



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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Breckenridge, CO 80424

TO: Board of County Commissioners  
Scott Vargo  
Jeff Huntley  
FROM: Sara R. Lopez  
RE: Work Session Meeting of September 21, 2021  
DATE: Tuesday, September 21, 2021

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**Attendees:**

Elected Officials: Elisabeth Lawrence and Josh Blanchard – Commissioners  
Jaime FitzSimons - Sheriff

Staff (in person or via Zoom): Scott Vargo, County Manager; Jeff Huntley, County Attorney; Bentley Henderson, Assistant County Manager; Marty Ferris, Finance Director; Nicole Valentine, Communications Director; David Reynolds, Finance Assistant Director; Adam Kisiel, Public Affairs Coordinator; Michael Wurzel, Sustainability Coordinator; April Paige, Executive Administrative Manager and Sara R Lopez, Administrative Assistant.

Guests (in person or via Zoom): Alison Mathes, Andrew Pappas, Eli Openheimer, Max Tyler, Blair McGary, Joan Jardon, Peter Siegel, Peyton Rogers, Phil Lindeman, Shianne Elliott, Stephen Saunders, Jenna deJong and others who did not sign in.

- I. **Rocky Mountain Climate Organization Presentation: Temperature & Precipitation Analysis**  
Stephen Saunders and Michael Wurzel gave an update on the following topics including but not limited to:

Climate Projections in Summit County Colorado Report

Average temperature in Colorado has increased 2 degrees Fahrenheit over the past 30 years, with additional warming expected in coming decades. Realizing our community's collective responsibility to reduce heat-trapping, greenhouse gas emissions and do our part to mitigate more warming, the Board adopted the Summit Community Climate Action Plan (CAP) on April 23, 2019, which set goals to decrease greenhouse gas emissions in Summit County 50% by 2030 and 80% by 2050, relative to a 2005 baseline. The CAP outlines recommended strategies to be pursued now and in the future to reduce emissions in residential and commercial building energy use (33% and 35% of total emissions in Summit County, respectively), transportation (33%) and waste (2%). However, the CAP does not provide climate modeling or predictions about future conditions in Summit County or the potential consequences or effects of climate change.

Key Findings

These climate projections show what Summit County communities have at stake—how much the local climate and the local quality of life could change—if greenhouse gas emissions continue to increase over the next 80 years.

The report projects that with high emissions, Summit County could see:

- Hotter summers, with more 75 and 80° days by mid-century,
- Warmer winters, with a near doubling of days above 32° during peak ski season from November to April
- Earlier spring warm-ups, with more days above 40° during peak spring skiing from March 16 - April 15, and
- A slight increase in overall precipitation, especially during winter, but with everyday precipitation events become less frequent, while heavy storms of rain and snowfall become more frequent.

For examples, according to projections in a high emissions scenario, the hottest days of the year in the Frisco/Dillon area would average:

- 85° in a typical mid-century year (2040–2059)—compared to 79° in 1970–1999,
- 88° in an extreme, mid-century year—compared to 82°, the hottest single day in 1970–1999,
- 90° in a typical late-century year (2080-2099), and
- 94° in an extremely hot, late-century year.

So an average summer day in mid-century would be 3° hotter than the single hottest day of the late 20th century. And, because the towns are at a lower elevation than the overall elevations of the climate model areas, the towns would be about 3° hotter than the above projections.

Even more dramatic to quality of life and climate impacts might be how common hot days become. The average number of days 80° and hotter per year would be:

- 12 days in typical mid-century year—a thirty-fold increase over 1970-1999, which averaged 0.4 such day every year, and
- 37 days in the extreme, mid-century year—compared to a high of four such days in 1970–1999.

The good news from this report is that the most severe impacts of climate change can be prevented, if emissions are sharply reduced by 2050. The highest emissions scenario is possible but unlikely due to the falling costs of renewable energy, battery storage and electric vehicles, while a very low emissions scenario is as equally unlikely, given that fossil fuel use remains at all-time highs across the globe, even with global commitments to curtail emissions sharply by 2030. With very low future emissions, 80°-plus days in the Frisco/Dillon Reservoir area are projected:

- To average three such days per year, in typical years from 2020–2039, and
- To stay the same from that point forward, also averaging three such days for the rest of the century.

### Consequences

The projected changes in temperature and precipitation in the RMCO report are likely to lead to a wide range of scientifically predicted, and now observed, impacts, including:

- More widespread and frequent wildfires,
- More wildfire smoke, and the associated negative effects on health and wellness,
- More debris flows from heavy storms falling on burned areas,

- Shorter and slushier ski seasons,
- Reduced water supplies,
- Fewer opportunities for fishing and other outdoor recreation, and
- More insect outbreaks and beetle-killed trees.

Mr. Saunders discussed changes to building codes and how the county needs to prepare for California-level wildfires. Outreach to people for voluntary fire mitigation is very important and the process has started but not at the level it needs to be done.

Commissioners and staff asked questions and thanked Mr. Saunders and Mr. Wurzel for their presentation.

## **II. Community Solar Opportunities**

Eli Openheimer gave an update on Pivot Energy and their work over the years. He also explained that Community solar provides subscribers equal access to the economic and environmental benefits of solar energy generation without the challenges of upfront costs, physical ownership, or land use constraints. In essence, if you can't install solar directly on your property, community solar can be a good option for accessing the savings and other benefits solar provides. Community solar expands access to solar for all, including in particular low-to-moderate income customers most impacted by a lack of access, all while building a stronger, distributed, and more resilient electric grid.

Community solar facilities are five, or less, megawatts of electrical capacity and vary in the number of acres affected. Unlike residential housing and commercial development, community solar installations are generally on leased land, and well-designed systems can be returned to their original state.

### **Why Community Solar?**

- Rooftop solar is not accessible to all people or businesses.
- Community solar benefits the community while supplying the utility grid with clean energy to meet Renewable Portfolio Standard goals.
- Local municipalities, businesses, schools and residents can subscribe to a community solar garden, saving them money on their utility bills without any upfront investment.
- No roof needed to benefit from solar.

### **Benefits of Community Solar**

Community Solar is an option for anyone to gain economic and environmental benefits of solar energy without having to invest in or install a solar array on a property. Mr. Openheimer gave an overview of a mountain solar community garden Pivot Energy worked on with the town of Brush, Colorado, on a site that had been previously used as an industrial feedlot.

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

There are less sunny days than other parts of Colorado, challenging topography, heavy snow loads, expensive real estate, and high upfront costs are some of the factors that make widespread adoption of solar a challenge in Summit County. A community solar subscription offers many of the benefits of solar and overcomes these particular obstacles. Summit County Government could feasibly

subscribe to approximately 1000 kilowatts of community solar through a non-binding, 20-year agreement that would save the County an estimated \$250,000 or more, over the next 20 years.

While there are many challenges to solar adoption in Summit County, developing a local, community solar garden is still a possibility. The County could partner with a community solar developer to construct a 2-3 megawatt community solar garden at the County SCRAP on a 20-year lease. There are many benefits to a community solar garden on the landfill, including the adaptive use of a marginalized land, the solar energy produced would be available on the local grid, and others.

Mr. Vargo asked if they have vetted properties in Summit County, noting that they price of land in the county is quite high. Mr. Wurzel said they have looked at land impacted by mines as well as the landfill, which seems to be the best area for a community solar garden. Mr. Vargo said it is necessary to determine if the land is available and that it has not been designated for landfill-use-only. Commissioners asked staff to look into it. The group discussed other options for community solar locations and agreements with potential partners.

### **III. Managers' & Commissioners' Issues**

Senior Management and Commissioners discussed several topics including but not limited to:

Scott Vargo

- The Town of Frisco has agreed for the county to move forward with the rezoning process.
- The FIRC Non Profit Center Committee will have Commissioner Lawrence and Sarah Vaine as county representatives.
- The next Short Term Rental discussion will be held at the Work Session on Tuesday, September 28, 2021.

Nicole Valentine

- Virtual Town Hall with the Public Health and Summit School District will be held on September 29, 2021.
- Stephanie Ralph was selected as a speaker for the upcoming TEDx Breckenridge on October 2, 2021. The live event is sold out but there are tickets available to the virtual event on October 12, 2021.

Bentley Henderson

- The next CDOT/BOCC Joint meeting will be on September 28, 2021, during Work Session.
- The Open Space & Trails would like the Board to endorse their request for the Golden State Connection State Trails Grant. Commissioners agreed.
- Update on Highway 6/Lake Dillon Drive, and Highway 6/County Road 51 intersections and the different types of roundabouts under consideration.

Elisabeth Lawrence

- Update on upcoming CCI meetings as well as CCAT Conference.
- She would like to hold an evening Town Hall event to discuss proposed changes to STRs. Tentatively scheduled for October 7, 2021.

- The US Treasury Capital Projects Program has announced a new grant for the remodeling of new construction for libraries. The planned remodeling project for the Silverthorne Library may qualify for this grant.
- She commended the Planning Department staff for their work at last week's Work Session and Regular Meeting.

Commissioners also reviewed schedules and upcoming calendar events.

**IV. Weekly Fire Restrictions Update (Sheriff)**

Sheriff FitzSimons gave an update on current conditions. Because of the cold nights it is recommended for the county to stay without restrictions through next week.

**V. Discussion of Legal Issues, Real Property Matters, and Real Estate Transactions (Attorney) (Executive Session Recommended).**

Jeff Huntley and Scott Vargo requested an Executive Session to discuss legal issues, real property matters, and real estate transactions.

A motion was made by Commissioner Blanchard and seconded by Commissioner Lawrence to go into Executive Session to discuss legal issues, real property matters and real estate transactions. The BOCC voted 2 to 0 to go into Executive Session per CRS 24-6-402 (4) (a)(b)(e). The motion was approved.

**I. Joint BOH/BOCC Special Work Session / Working Lunch**

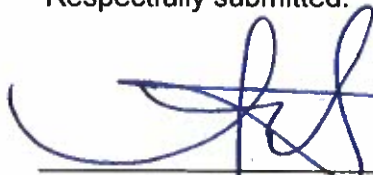
Amy Wineland gave an update on Summit County's latest case numbers, summary epi trends, vaccine updates, hospitalizations, etc.

For additional details, please see the BOH/BOCC Joint Meeting Minutes in the Agenda Center under County Commissioners Agendas: <https://www.summitcountyco.gov/agendacenter>.

For Summit County's Public Health Orders and latest information, please visit [www.summitcountyco.gov](http://www.summitcountyco.gov). Click on Get COVID-19 Info and Updates.

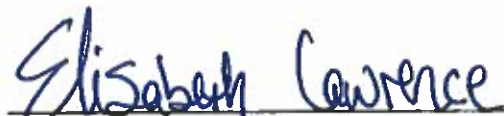
Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

  
Sara R Lopez, Deputy Clerk



Approved by:

  
Elisabeth Lawrence, Chair