



Chaffee County Commissioners Meeting
February 3, 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 February 3, 2026, at the Chaffee County Courthouse, 104 Crestone Ave., Salida. Board members present were Chair Gina Lucrezi, Commissioner Dave Armstrong, and Commissioner P. T. Wood.

Others present in person were Interim County Administrator/County Administrator Beth Helmke, Director of Finance Dan Short, Interim County Attorney Karl Hanlon, Community Planning & Natural Resources Director Miles Cottom, Planner Nick Gomer, Sheriff Andy Rohrich (Item G.1. only), and Undersheriff Alex Walker (Item G.1. only).

Others present remotely were Planner Brandon Wolff, Building Official Chad Chadwick, and Deputy County Clerks Kit Kuester, Julia Rivera, and Barbara Tidd.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Chair Lucrezi called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

2. Approve Agenda

Chair Lucrezi suggested that Agenda item G.4. be moved to G.1.

Commissioner Wood suggested that Agenda item H. be moved to after Agenda item F.

Commissioner Armstrong moved to approve the Agenda as amended as stated above.

Commissioner Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Review Public Meeting List

The Board reviewed the public meeting list.

4. 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 Rd. 160, Salida.

B. Minutes for Approval

1. Consider for Approval the Minutes of the January 20, 2026 Regular Meeting

Commissioner Wood moved to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2026 Commissioners' regular meeting. Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Consent Agenda

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

Commissioner Wood commented.

The motion carried unanimously.

1. Pay the Bills
2. Ratify approval of Liquor License Renewal for Independent Whitewater, DBA Drift In, at 10832 County Road 165, Salida, CO 81201, confirming provision of required conditions for Optional Premises License, as directed at 13 January 2026 Public Hearing
3. Ratify Letter of Support for Chaffee County Emergency Medical Service department's application to CDPHE Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Program Provider Grant program for equipment replacement needs - Helmke
4. Ratify Letter of Support for CSU Regional Economic Development Institute's application to Colorado State University Sustainable Rural Futures program - Helmke

D. Contracts/Grant Consideration

1. Discuss and consider 2026 Commissioner Discretionary funding agreements with community partner entities:

Interim County Administrator Helmke addressed the Board to open discussion and consider 2026 Commissioner Discretionary funding agreements with community partner entities as listed above.

Discussion ensued during which Helmke responded to Commissioner's question.

Commissioner Armstrong moved to direct staff to formalize the funding agreements for community partner organizations to document provision, use, and obligations regarding use of monies from Commissioners' discretionary funding areas as have been included in the Chaffee County 2026 budget. Commissioner Wood seconded the motion, and stated that if anyone wants to take a deeper dive into our discussions about this, those are reported in our budget hearings from late 2025 and can be found online.

The motion carried unanimously.

Buena Vista Singletrack Coalition

Chaffee County Community Foundation; Chaffee County Early Childhood Council

Chaffee County Economic Development Corporation

Chaffee Housing Trust

Greater Arkansas River Nature Association

Energy Smart Colorado

Mountain Valley Transit

Recycle Colorado

Salida Mountain Trails

Southwest Conservation Corps

2. Consider contract with Custom Geospatial Solutions, LLC for contract GIS services - Miles Cottom Director Cottom addressed the Board to consider a contract with Custom Geospatial Solutions, LLC for contract GIS services.

Discussion ensued during which Director Cottom responded to Commissioner's question.

Commissioner Armstrong moved to accept the contract with Custom Geospatial Solutions, LLC for contract GIS services as presented. Commissioner Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

E. Convene as the Chaffee County Board of Adjustment

At 9:31 a.m. the Board recessed as the Board of Commissioners and convened as the Board of Adjustment.

1. **Public Hearing on Board of Adjustment Appeal of Administrative Decision**
Project Name: Baumgardner Appeal of Administrative Decision
Project Address: 16953 County Road 306, Buena Vista
Brief Summary of the Proposed Development: The applicant is appealing an administrative denial of a request to reduce building setbacks from Cottonwood Creek from 300' to 100'.
Planner: Nick Gomer / 719-530-5571 / ngomer@chaffeecounty.org

Chair Lucrezi addressed the Board to open the Public Hearing regarding the Board of Adjustment Baumgardner Appeal of Administrative Decision for the project at 16953 County Rd. 306, Buena Vista.

Planner Gomer presented regarding this project and responded to Commissioner's question.

Applicant Kurt Baumgardner, 2714 Columbine St., Denver CO, who is looking to build on the property at 16953 County Rd. 306, Buena Vista, addressed the Board.

Heather Houston of Birch Ecology addressed the Board.

Kurt Baumgardner and Houston responded to Commissioner's question.

The public comment portion of the hearing opened at 9:57 a.m.

Public comments were given by:

Mark Carvey, 16955 County Rd. 306, Buena Vista.

Dana Carvey, 16955 County Rd. 306, Buena Vista.

Joe Cooper, 9325 County Rd. 160, Salida.

The public comment portion of the hearing closed at 10:08 a.m.

Discussion ensued during which Kurt Baumgardner responded to Commissioner's question.

The public comment portion of the hearing opened again at 10:13 a.m. There were no additional comments, and this public comment portion of the hearing was closed.

Commissioners deliberated during which Attorney Hanlon spoke and Gomer and Hanlon responded to Commissioners' questions and comments.

Attorney Hanlon reminded the Commissioners that it takes three votes to overturn the staff's decision and clarified that a modification would be an overturn.

Gomer and Attorney Hanlon responded to Commissioners' questions.

Deliberations continued.

Commissioner Wood moved to modify the setback to a plain based on 200 feet from the northern edge of the property/northwestern edge of the property along both the eastern and western boundaries to preserve the wildlife corridors on either side, and by sticking with the 300-foot setback, that's not a reasonable building envelope because it would put the wildlife in the winter range in harm's way by pushing them too close to County Rd. 306.

Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion.

Discussion ensued.

Commissioners Wood and Armstrong voted FOR the motion. Commissioner Lucrezi voted AGAINST the motion. The motion did *not* pass because any decision is required to be unanimous.

Attorney Hanlon stated that in the absence of an alternative motion, if the Board is unable to come to a unanimous decision, the staff decision stands.
Staff's recommendation stands.

Commissioner Lucrezi moved to affirm the staff's decision to deny the request to reduce the building set-backs from Cottonwood Creek from 300 feet to 100 feet.

The motion died for lack of a second.

Staff will prepare a resolution that Attorney Hanlon said would state what occurred during the hearing to clarify the record that this was neither an affirmation nor a denial.

At 10:43 a.m., the Commissioners adjourned as the Board of Adjustment and reconvened as the Board of Commissioners.

F. Regular Agenda Items

1. Consider MOUs with municipalities addressing the Extended Producer Responsibility funding management for waste diversion program support - Helmke

Interim County Administrator Helmke addressed the Board to consider MOUs with municipalities addressing the Extended Producer Responsibility funding management for waste diversion program support.

Commissioner Wood moved to approve the MOUs with municipalities addressing the Extended Producer Responsibility funding management for waste diversion program support as presented. Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Consider Commissioner Letter regarding Unfunded Mandates to the State of Colorado and Legislators - Commissioners

Chair Lucrezi addressed the Board to consider the Commissioners' Letter regarding Unfunded Mandates to the State of Colorado and Legislators.

Discussion ensued during which Commissioner Wood suggested that the letter mention that it would be useful to add a local fiscal note to the legislation and Attorney Hanlon spoke.

Commissioner Armstrong moved to amend the Commissioners' Letter regarding Unfunded Mandates to the State of Colorado and Legislators as Commissioner Wood requested. Commissioner Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Helmke stated that the final version of the letter will be provided to the Commissioners for their affirmation.

3. Discussion & Action on the intent to carry forward Private Activity Bond amounts - Beth Helmke

Interim County Administrator Helmke addressed the Board to consider open discussion and take action on the intent to carry forward Private Activity Bond amounts.

Helmke, Director Short, and Attorney Hanlon responded to Commissioners' questions and comments.

Commissioner Armstrong moved to submit IRS Form 8328 to carry forward the Chaffee County 2025 Private Activity Bond allotment and direct staff to complete this action by the February 15, 2026 deadline. Commissioner Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Consider request from Bill Alderton to refund application fee for a Rezoning Application filed April 2025 - Rose Reuling

Director Cottom addressed the Board to consider a request from Bill Alderton to refund the application fee for a Rezoning Application filed April 2025.

Director Cottom responded to Commissioners' questions.

Commissioner Wood moved to deny Bill Alderton's request to refund the application fee for a Rezoning Application filed April 2025. Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Consider the Destination Management Council's budget recommendation - Beth Helmke
Interim County Administrator Helmke addressed the Board to consider the Destination Management Council's budget recommendation.

Helmke responded to Director Short's question.

Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Wood moved to approve the Destination Management Council's marketing and stewardship strategy and budget as presented and recommended by the Council. Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion.

Discussion ensued during which Director Short spoke.

The motion carried unanimously.

Helmke clarified that she'll provide additional ad service scopes and come back to the Commissioners with those analytics and insights.

6. Interview with finalist candidate, Beth Helmke, for the Chaffee County Administrator position appointment - Commissioners

Chair Lucrezi addressed the Board to open the interview with finalist candidate Beth Helmke for the Chaffee County Administrator position appointment.

Interim County Administrator Helmke responded to Commissioners' questions during the interview.

Attorney Hanlon spoke.

Commissioner Wood moved to make Beth Helmke the permanent Chaffee County Administrator pending negotiations, verbal contract, and final written contract to be presented at the next February 17, 2026 meeting. Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

G. Executive Session

By consensus, the Commissioners agreed to retain the order of the Executive Sessions as listed on the published Agenda.

At 11:42 a.m., the Board recessed the open portion of the regular meeting and convened in Executive Session.

1. An executive session pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(b) for a conference with the Interim County Attorney for the purposes of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions related to the Mountain View Fire arson investigation. - Interim County Administrator Beth Helmke, Finance Director Dan Short, Sheriff Andy Rohrich, Undersheriff Alex Walker, and Interim County Attorney Karl Hanlon may attend.

Chair Lucrezi addressed the Board to enter into executive session pursuant to § 24-6-402(4)(b), C.R.S. for a conference with the Interim County Attorney for the purposes of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions related to the Mountain View Fire arson investigation.

Commissioner Wood moved to go into executive session pursuant to § 24-6-402(4)(b), C.R.S. for a conference with the Interim County Attorney for the purposes of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions related to the Mountain View Fire arson investigation. Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Attorney Hanlon stated that this executive session would constitute privileged attorney-client communications and no further recording of the executive session would be necessary.

The following persons are in attendance for executive session: Commissioners Armstrong, Lucrezi, and Wood and Interim County Administrator Beth Helmke, Finance Director Dan Short, Sheriff Andy Rohrich, Undersheriff Alex Walker, and Interim County Attorney Karl Hanlon.

The Commissioners moved into executive session at 11:42 a.m.

The Commissioners came out of executive session at 12:02 p.m. with no decisions being made.

I, Karl Hanlon, Interim Chaffee County Attorney, do hereby attest that the unrecorded statements and discussions that took place during the executive session held on February 3, 2026 constituted privileged attorney-client communication.

Karl Hanlon

Karl Hanlon, Interim Chaffee County Attorney

I, Gina Lucrezi, Chair of the Chaffee County Board of County Commissioners, do hereby attest that the unrecorded statements and discussions that took place during the executive session held on February 3, 2026 were confined to the topic described in the announcement of such session and authorized by the provisions of § 24-6-402(4)(b), C.R.S.



Gina Lucrezi, Chair

Chair Lucrezi stated that if any person who participated in the executive session believes that any substantial discussion of any matters not included in the motion to enter the executive session occurred during the executive session, or that any improper action occurred during the executive session in violation of the Open Meetings Law, she asked that you state your concerns for the record.

Hearing none, Chair Lucrezi moved on to Agenda Item G.2.

2. An Executive Session for a conference with the County Attorney and Special Counsel pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(b) for purposes of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions and C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(e) for determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, developing strategies for negotiations, and instructing negotiators both regarding *Chaffee County v. Brown*. - Interim County Administrator Beth Helmke, Finance Director Dan Short, Planning Director Miles Cottom, and Interim County Attorney Karl Hanlon may attend.

Chair Lucrezi addressed the Board to enter into executive session pursuant to § 24-6-402(4)(b), C.R.S. for the purposes of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions and § 24-6- 402(4)(e), C.R.S. for determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, developing strategies for negotiations, and instructing negotiators both regarding *Chaffee County v. Brown*.

Commissioner Wood moved to go into executive session pursuant to § 24-6-402(4)(b), C.R.S. for the purposes of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions and § 24-6- 402(4)(e), C.R.S. for determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, developing strategies for negotiations, and instructing negotiators both regarding *Chaffee County v. Brown*.

He stated that Commissioners Armstrong, Lucrezi, and Wood and Interim County Attorney Karl Hanlon will attend, Interim County Administrator Beth Helmke, Director of Finance Dan Short, and Community & Natural Resources Planning Director Miles Cottom may attend. Attorney Hanlon stated that Special Counsel Torie Jarvis and Jo Seavy with Sullivan Green Seavy, LLC will also attend.

Commissioner Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Attorney Hanlon stated that this executive session would constitute privileged attorney-client communications and no further recording of the executive session would be necessary.

The following persons are in attendance for executive session: Commissioners Armstrong, Lucrezi, and Wood and Interim County Attorney Karl Hanlon, Interim County Administrator Beth Helmke,

Director of Finance Dan Short, Community & Natural Resources Planning Director Miles Cottom, and Special Counsel Torie Jarvis with Sullivan Green Seavy, LLC.

The Commissioners moved into executive session at 12:05 p.m.

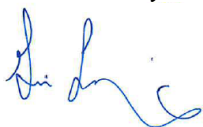
The Commissioners came out of executive session at 12:32 p.m. with no decisions being made.

I, Karl Hanlon, Interim Chaffee County Attorney, do hereby attest that the unrecorded statements and discussions that took place during the executive session held on February 3, 2026 constituted privileged attorney-client communication.

Karl Hanlon

Karl Hanlon, Interim Chaffee County Attorney

I, Gina Lucrezi, Chair of the Chaffee County Board of County Commissioners, do hereby attest that the unrecorded statements and discussions that took place during the executive session held on February 3, 2026 were confined to the topic described in the announcement of such session and authorized by the provisions of § 24-6-402(4)(b), C.R.S.



Gina Lucrezi, Chair

Chair Lucrezi stated that if any person who participated in the executive session believes that any substantial discussion of any matters not included in the motion to enter the executive session occurred during the executive session, or that any improper action occurred during the executive session in violation of the Open Meetings Law, he asked that you state your concerns for the record.

Hearing none, Chair Lucrezi moved on to Agenda item G.3.

3. An executive session pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(b) for a conference with the Interim County Attorney for the purposes of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions related to *Cooper v. Chaffee County*. - Interim County Administrator Beth Helmke, Finance Director Dan Short, Planning Director Miles Cottom, Building Official Chad Chadwick, and Interim County Attorney Karl Hanlon may attend.

Chair Lucrezi addressed the Board to enter into executive session pursuant to § 24-6-402(4)(b), C.R.S. for a conference with the Interim County Attorney for the purposes of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions related to *Cooper v. Chaffee County*.

Commissioner Armstrong moved to go into executive session pursuant to § 24-6-402(4)(b), C.R.S. for a conference with the Interim County Attorney for the purposes of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions related to *Cooper v. Chaffee County*.

He stated that Commissioners Armstrong, Lucrezi, and Wood will attend, and Interim County Administrator Beth Helmke, Finance Director Dan Short, Building Official Chad Chadwick, and Interim County Attorney Karl Hanlon may attend. Commissioner Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Attorney Hanlon stated that this executive session would constitute privileged attorney-client communications and no further recording of the executive session would be necessary.

The following persons are in attendance for executive session: Commissioners Armstrong, Lucrezi, and Wood and Interim County Administrator Beth Helmke, Finance Director Dan Short, Building Official Chad Chadwick, and Interim County Attorney Karl Hanlon.

The Commissioners moved into executive session at 12:35 p.m.

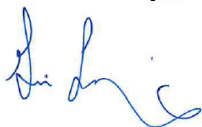
The Commissioners came out of executive session at 12:40 p.m. with no decisions being made.

I, Karl Hanlon, Interim Chaffee County Attorney, do hereby attest that the unrecorded statements and discussions that took place during the executive session held on February 3, 2026 constituted privileged attorney-client communication.

Karl Hanlon

Karl Hanlon, Interim Chaffee County Attorney

I, Gina Lucrezi, Chair of the Chaffee County Board of County Commissioners, do hereby attest that the unrecorded statements and discussions that took place during the executive session held on February 3, 2026 were confined to the topic described in the announcement of such session and authorized by the provisions of § 24-6-402(4)(b), C.R.S.



Gina Lucrezi, Chair

Chair Lucrezi stated that if any person who participated in the executive session believes that any substantial discussion of any matters not included in the motion to enter the executive session occurred during the executive session, or that any improper action occurred during the executive session in violation of the Open Meetings Law, she asked that you state your concerns for the record.

Hearing none, Chair Lucrezi moved on to Agenda item G.4.

4. An Executive Session pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(e) for determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, developing strategies for negotiations, and instructing negotiators and C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(f) for a personnel matter that no employee who is the subject matter of the executive session has requested be an open meeting both regarding the County Administrator. - Interim County Administrator Beth Helmke, Finance Director Dan Short, and Interim County Attorney Karl Hanlon may attend.

Chair Lucrezi addressed the Board to enter into executive session pursuant to § 24-6-402(4)(e), C.R.S. for determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, developing strategies for negotiations, and instructing negotiators and § 24-6-402(4)(f), C.R.S. for a personnel matter that no employee who is the subject matter of the executive session has requested be an open meeting both regarding the County Administrator.

Commissioner Armstrong moved to go into executive session pursuant to § 24-6-402(4)(e), C.R.S. for determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, developing strategies for negotiations, and instructing negotiators and § 24-6-402(4)(f), C.R.S. for a personnel matter that no employee who is the subject matter of the executive session has requested be an open meeting both regarding the County Administrator.

He stated that Commissioners Armstrong, Lucrezi, and Wood will attend, and Interim County Administrator Beth Helmke, Finance Director Dan Short, and Interim County Attorney Karl Hanlon may attend.

Commissioner Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The following persons are in attendance for executive session: Commissioners Armstrong, Lucrezi, and Wood and Interim County Administrator Beth Helmke, Finance Director Dan Short and Interim County Attorney Karl Hanlon.

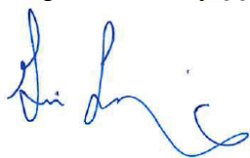
The Commissioners moved into executive session at 12:42 p.m.

The Commissioners came out of executive session at 1:08 p.m. with no decisions being made.

Chair Lucrezi stated that if any person who participated in the executive session believes that any substantial discussion of any matters not included in the motion to enter the executive session occurred during the executive session, or that any improper action occurred during the executive session in violation of the Open Meetings Law, she asked that you state your concerns for the record.

Hearing none, Chair Lucrezi stated that there was no more business to come before the Board and if there were no objections, the meeting is adjourned.

I, Gina Lucrezi, Chair of the Chaffee County Board of County Commissioners, do hereby attest that the statements and discussions that took place during the executive session held on February 3, 2026 were confined to the topic described in the announcement of such session and authorized by the provisions of §§ 24-6-402(4)(e) and (f), C.R.S. The session was recorded on separate medium.



Gina Lucrezi, Chair

H. Commissioners Comments

I. Adjourn

There being no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Attest:



