Chaffee County Commissioners Meeting
January 13, 2026

These minutes have been taken remotely via Zoom. Some County staff, representatives from other governments and government agencies, and others from the public may attend, including participating in the public hearing portion of the meeting, remotely via Zoom.

A. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held on January 13, 2026, at the Chaffee County Courthouse, 104 Crestone Ave., Salida. Board members present were Chair P. T. Wood, Commissioner Dave Armstrong, and Commissioner Gina Lucrezi.

Others present in person were Interim County Administrator Beth Helmke, Director of Finance Dan Short, Community Planning & Natural Resources Director Miles Cottom, Senior Planner - Long Range Implementation Gabe Hobson, Planner Nick Gomer, Road & Bridge Superintendent Mark Stacy (Item F.3. only), CSU Extension Director Monica Pless (Item E.1. only), County Clerk Lori Mitchell (Items F.6. and 7. only), Sheriff Andy Rohrich.

Others present remotely were Interim County Attorney Karl Hanlon, Planner Brandon Wolff, and Deputy County Clerks Kit Kuester, Julia Rivera, and Sophie Gibb.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

   Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Chair Wood called the meeting to order at 8:59 a.m.

2. Election of Commissioner Chair and Vice-Chair for 2026

   Chair Wood addressed the Board for the election of Commissioner Chair and Vice-Chair for 2026.

   Commissioner Wood nominated Commissioner Lucrezi as Commissioner Chair and Commissioner Armstrong as Commissioner Vice-Chair for 2026. Commissioner Armstrong seconded the nomination. The vote was unanimous for the nominations.

   Commissioner Wood stepped down as Chair and Commissioner Lucrezi assumed the position of Commissioner Chair.

3. Approve Agenda

   Commissioner Armstong moved to approve the Agenda. Commissioner Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Review Public Meeting List

   The Board reviewed the public meeting list.

5. Public Comment

Chair Lucrezi asked for public comment. She stated that you'll have up to 3 minutes to speak, and please give your name and address for the record.

Public Comment was given by:

Joe Cooper, 9325 County Road 160, Salida. Chair Lucrezi commented.

B. Minutes for Approval

1. Consider for Approval the Minutes of the January 6, 2026 Regular Meeting

Commissioner Wood moved to approve the minutes of the January 6, 2026 Commissioners' regular meeting. Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Consent Agenda

Director Short responded to Commissioner's question.

Commissioner Armstrong moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

1. Pay the Bills

2. Acknowledge the Sheriff's Office Monthly Report for December 2025

3. Acknowledge the Treasurer's Monthly Report

4. Approve grant application submission from Sheriff Office and BOCC Letter of Support for Colorado Opioid Abatement Council grant application to Round 4 of Infrastructure Share Funding program by Sheriff's Co-Response program - Helmke

5. Ratify MOU for Colorado Circular Communities (C3) Enterprise - Strategic Technical Expertise for the Public Sector (STEPS) program - providing waste audits for Chaffee County Landfill within waste diversion/recycling plan - Helmke

D. Convene as the Chaffee County Board of Adjustment

At 9:09 a.m., the Commissioners recessed as the Board of Commissioners and convened as the Board of Adjustment.

1. **Consent Agenda**

    - Consider Board of Adjustment Resolution 2026-01 - Overturning the Administrative Decision Declining to Find an Error in the Designation of the Sloat Property on the County Planning for Wildlife Map

Commissioner Wood moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

At 9:11 a.m., the Board adjourned as the Board of Adjustment and reconvened as the Board of Commissioners.

E. Contracts/Grant Consideration

2. Amendment to Common Ground grant award agreement to Brady Everett Ranches - Gabe Hobson

Planner Hobson addressed the Board to consider an Amendment to the Common Ground grant award agreement with Brady Everett Ranches.

Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Armstrong moved to approve the TN Bar Cattle Company's request to amend the MS Quarry Water Point Grant, allowing them to use the remaining funds to build an additional water line. Commissioner Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

F. Regular Agenda Items

1. Reorganization of Committee Appointments made by the Board of Commissioners

Chair Lucrezi addressed the Board regarding reorganization of Committee appointments made by the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Armstrong spoke.

Commissioner Wood moved to approve the 2026 Reorganization of Committee appointments as in the packet and presented. Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Commissioner discussion of selection process for County Administrator position - BOCC

Chair Lucrezi addressed the Board to open discussion regarding the selection process for the County Administrator position.

Discussion ensued.

Attorney Hanlon stated that if the Commissioners want to post the position internally for three (3) days, that is the current County policy, then consider any of those internal candidates, and then post a list of finalist(s) at the next meeting in Buena Vista. You are required by statute to allow 14 days between the time of naming a finalist(s) and making an offer of employment or appointment to the position. Hanlon suggested a motion to post the position internally for three (3) days, then put on the agenda to consider applicants at the next meeting.

Commissioner Wood moved to post the County Administrator position internally today January 13, 2026 for three (3) days closing on January 16, 2026, with the finalist(s) hopefully to be named on

January 19, 2026, and appointed for a permanent position at the meeting on February 3, 2026. Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Consider the Annual Commissioner Review & Approval for Highway Users Tax Fund (HUTF) changes in 2025 - Mark Stacy

Superintendent Stacy addressed the Board to consider the Annual Commissioner Review & Approval for Highway Users Tax Fund (HUTF) changes in 2025.

Commissioner Wood moved to accept the HUTF report as presented. Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

E.1. Discuss renewal/update of CSU Extension MOU Amendment, addressing partnership between Colorado State University Extension and Chaffee County as Extension county host - Helmke; Monica Pless, CSU Extension

Interim County Administrator Helmke addressed the Board to open discussion regarding the renewal/update of the CSU Extension MOU Amendment, addressing the partnership between Colorado State University Extension and Chaffee County as Extension county host.

Director Pless distributed printed materials and addressed the Board.

CSU Extension Mountain Region Director Kurt Jones spoke.

Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Wood moved to approve the renewal/update of the CSU Extension MOU Amendment as presented, addressing the partnership between Colorado State University Extension and Chaffee County as Extension county host. Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Jones clarified that this MOU will go to Colorado State University through its Office of General Counsel to ensure Jones didn't add anything that he is not supposed to. It will hopefully be within a month or so that this will come back for ratification.

4. Second Reading and possible action to adopt **County Ordinance 2025-03 Restricting Open Fires and Open Burning in Unincorporated areas of Chaffee County and Providing Penalties for Violation of Such Ordinance** - Beth Helmke; Sheriff Andy Rohrich; Kira Jones, Chaffee County Fire Protection District

Chair Lucrezi addressed the Board to consider the Second Reading and possible action to adopt **County Ordinance 2025-03 Restricting Open Fires and Open Burning in Unincorporated areas of Chaffee County and Providing Penalties for Violation of Such Ordinance.**

Sheriff Rohrich addressed the Board.

Discussion ensued during which Interim County Administrator Helmke spoke.

Commissioner Wood moved to adopt the Second Reading of **County Ordinance 2025-03 Restricting Open Fires and Open Burning in Unincorporated areas of Chaffee County and Providing Penalties for Violation of Such Ordinance**. Commissioner Armstong seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Helmke stated that her understanding is that the next step with this final version is that we will provide public notice that this has been adopted, then she believes there is a 30-day time frame from time of adoption until the effective date, which she'll confirm with the attorney and make sure that's reflected in the notice.

5. **Public Hearing**
Project Name: Pleasant Preserve Conditional Use Permit
Project Address: 600 Highway 285
Brief Summary the proposed development: To seek formal approval of the nonconforming pre-existing use of the parcel as a rural resort and permissions to expand the existing use.
Applicant: Ben Cherrey
County Planner Contact: Nick Gomer – ngomer@chaffeecounty.org - 719.530.5571

Planner Gomer addressed the Board to consider the Pleasant Preserve Conditional Use Permit for the project located at 600 Highway 285 for Applicant Ben Cherrey.

Planner Gomer responded to Commissioner's question.

Applicant Ben Cherrey addressed the Board and responded to Commissioners' questions and comments.

The public comment portion of the hearing opened at 9:45 a.m. There were no comments, and the public comment portion of the hearing was closed.

Commissioners deliberated.

Commissioner Wood moved to approve **RESOLUTION 2026-03 GRANTING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO PLEASANT PRESERVE CONFIRMING ITS EXISTING USE AND PROPOSED EXPANSION AS A CONFORMING USE UNDER THE CHAFFEE COUNTY LAND USE CODE**. Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

6. **Public Hearing** to Consider the Liquor License Renewal for Noah and Yousaf, LLC, DBA Sugarshack, at 17900 State Hwy 285, Nathrop, CO 81236 - Clerk's Office

Chair Lucrezi addressed the Board to consider the Liquor License Renewal for Noah and Yousaf, LLC, dba Sugarshack, at 17900 State Hwy. 285, Nathrop, CO 81236.

Interim County Administrator Helmke spoke.

The public comment portion of the hearing opened at 9:51 a.m. There were no comments, and the public comment portion of the hearing was closed.

Commissioner Armstrong moved to approve the Liquor License Renewal for Noah and Yousaf, LLC, dba Sugarshack, at 17900 State Hwy. 285, Nathrop, CO 81236. Commissioner Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

7. *Continued from December 16, 2025:* **Public Hearing** to Consider the Liquor License Renewal for Independent Whitewater, dba Drift In, at 10832 County Road 165, Salida, CO 81201

Chair Lucrezi addressed the Board to consider the Liquor License Renewal for Independent Whitewater, dba Drift In, at 10832 County Road 165, Salida, CO 81201.

Attorney Hanlon addressed the Board.

Attorney Chris Skagen, 1204 E St., Salida, representing the Applicant, addressed the Board. Skagen and Applicant responded to Commissioner's question.

The public comment portion of the hearing opened at 9:59 a.m.
Public comments were given by:

Attorney Matt Bayma, 104 Aldasoro Rd., Telluride, representing Riversong, LLC, which is the owner of the neighboring property at 10829 County Rd. 165, Salida.

The public comment portion of the hearing closed at 10:18 a.m.

Applicant responded to Commissioner's question.

Attorney Hanlon spoke.

Applicant spoke.

Discussion ensued.

Clerk Mitchell addressed the Board.

Discussion ensued during which Attorney Hanlon responded to Commissioner's questions.

Commissioner Wood moved to approve the Liquor License Renewal for Independent Whitewater, dba Drift Inn, at 10832 County Road 165, Salida, CO 81201, with the following conditions: setting hours from 10:00 a.m. to midnight and Applicant to provide an updated and clear map and provide a containment narrative.

Discussion ensued during which Attorney Hanlon responded to Commissioner's questions regarding the optional premises license and hours of operation.

Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Applicant said he could get the information requested by the Commissioners to them by February 3, 2026.

G. Commissioners Comments

H. Adjourn

There being no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

Attest:

Lori Mitchell

Lori Mitchell, County Clerk