



# Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Commission November 2020 Meeting Minutes

**Time:** Thursday, November 5, 2020, 9:30 am-12 pm

**Location:** Zoom Online

**Attending:** Lenore Bates, Nathan Boyless, Amanda Barker, Kelli Helpler, Jack Placchi, Cheryl Glanz, Andrew Grossman, Cassandra Patton, Chad Schneckenburger, Christy Costello, Heidi Plankow, Ilana Moir, Kathleen Bracke, Rebecca White, Tony Gurzick, Traci Stoffel

Call to order at 9:33 am.

## August 2020 Commission Minutes

Amanda Barker presented the August 6, 2020, Commission Meeting minutes. The motion to approve was from Nathan, seconded by Heidi. All in favor, none opposed.

## Updates from the Byways on the Road

- **Colorado River Headwaters:** devastated by the Lonesome Fire, homes lost for colleagues, donations for Grand County, asking for financial donations instead of physical donations
- **San Juan Skyway:** Capital Christmas tree is being harvested today, an online cutting ceremony to see it.
- **Flat Tops:** Capstone project with CU for CMP
- **Top of the Rockies:** currently revising the management plan
- **Mt Evans or Guenella Pass:** Cass, still under a stage 3 restriction that will continue until a good snowfall (Park County and Clear Creek for winter), Guanella closed a bit ahead of time.
- **Alpine Loop:** Gunnison field office looking at designated dispersed camping project to put in fire grates and put in safe, limited damage, using volunteer corps
- **Dinosaur Diamond:** new brochure with just edits remaining
- **West Elk Loop:** The chair pointed out safety issues at Independent Pass that had to be flagged for CDOT, confusing signage, exciting updates with the replacement of an interpretive sign, McClure pass new signage, too. Haven't met as a group since April.
- **Trail of the Ancients:** updating Corridor Management Plan, working with Mesa Verde to get the group back together

## Byways Presentation from the Dinosaur Diamond

Kelli Hepler, Graphox Design, Dinosaur Diamond Byway

- Link to presentation (Visually beautiful with good information, so check it out!):  
<https://my.visme.co/view/vdkgo3ed-dinosaur-diamond-presentation-colorado-byways-commission-2>
- They are interested in finding another byway with an example committee member descriptions.

- Questions brought up: How do you spread the news without spreading the virus? How can we be sure the local businesses are following the protocols and keeping people safe? How do you encourage a stop at the local diner or gift shop? How do you get the travelers' dollars and do it safely and respectfully?

### **Road-Tripping Presentation Summary from the Colorado Tourism Conference**

Lenore shared key information from a presentation at the Colorado Tourism Conference regarding road-tripping. The recorded presentation from the CTO conference has a dropbox link with materials: <https://bit.ly/33ERwqj> Key points:

- Scenic Byways are still hidden gems, bring in \$51 B in 2019. \$137 million road trips taken
- Growing over the last ten year, and mountains see higher compared to national
- Drive versus flying and domestic versus international travel,
- road trips average 5+ days
- Unique so people plan longer, 75% is usually one state, but 25% more than one site
- More partnerships involved in byways and any scenic drive mean many communities and attractions. National parks and historic resources
- National Scenic Byway Foundations' last two newsletters include a two-part series of research. Sign up to get their newsletter: <https://nsbfoundation.com/about/newsletter/>

### **Takeaways from the Annual Meeting**

Nathan Boyless presented primary takeaways for what the Commission is doing with the pain points of COVID-19.

- Education Committee and an effort to get content of the byways into the hands of students particularly in primary and secondary. More links and volunteers for the committee in [August meeting minutes](#).
- ColoradoByways.com web traffic highlights from Andrew:
  - Unique ColoradoByways.com landing page views since May 1 - 46,377
  - Unique views of the 26 Byways pages since May 1 - 123,809
  - Unique views of all Byways videos since May 1 - 15,730
  - As far as trends go we saw a 50% drop in video views and ColoradoByways.com landing page views from May 1 to Aug 1 vs Aug 1 to Oct 30 and about a 66% drop in views of the byways landing pages during the same period.
  - Lenore's notes in past years March to Mid-may is the peak visiting time.
- Education Itineraries are developing at CTO under Elizabeth O'Rear, travel region structure, developing education travel itineraries for 8 regions, 3rd one coming online soon. <https://www.colorado.com/educational-colo-road-trips>

### **TravelStorys GPS Opportunity for Byways**

Nathan Boyless and Andrew Grossmann presented collective planning for all 26 byways to get more digital visibility for our byways, we think we can find scale here. Scale means more efficient pricing and discounted rates and also translates to learn about adjacent pricing. Also branding to the state byways network (like we're doing with Colorado.com)

The Byways Commission cannot be the body to hold the contract, one of our partners will hold

it, maybe CTO but could be HC, CDOT, or another agency. Commission likely to enter an MOU, particularly the agency partners to sign

Collective interest in Colorado Tourism industry, how do we give more opportunities. The Byways are at the epicenter for linear traveling but also keeping our historical resources alive in tourism. CTO has been providing some funding for individual byways.

The cost per byway would be \$10,000 and an immediate \$260,000 to the state. How do we make this more cost accessible? Individual Byways have Management Plans with all the points of interest mapped out, photographed, and described.

The \$2500 annual fee gives access to the platform could share across the Commission agencies. We can get this down to \$4,000 per byway, huge savings collectively. Tracks Across Borders has the app with OnCell and also a portion of Pawnee Pioneer Trails. TravelStorys completed are Highway of Legends, Los Caminos Antiguos, and RMNP/Trail Ridge Road. Lariat Loop and Gold Belt sell their CD/Download tours, Flat Tops Trail took a cassette and made it into an [MP3 download](#).

App fatigue is real, especially for young people for an app you use once for one day. What do we do about byways that use another app or mechanism? SIPA could help if the local partner is a government worker to be a granting agency. Main Street Communities could be added as a group to take advantage of the \$4K rate for individual main streets that could be funded. Same with State Parks. Cheryl could help with this. She has CSU MTM students starting on itineraries. Cross-promotion with Colorado Drivers License offices or loaded in rental cars, target the RV companies.

The next steps include looking at developing an MOU with state partners. Next meeting with all State Agency Reps on the Commission. Bring in Chis Bowles into the conversation who will be the 2021 HC Commission rep. Is there a future financial ask the program can make of the General Assembly? Sen Rankin won re-election and huge tourism support.

### **2021 Meeting Schedule**

The proposed 2021 quarterly meetings are February 3, May 5, August 4, November 3, 9:30 am - 12:00 pm on Zoom or realistic to plan otherwise.

### **Open floor updates**

- Lenore is now a committee member of the Main Street Advisory Program.
- Photo Exhibit update - CDOT is going through contract negotiations for Colorado Springs Airport, AG's office at the state is reviewing it. There's an artist rights act. We were supposed to have the exhibit open on October 5, but now taking much longer. Next year, a second set produced for the Colorado State Fair.
- Dave Flugge at the Colorado Tourism Office is the right person to connect and learn more about an Instagram takeover from the Colorado Scenic Byways.

The meeting adjourned at 11:36 am.