

**Meeting Minutes of the Board of Directors for the
Regional Housing Alliance of La Plata County
April 10, 2025**

1. Call Meeting to Order

A meeting of the Board of Directors (the “Board”) of La Plata County Regional Housing Alliance (RHA), was held on April 10, 2025, commencing at approximately 2:00 p.m. at the Durango Chamber of Commerce located at 2301 Main Avenue, Durango, Colorado 81301.

2. Introductions and Roll Call

The following directors, constituting a quorum, were present in person or by Zoom. Patrick Vaughn, Chair of the RHA, presided over the meeting noting that there was a quorum of the Board being present and he called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

Attendees:

- Chairman, Patrick Vaughn, Member at Large
- Vice Chair, Marsha Porter-Norton, La Plata County Commissioner
- Treasurer, Mark Garcia. Town of Ignacio Manager
- Director Kevin Hall, La Plata County Deputy Manager
- Director Clark Craig, Town of Ignacio Mayor
- Director Gilda Yazzie, City of Durango Mayor
- Director Mike French, City of Durango Prosperity Officer (Online)
- Director Brenna Morlan, Town of Bayfield Trustee
- Director (Bayfield) – *vacancy*

Others Present:

Eva Henson, La Plata Economic Development Alliance, “EDA” Contractor

Deedee Schadt, EDA Contractor

Jessie Christiansen, EDA

Pam Moore, HomesFund

Dan Hunt, Mobile Home Parks non-profit

Lynn Hyde, La Plata County Community Development Director

Samantha Gallagher, Fort Lewis College Chief Financial Officer
Jenn Lopez, Project Moxie
Elizabeth Salkind, Housing Solutions for SW (online)
Shak Powers, Region 9 (online)
Joan Fauteaux, Durango Area Association of Realtors (online)

Conflicts of Interest: no conflicts of interest were disclosed

3. Public Comment

Dan Hunt expressed his appreciation to the RHA for providing Catalyst funding for the Animas View Mobile Home Park project. He noted that while there have been some delays, the project is progressing.

4. Approval of Agenda

Eva Henson informed the Board that a Decision Item related to the S.T.E.E.R. Initiative may need to be added, as further discussion and potential Board action could be required.

Upon motion duly made by Director Craig and seconded by Director Morlan, it was unanimously **RESOLVED**, that the Agenda for the April 10, 2025 Board meeting, in the form provided to the Directors in advance of this meeting, is hereby approved.

5. Approval of Consent Agenda

a. March 2025 Minutes

Upon motion duly made by Treasurer Garcia and seconded by Vice-Chair Porter-Norton, it was unanimously **RESOLVED**, that the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on March 13, 2025, in the form provided to the Directors in advance of this meeting, is hereby approved.

b. February 2025 Financial Statements

Upon motion duly made by Treasurer Garcia and seconded by Vice-Chair Porter-Norton, it was unanimously **RESOLVED**, that the February Financial Statements, in the form provided to the Directors in advance of this meeting, is hereby approved.

6. Public Presentations & Engagement with Non-RHA Entities

a. La Plata Community Development Director Update, Lynn Hyde

Lynn Hyde shared information previously presented to the Board of County Commissioners in February 2024 regarding the County's permitting process. She explained the general flow from permit application to project completion, noting that in 2024, more permits were concluded than applied for—a positive indicator.

The duration of a land use application process averages about three months and largely depends on who is submitting the proposed project. When the applicant submits a project to the County, there is a “shot clock” and sometimes the County has control over timelines and sometimes it’s the applicant or developer. Thus, the time it takes to get through the process varies.

The software used by the County tracks building permits but does not specifically track below-market or affordable housing units. Notably, the County issues permits for a range of housing types, including RVs used as additional residences. In 2024, the County issued 131 new single-family residential permits. Permit activity peaked in 2021 but has since declined, with home sizes also decreasing due to rising construction costs.

Additionally, the County conducts parcel research requests to verify whether properties have been properly permitted—an important preliminary step before initiating development projects. A question was raised regarding the County’s role in fast-tracking affordable housing under Proposition 123. Lynn noted that while the County has some initial ideas about what this could involve, further discussion with the County Commissioners is ongoing.

7. Decision Items

a. FLC Vantage Request for RHA (2) Letters of Support, Jenn Lopez, Project Moxie

Jenn Lopez provided an overview of the FLC Vantage project, which began in 2021 with a housing needs assessment conducted in partnership with Fort Lewis College (FLC) faculty. In 2023, the project team partnered with HomesFund and selected additional development partners. The RHA awarded Catalyst Fund support in 2024, which contributed to the pre-development costs of the project in Three Springs. Currently, the team is pursuing two funding applications, with approximately a 10% chance of success. Jenn noted a potential matching opportunity that the RHA should be aware of. It is anticipated that approximately half of the units will be filled by FLC employees, leaving an estimated 20–25 units available for other community members. The site is located directly across from the hospital.

Eva Henson drafted two support letters for the project, which were included in the Board’s meeting packet.

Upon motion duly made by Director Morlan and seconded by Treasurer Garcia, it was unanimously **RESOLVED**, approval of two RHA Support Letters for FLC Vantage project as presented, are hereby approved.

b. Request for Release - Right of First Refusal Agreement (Lot 34 Yucca Estates Subdivision)

Eva Henson provided a summary of the history related to the current property agreement and Pam Moore from HomesFund answered questions. This is a unique situation, both acknowledged. Eva said that when she was informed of the situation which is that the RHA was listed as having a Right of First Refusal (“ROFR”). title, she coordinated with the seller and title company, who agreed to extend the closing deadline to Friday of this week. In this case, a person was purchasing the property from a parent. The RHA’s Right of First Refusal Agreement (“ROFR”) pertained to a down payment assistance loan now held by Homes Fund. However, it was refinanced and the loan was paid off but the ROFR was not released. To address similar situations in the future, a suggestion was made that HomesFund be granted authority to release properties under these circumstances without requiring additional Board approval.

Upon motion duly made by Vice-Chair Porter-Norton and seconded by Director Morlan, it was unanimously **RESOLVED**, that the request for release – Right of First Refusal for 34 Yucca Estates, in the form provided to the Directors in advance of this meeting, is hereby approved.

Upon motion duly made by Director Molan and seconded by Vice-Chair Porter-Norton, it was unanimously **RESOLVED**, to give HomesFund authorization to release any future properties that fall into this category, is hereby approved.

8. RHA Updates

a. 2nd Annual Southwest Housing Summit – Agenda

Eva Henson provided an update on RHA’s **2nd Annual Southwest Housing Summit**, scheduled for **Tuesday, April 29, 2025**, at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Durango, CO. She reviewed the event agenda, noting it is a one-day conference convening a wide range of stakeholders, including Region 9, keynote speaker M. Nolan Gray, Michael Leahy of Castlewood Partners (Leadville), City of Durango, HomesFund, Elevation Community Land Trust, and other local partners.

Highlights include:

- Book signing by Mr. Gray, with books available on-site through Maria’s Bookshop
- Networking lunch and closing refreshments with a cash bar
- **Sponsorships secured to date total \$24,000**, including:
 - **Platinum Sponsor:** NAR Housing Opportunity Grant with DAAR (Durango Area Association of Realtors)– \$7,500

- **Gold Sponsors:** The Colorado Health Foundation – \$5,000; First Southwest Bank – \$5,000
- **Silver Sponsor:** Colorado Housing and Finance Authority – \$3,500
- **Bronze Sponsors:** Wells Group – \$1,500; Enterprise Community Partners – \$1,500
- The application to the Boettcher Foundation Rural Catalyst Grant Program (\$5,000) was not awarded
- **57 tickets sold** to date, with **43 remaining** – more than 50% sold, two weeks ahead of the event
- Max Capacity is **150 attendees** – providing approximately 42 complimentary tickets for RHA Board, LPEDA staff, speakers/panelists, and scholarships.
- Recent outreach includes a Local News Network interview, event release, and social media promotions

b. Catalyst Fund Round 5 – Open

- Housing Catalyst Fund Round 5 is accepting applications through Friday, May 16, 2025.
- Funding decisions will be announced by June 30th.
- Please contact Sarah Tober, sarah@yeslpc.com, for more information or questions.
- A Housing Catalyst Fund 101 Webinar will be held on April 23rd @ 10 a.m. via zoom

c. Division of Housing SW Region Tour – Tuesday, May 20th

The Division of Housing (DOH) staff including Andrew Atchley and Shirley Diaz will be bringing the new Housing Development Specialist Rural Team Manager, Fallon Miller, through the SW Region on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, to get to know people in her territory, and their team will also be taking any feedback, thoughts, or concerns you up the chain to DOH or the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA).

Tentative Itinerary: Pagosa Springs, Ignacio, Durango, Tour of Timber Age in Mancos, and Silverton.

DOH has requested that the RHA host lunch (e.g. 12:30-1:30 p.m.), possibly at the FLC Center for Innovation Center, the Board is invited. The board suggested that a drive by for Pine River Commons and Cinnamon Heights in Bayfield be worked into the tour if possible.

d. S.T.E.E.R. Committee Initiative

The S.T.E.E.R. Committee has continued to build on last year's work, strategically incorporating findings from the housing needs assessment and focusing discussions on current housing challenges. The committee has narrowed down a list of potential

local revenue streams, which have been evaluated with the support of legal and financial consultants. These discussions have included an analysis of the pros, cons, and feasibility of each option.

Meetings #3 and #4 are scheduled for May, with the possibility of a fifth meeting depending on outcomes.

The importance of maintaining momentum was emphasized, particularly in securing expert support to advance any potential ballot initiative. The opportunity to work with Butler Snow (legal counsel) and Hilltop Securities (financial advisor) was identified as critical.

Butler Snow: their contract would be not-to-exceed \$6,500

Hilltop Securities: their contract would be not to exceed \$7,000

It was agreed that these expenses should be funded through the RHA general budget rather than the DOLA Local Planning Capacity Grant. The Board acknowledged that additional funds may be needed to ensure continued progress. An update was also provided on Lodger's Tax legislation currently under consideration in the State Legislature (note: as of this meeting, the bill was in the State Senate). A motion was proposed to approve engaging Butler Snow and Hilltop Securities under the terms outlined, utilizing RHA budget funds.

Upon motion duly made by Director Morlan and seconded by Treasurer Garcia, it was unanimously **RESOLVED**, that the RHA Board approves the use of RHA general budget funds and authorizes proceeding with contracts with Hilltop Securities (not-to-exceed \$7,000) and Butler Snow (not-to-exceed \$6,500) in support of the S.T.E.E.R. initiative.

e. DOLA Local Planning Capacity

Eva Henson, Tuggy Dunton (Town Clerk/Treasurer, Town of Ignacio), Jessie Christiansen (Business and Finance Director, Economic Development Alliance), and DOLA staff (Robyn DiFalco, Jessica Rupe, and Patrick Rondinelli) met to discuss the current DOLA Local Planning Capacity Grant, including scope clarification, potential supplemental funding and desired outcomes.

DOLA recently announced new incentives for communities that implement fast-track procedures prior to the November 2026 deadline, with funding available on a first-come, first-served basis—particularly for those able to act within the current state fiscal year (July 1–June 30). The incentive offers up to \$50,000 in supplemental funding for eligible activities.

The discussion included whether the Town of Ignacio might be positioned to adopt fast-tracking procedures more quickly than other partner jurisdictions and thereby

qualify for the additional funding. Concerns were noted regarding the process and timeline required to achieve fast-tracking.

9. Member Updates

a. Member at Large

Chairman Vaughn noted that the Three Springs Development Agreement includes examples of administrative review processes that could help inform the design of fast-track housing initiatives. He also mentioned that the City of Durango's refined process from the Three Springs project could serve as an excellent template for future fast-tracking efforts. Additionally, he shared that he has heard positive feedback about Nolan Gray, the featured keynote speaker for the upcoming Housing Summit, and is looking forward to the event.

b. Town of Ignacio

Treasurer Garcia noted that the Local News Network recently aired a segment on Ignacio and the Rock Creek project, highlighting the community's progress. He emphasized the critical role HomesFund has played in the project's success. He reported that Phase 1 is expected to close on units by the end of May or early June. The Ignacio School District has expressed interest in purchasing one unit in Phase 1 and four units in Phase 2. Phase 2 will include 11 units, with ongoing efforts to identify additional eligible buyers earning below 100% of the Area Median Income (AMI) for six of those units. Treasurer Garcia also noted that the team is actively exploring funding sources for the Ignacio Housing Authority and expressed his appreciation for everyone's contributions to the project.

c. Town of Bayfield

Director Morlan shared that an open session will be held that evening from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at the Bayfield Senior Center to meet with two finalists for the town manager position. Formal interviews are scheduled for Friday and will be conducted by a town panel, with strong candidates under consideration.

She noted that the town has received a proposal for an RV park with approximately 74 spaces located across from the Post Office, with potential to designate some of the spaces for below-market housing. Additionally, certain areas of Bayfield are currently being evaluated for annexation. New developments in the area include the opening of Tractor Supply and the start of construction on an O'Reilly Auto Parts store adjacent to the Family Dollar.

d. City of Durango

Director Yazzie shared that elections have been a recent focus, resulting in the election of two new councilors. The city is looking forward to the future and the opportunities ahead with the new council leadership.

e. La Plata County

Commissioner Porter-Norton stated that there will be a BOCC Retreat on April 23rd. The new draft of the State of Colorado Wildland Urban Interface Code is out for public comment. Discussions are occurring about how it will impact the price of homes. The proposal from LPC to the Board finalizing the WUI Code is a tiered structure so that there would be options for fire safety, but they would be less expensive. In addition, there are two bills in the Legislature regarding homeowners' insurance. One considers mitigation and the other would set up grants for things like roofs and home hardening. There is a new State insurance program FAIR which just launched and is an insurance coverage of last resort. This program is particularly relevant as many residents are experiencing difficulty obtaining home insurance due to increasing wildfire concerns.

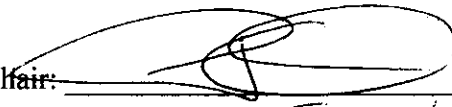
10. Adjournment:

Reminder – there is no May meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:49 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for June 12, 2025 at 2 p.m. at the Durango Chamber and via Zoom.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signed: Patrick Vaughn, Chair:



Signed: Eva Henson, Secretary of Meeting:

