



Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Commission May 2020 Meeting Minutes

Time: Wednesday, May 6, 2020, 9am-12pm

Location: online Zoom

Attending: Lenore Bates, Amanda Barker, Heidi Plankow, Tony Gurzick, Jack Placci, Andy Hill, William Haas, Traci Stoffel, Andrew Grossman, Nathan Boyless, Christy Costello, Kathleen Bracke, Jane Leche, Cheryl Glanz, Aaron Bustow, Rebecca White, Elizabeth O’Rear

Call to Order 9:06am.

Approve February Commission Minutes

Amanda Barker asked Commission Members to review and offer any amendments to the February 2020 minutes. The motion was moved by Chistine, second by Cheryl, all in favor, none opposed.

Welcome and New Appointments

Nathan Boyless welcomed Chad Schneckenburger (USFS) and Traci Stoffel (DOLA) as new Commissioners and asked them to introduce themselves to the group. At the time of the May meeting, we were still waiting on the State process to formally name them as Commissioners.

2020 Executive Committee Vice-Chair Selection

At the February Commission meeting, the Commission elected Nathan Boyless as Commission Chair and Amanda Barker as Secretary. A Vice-Chair was not confirmed. Amanda Barker nominated Heidi Plankow at this meeting to be the Vice-Chair of the Commission. Ilana seconded the nomination. All in favor, none opposed.

Round-Robin Update on Byways

- **2020 Survey of the Byways** - Lenore reports that 14 out of 26 are completed with strong follow-up happening with Heidi and Cheryl. Lenore will share which byways have not completed and who can help complete the information. Lenore will plan to share the completed survey results at the August Commission meeting.
- **Awards** - Two of Colorado’s Scenic & Historic Byways recognized for enhancing preservation and communications, along with boosting tourism and economic development. The National Scenic Byway Foundation presented the **Trail of the Ancients Scenic & Historic Byway** in southwestern Colorado with this year’s Public-Private Partnership Award for the new McElmo Creek Flume Interpretive Stop along U.S. 160 near Cortez. In southern Colorado, the **Highway of Legends Scenic Byway** between Trinidad and Walsenburg received an honorable mention from the Foundation in the Marketing and Communications category for Best Use of Technology. The TravelStoryGPS is a self-guided, audio tour app that allows travelers to hear local

experts tell the story of how the igneous rock formations were created more than 25 million years ago, along with information about the byway's history, wildlife, culture, and legends.

- **Corridor Management Plans:** Lenore recently connected with Colorado River Headwaters, Trail of the Ancients, Silver Thread, and Peak to Peak about revising their CMPs.
- **Top of the Rockies** is re-organizing and also revising their CMP after a long lapse in leadership. The group will receive 50 hours of assistance from Lenore and CDOT.
- **Flat Tops:** The group is active and working on different projects. Nancy and Stephanie are engaged and the group has momentum.
- **Cache la Poudre:** There are changes to the Gateway in Fort Collins. Meetings have some confusion. Cheryl Glanz is participating and educating decision-makers.
- **Pawnee Pioneer Trails:** Lenore/Cheryl talked with Doris. There is potential for a creative corridors brochure about Buena Vista and Salida.
- **Alpine Loop:** They are having big conversations around plowing and shutting down areas for visitors.
- **Frontier Pathways:** received a CRAFT workshop and Heidi facilitated that workshop, using some of the funding for a brochure.
- **Gold Belt:** also had a CRAFT workshop. Heidi's report will be completed in May.
- **West Elk Loop:** still meeting, now by Zoom
- **San Juan Skyway:** County Commissioners involving byways group in decision-making on projects along the byway, a big change in their approach to community engagement.
- **Collegiate Peaks:** Federal Highways announced Browns Canyon to reconstruct access to the Arkansas River
- **Mesa Verde:** got a grant
- **Highway of Legends:** Nathan is assisting with their nomination and awards
- **Lariat Loop:** Bill Litz is on the board with Lariat Loop - things are closed and quiet, could be an additional contact to call
- Tony Gurzick was in touch with Greg Smith about the new **Cherokee Trail Auto Tour** program sponsored by the Oregon – California Trails Association (OCTA). The Cherokee Trail portion overlaps with the front range and eastern plains byways. Tony will reach out and connect groups after the meeting.

National Scenic Byways Nominations Review

Lenore Bates presented three nomination drafts for the Commission to review. The Highway of Legends, Los Caminos Antiguos, and Silver Thread will submit nominations with CDOT and the Byways Commission's encouragement to the Federal Highways Commission (FHWA) for National Scenic Byways status in early June. Amanda compiled notes from the discussion and passed them on to Lenore and the contacts for the three nomination drafts. The byways will find out the decision of their national status in fall 2020.

Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) Rebound Marketing Plan (Andrew Grossman)

- Travel will reactivate in three phases: in-state and nearby driving markets, second is air travel within United States, and finally re-emergence of international travel
- Travelers feel 650 miles is the limits of where they want to go
- Traveling in personal vehicles is most likely way to travel
- Russian doll problem - need consistent guidance to help municipalities not have to reinvent the wheel
- Plans were created to have steps for “Wait”, “Ready”, “Set”, and “Go”, but there is flexibility to go backwards if the health crisis intensifies and even go back to the “Wait” stage.
- Let’s CO (Let’s Colorado) will be the branding

Byways Microsite Update (Andrew and Elizabeth O’Rear, CTO)

- Website is near-final
- Remaining component is the completion of an overview video
- Launch before Memorial Day with press release and launch on CTO channels
- <https://www.colorado.com/colorados-scenic-historic-byways>
 - Each individual byway page has an itinerary.
 - These pages will link to individual byway pages and their particular signage
 - Photos and video assets will be shared with byways for their own promotion, rights-free, all can be shared with the Commission.
- Education grants with the State Historical Fund, under contract until September 2020. All of the content was reviewed by SHF, all language, maps, etc went through them. Additions and changes will happen like a status of a road or a business closing. All that feedback will come though CTO but projecting a quarterly re-refresh with link checks, etc.
- Ask of Commissioners: Continue to contact individual byways representatives. Let them know about the rights-free video and photos, press release, letter of recognition and acknowledgement to send to their elected and local officials.

Byways Program in New Normal

Nathan Boyless led a conversation with the Commission to think through COVID-19 and byway-related issues. Our landscape has changed, especially for the partners we serve around the state. Tactically, what can we do in 2020 and 2021 to make sure we are supporting and serving on behalf of the Governor, the citizens and visitors to Colorado?

The Hedgehog Concept from the book, Good to Great

- What are you most passionate about?
 - travel and roads
 - stewardship of public lands
 - loss of open space
 - place and supporting communities (capacity building, storytell)
 - conserving what we love about Colorado and conserving for future generations

- sustainable opportunities for rural Colorado to protect their places and highlighting unique features, allowing features to discover those places
- collaboration among the byways and unifying the voice of the byways
- need strategic planning to support byways
- Care for Colorado plan that has been pushed out to Welcome Videos (have resources like videos for kids)
- Each byway has a story and making sure those unique stories are told
- Themes: Empowering Communities with Stewardship, Conservation, Preservation, Communities, Storytelling
- What can you be the best at?
 - Advocacy for the byways
 - Resources and information for the byways
 - Promotion of byways
 - Planning for byways
 - Connecting byways to resources and to each other
- What is your “economic denominator”, i.e., metric by which you measure success?
 - How do we measure this?
 - Local byways feel that sense of empowerment
 - All byways remain viable
 - Survey participation - 14 completed out of 26 currently

Nathan concluded the conversation saying he will create a venn diagram of this work and share with the Commission. The group will talk about near- and mid-term goals for the Commission and Byways Program at the August 2020 Commission meeting.

Final Updates from Commissioners:

- Chad Schneckenburger will have an Intern in the upcoming months at USFS and wants to include him in the Byways Program and the Commission as appropriate. The group gave encouragement!
- OEDIT sent out guidelines from the CDC to send out to byways contacts and businesses.

Commission meeting adjourned at 12:03.

Commission:

Amanda Barker, Member at Large
Nathan Boyless, History Colorado
Andrew Gossmann, Colorado Tourism Office
Kathleen Bracke, Transportation Commission
Christine Costello, Colorado Creative Industries
Chad Schneckenburger, USDA Forest Service
Cheryl Glanz, Eastern Byways
Rep. Barbara McLachlan, State Legislature
Ilana Moir, Conservation/Open Space Rep
Heidi Pankow, Western Byways
Jack Placchi, BLM Representative
EX-OFFICIO Members (designated through Dept. Executive Directors):
*Tony Gurzick, representing the Department of Natural Resources
*Cynthia Nieb, representing History Colorado
*Traci Stoffel, representing the Department of Local Affairs
*Rebecca White, representing the Department of Transportation
Colorado Dept. of Transportation
Lenore Bates, Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Program Manager

Program Vision:

Guiding travelers to experience and be inspired by treasured places that comprise Colorado's Scenic and Historic Byways. (Commission Approved 5/14/13)

Program Definition:

The Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways program is a statewide partnership intended to provide recreational, educational, and economic benefits to Coloradans and visitors by designating, interpreting, protecting, and promoting a system of outstanding touring routes in Colorado.

Commission Mission:

The Commission is a partnership to evaluate and designate the state's Scenic and Historic Byways and to develop and recommend funding sources and provide administrative support to sustain the byways for future generations. (Commission Approved 12/7/12)

Commission Bylaws:

<https://www.codot.gov/travel/scenic-byways/bywayscommission>

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