the administrative costs for CCI administering Public Lands Steering Committee;
- Request that the CCI Board of Directors provide the membership with information about Board decisions. Options suggested were: email Western District counties, have a report in *E-CountyLines*, or have a report in the quarterly publication of *County Lines*.
- Explore video conferencing so the most district counties of the Western District could participate more fully rather than drive to Denver for Steering Committee meetings.

**REAL Colorado:** Arapahoe County Commissioner Susan Beckman and chairperson of CCI's HHS Steering Committee presented a rationale for why the HHS Steering Committee and CCI need to pursue REAL Colorado, a brief history, current status and future direction for REAL Colorado. Fundamental to REAL's effort is to encourage the state and counties to be **R**esponsive, **E**fficient, **A**ccountable and to have **L**ocal-state partnerships that are meaningful.

Commissioners raised concerns about the state legislature adopting REAL principles. How to make it happen? It would take a cultural shift that the General Assembly is unlikely to make. It was suggested that it would take a grassroots effort by the citizenry not the legislature. One difficulty in these times of budget cutbacks, the legislature has turned to micro-management bills that are encroaching on county autonomy.

**Local Technology Planning Teams (LTPT):** Frank Ohrtman, communication manager, Office of Information Technology, presented an overview of the state and counties' progress to upgrade broadband data development at the county level. Community broadband emphasizes three things: all solutions are local, no one size fits all and it does not take millions of dollars to bring gigabit per second service to counties. Currently there are seven such

LTPT's in the state.

Mr. Ohrtman outlined a seven step process to a successful planning team's work to upgrade broadband: (1) aggregate experience, (2) assess broadband environment, (3) assess demand, (4) aggregate demand, (5) aggregate resources, (6) aggregate solutions and (7) aggregate sustainability. For more information: Frank Ohrtman 303-910-5968 [frank.ohrtman@state.co.us](mailto:frank.ohrtman@state.co.us)

**Waste Tire Program** Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment briefly described the current waste tire program to rid the state of the 62 million waste tires found mostly in unincorporated counties throughout the state. The fund is supported by a \$1.50 fee collected on all new tires sold in the state. A public entity must apply for the grant yet counties can hire a private contractor to dispose of the waste tires. There is no application deadline, the grant is a cost reimbursement contract and through year's end there is \$900,000 still available. For further information contact <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/oeis/wtprog/wastetire.html>

### **Legislative Issues of Significance to Western District Counties**

**Water Quality Standards** – CDPHE is jumping out in front of EPA's considerations of possible increased water quality standards and the costs to counties is estimated in the millions of dollars. Routt County's estimate of the cost to meet the new standards for Routt County alone is \$11 million. Counties need to be brought into the process early to effectuate a REAL partnership on this expensive issue to counties.

**Federal Mineral Lease District Act** – A bill is being proposed by eight counties to permit the distribution of FML funds to a district rather than just individual counties. There is a group of commissioners and county attorneys drafting the proposed bill which will be introduced in the 2012 General Assembly. For more information contact Commissioner John Martin, Garfield County.

**Slash Burning Act** – the Act SB11-110 was passed last year and it was brought to commissioners' attention that a small section of the Act takes away the authority of BOCC's to ban agriculture producers slash burning in forested county during high fire danger periods. It was suggested that there needs to be an amendment to that Act to allow commissioners to ban ag producers' slash burning in forested counties.

## CCI Business Meeting



At the business meeting, Conejos County Commissioner John Sandoval and CCI President, congratulates Douglas County Commissioner Jack Hilbert on becoming the 2012 CCI President.

On Tuesday, November 29<sup>th</sup> CCI President, Conejos County Commissioner John Sandoval called the 2011 Winter Conference business meeting to order.

CCI Treasurer Barbara Kirkmeyer presented the proposed 2012 budget and dues schedule to the membership. Once again, the CCI Board of Directors was able to develop a balanced budget and dues structure based on the continuation of county assessments being frozen at the 2008 level. The proposed budget and dues schedule passed unanimously.

Commissioner Jack Hilbert, Douglas County, presented a proposed NACo resolution concerning the maintenance of the Child Support Enforcement collection fee. The resolution was discussed by membership and passed unanimously. This resolution will move forward and be presented at the 2012 NACo Legislative Conference.

Commissioner Cindy Domenico, Boulder County, presented a proposed CCI resolution concerning Public Disclosure of Chemicals Associated with Hydraulic Fracturing. Discussion for and against the resolution was presented by various

commissioners. With the agreement of 2/3 members present, an alternate resolution was presented by Commissioner Barbara Kirkmeyer, Weld County. Following discussion, a roll call vote was taken on whether to approve Weld County's alternate resolution. The vote was tied and the resolution did not move forward. Boulder County then moved to postpone indefinitely their motion and upon vote, the resolution died.

President-elect Commissioner Jack Hilbert, Douglas County, presented comments on his goals for the upcoming year and the new CCI Board was sworn into office. Congratulations to the following members for their re-election or election. President: Jack Hilbert, Douglas County; Secretary: Dennis Hisey, El Paso County; Treasurer: Barbara Kirkmeyer, Weld County; Board Member: Trent Bushner, Yuma County; Thomas Davidson, Summit County; Kellie Hotter, La Plata County and Keith Goodwin, Otero County.

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned.



The 2012 CCI Board was sworn in by Washington County Commissioner David Foy (top right). The board includes, from left: Weld County Commissioner Barbara Kirkmeyer (Treasurer), Conejos County Commissioner John Sandoval (Past President), El Paso County Commissioner Dennis Hisey (Secretary), Otero County Commissioner Keith Goodwin, Yuma County Commissioner Trent Bushner, Douglas County Commissioner Jack Hilbert (President), Summit County Commissioner Thomas Davidson and La Plata County Commissioner Kellie Hotter (President-Elect).

# Winter Conference Photo Highlights



Phillips County Commissioners Joe Kinnie, Jerry Beavers and Bud Bieseimer get ready for the next issue session.



Jefferson County Commissioner Don Rosier received the Freshman Commissioner of the Year award from Conejos County Commissioner & CCI President John Sandoval.



Colorado Department of Human Services Director Reggie Bicha, El Paso County Commissioner Sallie Clark, Arapahoe County Commissioner Susan Beckman, Governor John Hickenlooper and Weld County Commissioner Barbara Kirkmeyer pose with the REAL Seals of Approval given to Director Bicha & Governor Hickenlooper at the opening session.



Alamosa County Commissioners Darius Allen and George Wilkinson catch up between sessions.



Baca County Commissioner Peter Dawson, Otero County Commissioner Kevin Karney and Routt County Commissioner Doug Monger share ideas during a break.



Clear Creek County Commissioner Tim Mauck and Clear Creek County Administrator Tom Breslin enjoy the Monday reception.



Commissioner Phil Chamberland, Public Works Director Marlene Crosby, Commissioner Paula Swenson, Administrator Matthew Birnie and Commissioner Hap Channell, all of Gunnison County, celebrate Matthew's Administrator of the Year award.



Ouray County Commissioner Lynn Padgett celebrates her Commissioner of the Year award with husband Jeff Litteral.



Human Services Director Cheryl Ternes, Commissioner Frank Weddig, Commissioner Nancy Jackson, Commissioner Susan Beckman, Commissioner Rod Bockenfeld and Commissioner Nancy Sharpe, all of Arapahoe County, celebrate Commissioner Beckman's Distinguished Service award.



Pueblo County Commissioner Jeff Chostner celebrates his big win with Stu Diamond at the Tuesday banquet.



Weld County Commissioner Barbara Kirkmeyer, Douglas County Commissioner Jill Repella, Arapahoe County Commissioner Susan Beckman and El Paso County Commissioner Sallie Clark pose with game show host Stu Diamond (center).



Arapahoe County Commissioner Rod Bockenfeld and Weld County Commissioner Sean Conway stop and smile for the camera during a break.

## Hard Rock Mining

Ouray Commissioner, Lynn Padgett began this CCI conference session with a summary of recent events in her county. When Ouray county recently realized that new prospecting was occurring in the county and that there was a potential of interfering with their outdoor tourism economy, they began looking into the gaps and overlaps of the federal, state and local regulations surrounding hard rock mining in Colorado.

State regulator, Loretta Pineda, from the Division of Reclamation Mining and Safety, presented a thorough synopsis of what the state regulates. For the purposes of this conference session, the focus stayed on hard rock minerals, not on coal, uranium or oil and gas. Currently there are 1,539 hard rock mining operations permitted in Colorado. These include gold, gravel, molybdenum, and other rocks and minerals. The state has authority over the bulk of the regulations governing the industry, but local governments have authority to regulate certain things under their land use powers. No mine may operate in the state without the consent of the local government. A variety of state agencies also contribute to ensure that mine permits comply with archeological, water quality and air quality issues prior to approval.

Jane Mannon, Community Affairs Manager for the Cripple Creek and Victor Gold (CC&V) mining Company, AngloGold, presented to the commissioners how they work with local governments on a daily basis. CC&V, the two municipalities and Teller county implemented a mineral overlay district to help manage the impacts of the mining operations. Regulations include such things as notice of all state permit actions, public input on mining plans, infrastructure development for local governments and county planning review on new technologies and procedures. As a result of the beneficial relationship between the industry and local governments, there has been little negative consequence of the gold mining operation in the county.

At the end of the session the panelists fielded questions from commissioners regarding planning for emergencies in areas without cell phone coverage and how the state regulates and determines the size and scope of the surety bonds designed to cover costs of reclamation and safety. CCI will continue discussion with counties, the state and the federal land management agencies over the next year to discuss the regulations in place and identify ways local governments can be responsive and good partners in the hard rock mining industry in Colorado.

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## Insights into the 2011 Election

Floyd Ciruli, Colorado pollster and commentator, provided commissioners with some of his polls and his interpretation of what they mean in an environment that is dominated by what he said are three primary conditions: a public crisis of confidence of core institutions of governance and leaders; continuing volatility in markets, in politics of shifting partisan control between elections; and polarization and gridlock between elites and the public who are passionately divided on prime issues of responsibility and size of government.

On the national level he reiterated what pundits have been saying - that Colorado is a battleground state for the presidency and he predicted Colorado will see presidential candidates often. Regarding current national polling on which Republican candidate could prevail, Mr. Ciruli said that, since President Eisenhower, favorable ratings in the winter prior to the following fall presidential election is not predictive of whether the incumbent would win or lose reelection.

With greater the polarization, he said, the center cannot hold and fewer problems are solved. There is less flexibility to negotiate because absolutes are the goal. To illustrate the point he added a few demographics from recent polling that in 2011 conservatives dominate at 41%, compared to liberals at 21%, and moderates holding at 36%. These moderates swing depending upon the zeitgeist—the tenor of the times. Partisans are playing to the two recently hyped movements—the Tea Party Movement, with support ranging from 25% to 43%, and the Occupy Wall Street Movement, with support ranging from 28% to 44%, depending upon the pollster.

At the state and county level he quoted a Denver Post headline that read “Colorado was a Killing Field for New Taxes” in the November election. With minor exceptions tax issues failed locally and statewide, e.g. statewide prop 103 (tax increase for schools) failed with just 37% approval. The Colorado public is in no mood for tax increases in the near future.

Based upon several county polls Mr. Ciruli identified county issues for 2012:

- Structural deficits: state and local (both constitutional restrictions and payroll and pension plans)
- Marijuana: legalize and dispensaries
- Economic development: siting and incentives
- Water: conservation, recycle, ag use, new projects, permitting and financing
- Infrastructure: buildings, transportation and communication

Communication with the public is the issue in the future. Counties will have to grapple with new ways of communicating with the public because of the fragmentation of media and polarization of politics. All sorts of devices will be needed: daily and weekly newspapers, online, virtual town halls, county websites, face to face dialogue and much, much more.

### Upcoming CCI Steering Committee Meetings

**Thursday, January 19, 2012**

- 9 a.m.— General Government
- 11 a.m.—Tourism, Resorts & Economic Development
- 12:30 p.m.—Taxation & Finance
- 2 p.m.—Transportation & Telecommunications

**Friday, January 20, 2012**

- 9 a.m.—Health & Human Services
- 11 a.m.—Agriculture, Wildlife & Rural Affairs
- 12:30 p.m.—Land Use & Natural Resources
- 2 p.m.— Public Lands

## County Airports

The State of Colorado has 76 public-use airports, 33 of which are at least partially county-owned and/or operated. These facilities are an integral part of the state's transportation system and are essential to continued economic development in our communities. As aviation issues gain in complexity, so do local issues regarding airports. A session at the CCI Winter Conference explored a number of issues related to the funding and operation of county airports, working with the community and relationships with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Chris Schaffer, Assistant Manager of the FAA's Denver Airports District Office, discussed the various funding opportunities available to local airports, including the Airport Improvement Program (AIP). AIP funding is primarily directed toward maintaining airport infrastructure and increasing capacity to accommodate growing traffic demands. Current legislative authority for the AIP expires in 2012, and the issue of reauthorization has been a contentious one in Congress. There are significant issues still to be resolved, including funding levels for AIP and the fate of the Essential Air Service Program.

Bob Christiansen and Tom Sullivan (county administrators from Chaffee and Routt counties, respectively) talked about the challenges of operating regional airports in rural communities. The Salida Airport in Chaffee County is co-owned by the county and the City of Salida and managed through an IGA between the local governments. The county also established an Airport Advisory Board to seek business and citizen input into airport operations. Both speakers touched on the importance of air

service to the region for tourism purposes. Regional air service is also a draw for "location neutral businesses" and can be an important economic development tool.

Sullivan spoke about the importance of complying with FAA regulations, including maintenance standards, record keeping on infrastructure, equipment upgrades and employee training. As a commercial service airport, Yampa Valley Regional Airport must also schedule flights into the National Air Traffic System – ensuring that passengers can then make connecting flights across the country. Sullivan touched on the challenges involved with controlling the mixture of commercial and general aviation aircraft.

Hilary Fletcher, former Pitkin County Manager and current governmental affairs specialist for Aviation, Inc., discussed the array of public involvement tools that local governments can use to educate the public on airport projects to build good will. These tools include social media, fly-ins, construction tours, youth programs, focus groups and stakeholder meetings. Fletcher warned attendees that even small groups of concerned citizens can present big problems for expansion projects, if they are well organized and passionate about the issue.

There was also some discussion about security challenges at regional airports. Most of the terminals at smaller regional airports were constructed prior to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, consequently bringing them up to Transportation Security Administration (TSA) standards is often difficult.

## Census Bureau Releases 2006-2010 ACS Estimates

On Thursday, December 8, the Census Bureau released the 2006-2010 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, containing detailed social, economic, housing and demographic characteristics. This 5-year estimate has been benchmarked to the 2010 Census count. The data are available for all geographies down to the Block Group and represent the average characteristics of these areas for the 5-year span. Directions on how to access the data are available below.

The data is best used for analyzing very small populations for which 1 and 3-year estimates are not available, and when precision is more important than currency. It is also useful for comparisons of characteristics across geographies; for example to compare the Median Household Income in Montrose County to the Median Household Income in Montezuma County. Comparisons to the 2000 Census should be made with caution.

The data (down to the Tract level) can be accessed using American FactFinder at [factfinder2.census.gov](http://factfinder2.census.gov) and the State Demography Office has provided user guides on our website at [www.colorado.gov/demography](http://www.colorado.gov/demography). Choose "Training Opportunities" on the right hand side of the page. All geographies, including Block Groups are available using the Summary File Data Retrieval Tool, which can be downloaded along with a user guide here: [http://www.census.gov/acs/www/data\\_documentation/summary\\_file/](http://www.census.gov/acs/www/data_documentation/summary_file/)

## You Have Questions? We Have Answers

The “Answer Panel” included Teller County Commissioner Jim Ignatius, Arapahoe County Attorney Kathryn Schroeder and Jefferson County Human Services Director Lynn Johnson. The format was a response to commissioners elected in 2010 who overwhelmingly preferred an open ended question & answer format. Questions raised during the session follow: *(answer summaries are italicized)*

### **BOCC questions:**

- How do other counties handle invocations before BOCC meetings? *Rotate among clergy or citizens or commissioners*
- When individual commissioners attend community events what autonomy do they have? When is it necessary to check with the BOCC? *It's county by county preference how it is handled, but commissioners have great latitude in terms of the community involvement and the extent to which they involve their fellow commissioners.*
- What can you do when one BOCC member lobbies other commissioners through the press? *Have individual conversation with commissioner to avoid discord*
- Is home rule a good way to improve relations with and/or control over other county constitutional offices? *Home rule authority is structural in nature, not functional. While home rule counties can appoint some elected officials, pursuing home rule status is a lot of work.*
- How can commissioners intervene in personnel issues when there is a county administrator? *Use the county's personnel policies and hold the administrator accountable for errant staff behavior*
- Do you have any advice when newly elected commissioners should be chair of the BOCC? *Ask to be mentored by a previous BOCC chair, have a written policy of chair expectations, do your homework on issues because the chair will be the county spokesperson, and chairing the meeting fairly is important.*

### **Planning questions**

- Do counties have strategic plans to help guide budgets? *It's best, many counties do*
- How can counties improve their planning when the emphasis is on “known” vs. “perceived” needs? *This is a complex question because BOCC must prepare the county for the future but can't be too far out in front of citizens*

### **Other questions**

- Human services is still a mystery, can you simplify it for me? *First and foremost work through the social services director, ask her/him questions and have them guide you through the maze*
- Are counties adopting twitter and Facebook as a way to communicate with citizens? *Very few*
- How can Colorado commissioners increase their influence at the federal level? *Two ways: (1) work actively through CCI, federal resolutions and the NACo traveling team, and (2) one or more counties hire a Washington lobbyist to lobby congress and to open federal executive office and department doors*
- How can counties do a better job of keeping revenue at the counties level and avoid it being skimmed off at the state level? *Work through (1) CCI Steering Committees for legislative positions, (2) be on top of the county's budget, (3) use all county contacts (other electeds, legislators, business leaders) to advocate the county's need for the revenue, not just the state need and (4) sit on state boards and commissions that have jurisdiction and influence over the allocation of state dollars to counties.*

Happy Holidays  
From the CCI Staff

## Digital Communication Tools for County Commissioners

It is no secret that we are living in “The Digital Age.” National statistics show that more than 75% of households in this country have at least one personal computer, and personal digital assistants (PDAs) like the iPhone are also becoming more and more commonplace. As these technologies become increasingly prevalent, the methods with which commissioners communicate with their citizens, and the media, take on a new dimension. The advent of social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter are allowing counties to reach out to constituents in ways most commissioners never envisioned a few years ago. Commissioner Audrey Danner (Moffat) led a panel discussion at the CCI Winter Conference that offered some “real world” examples and tips for getting digitally linked with your citizenry.

Commissioner Danner, herself an avid Facebook user, talked about the benefits of enhanced communication with citizens. She sees opportunities to create better information portals that are more responsive and “real time” than traditional media outlets such as newspapers. Social media communication tools also allow for a two-way conversation that enhances relationship building and better engages the citizenry. Moffat County has also revamped and updated their website, using free staff assistance from the Statewide Internet Portal Authority (SIPA).

Commissioner Crestina Martinez (Costilla) provided a quick history on the evolution of Facebook and demonstrated some effective tips for separating your online “private” life from your “public” life. This is not as easy as it sounds and there is some inevitable bleed-over between the two worlds. She cautioned the attendees on the posting of photos from various social gatherings, noting that even if you are holding a glass of water in a photo, if there’s a “Coors” sign behind you, it leads the viewer to a certain unintended conclusion!

Martinez also pointed out the utility of the various demographic profile features of Facebook, which enable you to not only see how many people have visited your page or viewed a certain posting, but their age ranges, genders, location and other information that is useful for future community outreach efforts. She also noted that once you establish a presence on Facebook, it is very important to maintain it and update it fairly regularly.

Martinez also stressed the importance of setting staff policies for personal Facebook pages and the uses of social media while at work. Many counties have grappled with the question of whether to block access to Facebook while on the job. Costilla County considered blocking it, but ultimately decided to allow it.

Commissioner Sallie Clark (El Paso) first began using a number of social media platforms in her personal business, then began adopting them for use in her role as county commissioner. She currently has both a personal and an official Facebook page, a LinkedIn account, an Enewsletter, a blog, a Twitter account and a channel on YouTube. Clark, Martinez and Danner have all utilized various social media platforms to provide a window into “the life of a commissioner” for the citizenry, discussing which meetings they have attended, what topics were discussed and what upcoming events or policy decisions are pending. Social media provides an excellent way of not only educating the citizens on what kinds of issues the county commissioners are addressing, but also of soliciting feedback and questions from the citizens on these various issues.

Clark discussed how she uses YouTube videos to document various community events, neighborhood cleanup projects, etc.. These events often feature interviews, which she shoots herself on a handheld camera or PDA with community members and provide an effective outlet for reporting on important stories without having to deal with the filter of traditional media. Clark once uploaded footage of a wildfire that had just broken out in the foothills on the outskirts of Colorado Springs. The footage was actually picked up and used by a local media outlet.

While Clark is an avid fan of social media, she did sound a note of caution regarding reporting on her own movements. She makes it a practice to report on where she has **been** and what meetings she has **already** attended, but **never** indicates which meetings she will be attending in the future. She also noted the ease of remotely uploading various stories/videos/etc. with devices such as an iPhone or other PDAs.

Digital Cont. on next page...

# Digital Communication Cont.

Jim Philipps, Media Relations Manager for the National Association of Counties (NACo), stressed the necessity of having a media plan in place – regardless of what form your communication efforts take. Be mindful of who your audience is and remember that the press is always watching. Social media messages should be informational and factual above all else. Philipps noted that NACo will be hosting an upcoming webinar on social media policies. CCI will forward future information on this webinar when it becomes available.

John Conley, Director of SIPA, talked about the importance of having policies in place regarding social media usage. He noted that in most organizations and this includes county governments, access to the press is usually run through a public information officer (PIO) or similarly “media-savvy” individual. With social media communications, it is very possible that staff can interface with members of the press **without** the oversight of a PIO, which could be problematic for the county.

Conley concluded by mentioned how the Colorado State Patrol has embraced the social media as a tool to get their message out. The chief of the state patrol, in surmising the opportunity, was quoted as saying: “We need to be where they (the citizens) are, because they aren’t necessarily where we are.”



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# New Report Proposes Creation of National Veterans Foundation to Improve Collaboration Between Public and Private Resources



A report presented on Monday, November 28 to Colorado U.S. Senator Michael Bennet calls for the creation of a National Veterans Foundation modeled after work being done in Colorado Springs to fill gaps that exist between public and private agencies, as well as service providers that support America’s veterans.

The Veterans Foundation is a key highlight in the “Better Serving Those Who Have Served.” report, which was prepared for Bennet by experts in the public and private sectors who participated in his Colorado Veterans Forum in Colorado Springs and Denver in August. Bennet today joined leaders of Colorado’s veterans community for the report’s release. Bennet commissioned the report to ensure that Colorado and the United States are ready to support the influx of troops returning from overseas as the country winds down two wars.

“Our troops make up one percent of the nation’s population, but they have 100 percent of the responsibility to fight to defend our freedom. Americans want to keep the promises we’ve made to serve these brave men and women when they return home,” Bennet said. “A National Veterans Foundations can provide direct support to communities to ensure that veterans can find and access the services they need.”

The Department of Defense (DOD), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and other federal and state agencies have programs supporting our nation’s service members and veterans. Gaps in service exist between these agencies because of the limited statutory mandates for each. A growing number of private and non-profit service providers are already filling some of those gaps. However, there is currently no way to tell whether gaps still exist, and the large number of organizations and service providers make it difficult for service members and veterans to successfully identify and obtain the assistance for which they are looking.

In addition, the lack of communication between groups makes it difficult to get the most out of possible public-private partnerships. Such partnerships could stretch resources further and prevent gaps in coverage.

The Foundation would support communities and community-organizing entities attempting better collaboration to serve veterans, like the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG). PPACG has developed a Network of Care website that serves as a centralized, web-based information resource for military families and veterans. The website is one component of a larger strategic planning initiative that attempts to bring community leaders, military installations, local businesses, and non-profit service providers together to provide a community-based system of care. Without this type of collaboration, in some communities, veterans can fall through the cracks in the systems that support them.

The President has announced plans to remove all troops from Iraq by the end of the year and to withdraw all troops from Afghanistan by the end of 2014. Colorado will see about 400 soldiers come home from Iraq in December alone. Bennet wants to ensure that we are prepared to support these military families and veterans, especially as they are return to an economy that is still struggling.

The unemployment rate for veterans climbed from 9.8 percent in August to 12.1 percent in October. Last year, it hit 21.1 percent for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans between the ages of 18-24. In Colorado, the unemployment rate among veterans age 18 to 34 is 10.3 percent, according to latest information from the U.S. Census Bureau. Additionally, 10.8 percent of veterans age 18 to 34 had an income below the federal poverty level in 2010.

Veterans are estimated to represent one quarter of all of the homeless in the U.S., and veterans from previous wars continue to battle long benefits delays due to bureaucratic overload, inefficiency and inaccuracy. Suicide rates among veterans are three times higher than that of the general population, and many veterans face combat related brain injuries that are difficult to treat and often misunderstood by potential employers.

In August, Bennet hosted a “Colorado Veterans Forum” in Denver and Colorado Springs that brought together veterans advocates, health experts, service providers and others in the veteran community from across the state to discuss how to make Colorado the best place to live and work for veterans. The forum participants discussed issues including VA Healthcare and Claims; Veterans of Previous Wars/Developing a 30-Year Plan for Tomorrow’s Veteran; Education, Employment, and Economic Opportunity; Transitions for Post-9/11 Veterans; Quality of Life for Families; and Whole-of-Community Collaboration.