

ROCC Annual Meeting and Potluck Dinner

DATE: December 3, Saturday, 5:30 - Sorry for the change in date and conflicts due to the change to December 3. We found out too late that Noel Night is on December 2 and didn't want to have a conflict with a town and business event. We checked all community calendars before we set the December 2 date and for some reason Noel Night was not on the calendars. Hope that you're still able to make the annual meeting on Saturday, December 3.

WHERE: United Church of the San Juans, 295 N Lena, Ridgway, CO 81432

1. Potluck Dinner - 5:30 - 6:15

- Bring a dish to share and utensils

2. Announcements - 6:15 - 6:20

- ROCC Spaghetti Dinner and Citizen of the Year nominations

3. Adopt Minutes from September meeting - 6:20 - 6:25 Please read and be ready to vote on minutes from September 9, 2016 ... [PDF](#) of September minutes

4. Treasurer's Report - Scott Williams - 6:25 - 6:35

- 2016 Report
- 2017 Projected Budget

5. Old Business - 6:35-6:40

6. ROCC Committee Reports / Questions (See written reports at end of this agenda)

- Clean Energy - **6:40 - 6:50**
- Social Justice - **6:50 - 7:00**
- Western Colorado Congress (WCC) **7:00- 7:30**
 - *Discussion / Action Items (explanation in WCC Committee Report below)
 - possible pivot toward more social justice issues
 - paring down our issue portfolio
 - need for flexibility and rapid response
 - financial sustainability of WCC

7. New Business - 7:30 - 7:45

- **ROCC Talk ideas**
- **Nomination's Committee Slate of Candidates**
 - President - Don Schwartz
 - Vice-president - Kate Kellogg
 - Secretary - Dudley Case
 - Treasurer - Scott Williams
 - WCC Representative - AL Lowande
 - WCC Alternative Representative - Dave Jones
 - ROCC Representative-at-large - Bob Green
 - ROCC Representative-at-large - Roze Evans
 - President Emeritus - Jen Parker

8. Door Prizes - Must be present to win.

ROCC 2016 Accomplishments and Events by Roze Evans

1. **Social Justice / Affordable Housing Committee** - This was the number 1 issue identified during the goal setting session during the 2015 December Annual Meeting. This committee has had a very successful year. They organized two forums: a well-attended affordable housing forum that included members from all governmental entities and a candidate forum for the Ouray County Commissioner race. (see committee report)
2. **Clean Energy Committee** - During the December 2015 ROCC Annual Meeting clean energy was identified as 2016's number 2 goal. The Clean Energy Committee was created in January of 2016. It has become a very active and successful committee that gets things done. (see committee report)
3. **Keep OURay Alpine Campaign** - ROCC helped organize 100s of citizens in support of strong building regulations on patented mining claims in the high alpine zone. This successful campaign was supported by right, left, conservative, liberal, Democrats, Republicans.
4. ROCC gave \$5000 to the Ridgway Public Schools to purchase LED classroom lights. LED lights will save the district several thousand dollars a year in electric bills. Research shows that learning is better with LED lights.
5. Donated \$1000 to Top of the Pines to help with trails and signage.
6. Conducted a membership drive in November that has resulted in new memberships and renewal of lapsed memberships.
7. ROCC Talks - Organized 3 ROCC Talks
8. Organized and staffed Recycling in the Park - A successful month of recycling at the Ridgway Concert Series
9. ROCC Community Spaghetti Dinner (organized by Kate Kellogg)
10. ROCC Community Parking Lot Sale (organized by Rich Niemeier)

ROCC COMMITTEE REPORTS FOR 2016

ROCC Social Justice Committee Report by Kate Kellogg

September Public Forum on Affordable Housing

The committee spent nearly three months this past summer planning the "Housing Our Community" public forum held September 21. More than 60 people turned out at the Ridgway Community Center for the event. Panelists included the three county commissioners, Ridgway mayor, Ouray city administrator and all members of the Ouray County Housing Authority.

Shirley Diaz, executive director of the San Miguel Housing Authority and OCHA member, gave an overview of the current housing situation in Ouray County. She explained that the OCHA was formed about eight years ago as an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) comprised of representatives from the three jurisdictions – Ouray, Ridgway and Ouray County.

The Authority essentially died until early in 2016, when, partly under pressure from the SJC, it resumed meeting regularly.

ROCC Social Justice continued... Diaz also provided data that shows at least 80-100 affordable housing units (either rental or deed-restricted ownership) are needed to house the county's workforce.

Ridgway Mayor John Clark emphasized the need for affordable housing to keep Ouray County a diverse community. Both Patrick Rondinelli, Ouray City administrator, and Commissioner Don Batchelder cited city and county budget constraints as an obstacle to funding affordable housing projects. Commissioners Lynn Padgett and Ben Tisdale mentioned the need for public/private partnerships, grants, government loans, etc.

During public comments, many people testified about their own needs for affordable housing in the county or voiced their support for it. Just two individuals, Ouray landlords, made negative comments about problems with rental tenants.

Next Steps

The committee is encouraged that the city of Ouray and town of Ridgway have approved a new IGA for the Housing Authority. (The old IGA was subject to the Tabor Amendment that limited public funding.) Ouray contributed \$1500 and Ridgway has included a \$2000 line item in the 2017 budget for the Housing Authority. John Clark said Town Council will likely contribute those funds once there is a project or proposal that requires funding.

As of November 18, the county commissioners had not yet voted on approving or funding the IGA. Commissioner Don Batchelder has resisted funding the Housing Authority until it has a project.

Over the past year the committee has achieved the goal of giving affordable housing visibility in the community. The issue is getting more media coverage and the OCHA at least is becoming a viable entity. Comments at the forum indicated that much of the community is supportive of affordable housing efforts.

So at this point, the committee is rethinking strategies. The small amount of funding each jurisdiction is likely to contribute for 2017 won't even support a part-time administrator's salary on a contract basis. The committee is aware that every successful affordable housing authority has a paid professional who coordinates projects with developers and local planners. It is looking like that would require a tax ballot issue, state or federal grants, or private funding sources.

And without a project to administer, the OCHA might become just a bureaucracy that doesn't accomplish anything. That could create an "I told you so" scenario.

Instead of pushing for city, town and county funding right now, the committee will attempt to keep the issue in the public eye and generate still more interest while continuing to put pressure on elected officials and the Housing Authority members.

At the last committee meeting, each member agreed to contact people who provided phone numbers and e-mail addresses at the public forum. Those people will be asked if they are interested in helping move affordable housing forward or joining the SJC.

The plan is to bring together current committee members plus new people and create a campaign for 2017. The committee hopes to build on exposure from the forum and recent newspaper articles that have highlighted affordable housing needs throughout the region.

ROCC Clean Energy Committee by Rein VanWest

WHAT Are We: We're a group of active, pragmatic idealists who would like to move the needle of renewable energy forward in various ways in Ouray County.

WHO Are We: We're a diverse group of ROCC members, members of the SMPA Board of Directors, employees of San Miguel Power Association, interested citizens, and allied with EcoAction Partners.

WHEN Are We: Our working group has been meeting generally on the 3rd Tuesday of every month.

ROCC Clean Energy continued... **WHERE Are We:** We have been meeting in the homes of various members and now at the SMPA office.

VISION: To make Ouray County as energy efficient as possible and to make it 100% renewable energy sourced.

HOW Are We: CEC has been studiously educating itself with the complex and fascinating world of electricity: what it is, what generates it, how we get it, how to keep it cheap, who the players are, what are its market challenges, what are its regulations, how can we apply programs and policies already out there in achieving our vision.

IN The Cage:

- Green Blocks,
- Green Lights (LEDs),
- Home Energy Audits,
- Swapping out older lighting in Ridgway Schools w/ LEDs,
- Exploring ways to maximize the new solar system installation on the roof of the expanded Ridgway Fire House to share with Town Hall,
- Learning the details of a state enabled program, 'Commercial – Property Accessed Clean Energy' to understand what would make it viable in Ouray County.

NEEDED: More inquiring minds; come join us: next Clean Energy Committee meeting on Tuesday, December 13, 9am, SMPA office in Ridgway.

2016 ROCC TALK COMMITTEE REPORT by Dudley Case

April 21 ROCC TALK - SMPA Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Programs

Location: Ridgway Community Center

Attendees: 31:

Members - 22

Non-members - 5 (\$25)

Presenters - 4

New membership - 1 (\$35)

Family membership renewal - 1 (\$55)

June 22 ROCC TALK - Bee's Needs & How You Can Help

Location: Ridgway Community Center

Attendees: 15

Members - 13 members

Presenters - 2

August 18 ROCC TALK - A History of Mining and Four-Wheeling in Ouray County

Location: Wright Opera House

Attendees: 89

Members - 14

Non-members - 71 (\$355)

Presenters: - 4

WCC REPORT by Al Lowande

At the Nov. 20 Board meeting, it was decided to bring several issues to the community groups for discussion:

possible pivot toward more social justice issues: Given recent political developments at the national level, WCC staff and Board want member opinions on whether we should devote more resources to such concerns as affordable housing, immigrant rights, refugee policy, bullying and harassment of minorities, income inequality, political **WCC**

WCC Report continued... influence inequality (money in political campaigns), etc. WCC staff is passionate about these issues and Executive director Dave Reed believes there will be significant grant possibilities in these areas. Given that WCC has run deficit budgets this year and last, grant achievability needs to be considered in our choice of issues.

paring down our issue portfolio: WCC staff has expended considerable organizer time this year assisting local groups with their campaigns, which has been well received. For example, Rachel has helped us with affordable housing, clean energy and the alpine building regs campaigns. Together with regional and statewide campaigns, this has stretched staff past reasonable limits and is unsustainable. WCC needs to focus on fewer campaigns so we can do a better job on them without burning out and losing our incredibly talented (and underpaid) staff. Obviously, there is some tension between this need and the desire to work on social justice. Member opinions about priorities is welcome and needed.

need for flexibility and rapid response: WCC is fairly unique among non-profits because of our grass-roots governance. What we work on is driven by our members and local groups. However, this structure causes us to be much slower than most of our “staff-centric” allies in responding to emerging threats. Given the utter unpredictability of the incoming administration, and their promise to rapidly do some pretty disturbing things, (which could also embolden some of our powerful adversaries at the state level to follow their cue), the Board feels that WCC may need to be more agile in responding to outrageous proposals and edicts. So, the Board is basically asking the membership to allow some leeway to make occasional rapid executive decisions and responses. While this may temporarily bypass the normal slow “percolation” process through committees and local groups, such actions would always be attuned to positions that our grass-roots process has already arrived at and, of course, would always honor our mission statement.

financial sustainability of WCC: A variety of factors has caused our income as an organization to drop in recent years. Although expenses have risen only slowly, the net result has been several years of unsustainable budget deficits. We are the go-to group and most effective voice on the Western Slope as guardians of the public interest against corporate and governmental abuses. The WCC staff are an amazing collection of highly educated, trained and articulate individuals. They are high among my personal heroes as their idealism causes them to work their tails off for OUR causes at salaries far below what their talents could command elsewhere.

Given how much of the recent campaign’s rhetoric is anathema to our values, we can ill afford to weaken, no less lose WCC as our collective source of “people power”. So, the WCC Board is asking every single member to “step up to the plate” financially. When you consider that the portion of your dues that goes to WCC would not cover a week’s worth of lattes, there is a terrible mismatch between the value of this powerful collective voice and what most members invest in the organization that provides it. Please consider “putting your money where your values are” and making a substantial contribution beyond your dues. I know when someone asks something like this of me, I am always left wondering things like “Just how much do they need?” or “How much do I value this organization and what they do?” While only you can answer the latter, I certainly hope it’s a lot more than a few fancy coffee’s worth. For guidance on the first question, it might be useful to know that if every single WCC member donates an extra \$50, it would roughly wipe out this year’s deficit, nothing more. Since even that amount won’t cover two weeks of that overpriced morning jolt, I hope that serves as the very low end of what you will consider. WCC needs us, but, more importantly, we need WCC, now more than ever.

If any of you ever have questions about WCC, contact me at evanslowande@gmail.com or call at 626 4194. Since I’m a horrendously slow typist, I prefer talking on the phone!

WCC Food and Ag Committee Report for ROCC annual meeting – December 3, 2016 by Robyn Cascade

Cottage Foods:

WCC had a seat at the table during the Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDPHE) rule-making for the new bill that allows fermented and pickled vegetables to be sold as cottage foods. Current focus is to participate in distribution of information regarding the new law to producers.

Food and Ag Justice Coalition (FAJC)

10-state FAJC continues to strategize around the campaign “Public Money for Public Good” which addresses our concern regarding taxpayer money being used to fund corporate agriculture and our desire for such public funds to support local, sustainable food systems.

WCC FOOD AND AG CONTINUED ... FAJC’s other campaign to put a stop to the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) has ended with Congress stating in mid-November that the trade deal will not be considered. Hurray! Back in September, Wink Davis, western slope farmer, WCC member and chair of WORC’s Food and Ag Committee, met with several members of Congress regarding this issue.

Goals for 2017

1. Distribute information regarding SB 58 (Cottage Foods Bill) -especially opportunities for producers.
2. Gather input and organize support for a sustainable livestock marker bill in anticipation of the 2018 Farm Bill advancing some of WCC’s Food and Ag Committee’s 2016 priority goals including:
 - Growing “good meat” ~ protecting soil health, minimizing impacts to climate change, reducing meat consumption
 - Partnering with allies on improving access to healthy food and removing barriers faced by young farmers
 - Protecting our seed supply
 - Local procurement policies

National allies state:

The goal of this campaign is to advance federal policy in support of sustainable livestock through the creation, promotion and organizing around a marker bill that would lead to the inclusion of legislation in the 2018 Farm Bill. The primary aim of the legislation will be to level the playing field for producers, improve livestock management practices, (especially better soil management for maximum carbon sequestration) and increase economic and market opportunities for independent sustainable livestock producers, as well as producers looking to transition to sustainable systems.

We envision the creation of new policies that would increase technical, marketing, financial, research, conservation and infrastructure support in order to expand small and mid-scale diversified crop and livestock production. Establishing new policies, incentives, and programs in multiple titles of the farm bill can help producers improve conservation practices and access more lucrative, fair and sustainable markets that reward producers for better practices related to worker conditions, environmental health and animal welfare. An important focus will be on expanding opportunities for beginning and socially disadvantaged producers. Together this suite of policies could deliver numerous environmental, economic and animal welfare benefits.