

# **Pikes Peak Regional Building Department**

2880 International Circle  
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80910

## **REGIONAL BUILDING COMMISSION MINUTES**

September 30, 2021

2:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Tom Strand, Colorado Springs City Council  
Vice Chair Don Wilson, Mayor of Monument, Colorado  
Carrie Geitner, El Paso County Commissioner

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Roger Lovell, Regional Building Official  
Virginia Koulchitzka, Regional Building Counsel  
Jay Eenhuis, Deputy Building Official – Plans  
John Welton, Deputy Building Official – Inspections  
Erin Garcia, Director of Finance  
Matt Matzen, Front Counter Supervisor  
Linda Gardner, Executive Administrative Assistant

The Regional Building Commission meeting was conducted in a hybrid form, allowing Commission members, Department staff, and the public to attend in person at the Pikes Peak Regional Development Center, 2880 International Circle, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80910, Room 100-14, or virtually via a program called Microsoft Teams live events, which is accessible via Pikes Peak Regional Building Department's website Boards & Committees' page at: <https://www.pprbd.org/Information/Boards>.

### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Tom Strand called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

### **2. CONSIDERATION OF THE AUGUST 26, 2021 MEETING MINUTES**

A motion was made by Don Wilson to **APPROVE** the August 26, 2021 Regional Building Commission Minutes as written, seconded by Carrie Geitner; the motion carried unanimously.

### **3. NEW BUSINESS**

a) Careers in Construction Update by George Hess.

George Hess appeared and stated the Careers in Construction (CICC) is celebrating its 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary with 29 locations serving over 100 schools. There are currently 1,500 students enrolled with 5 houses under construction; and 1,000 industry expert volunteer hours. He stated the cumulative program stats are as follows: 1,775 PACT Certificates earned; 983 OSHA 10 Certificates earned; 344 students employed from CICC job

placements; 130 partner employers; and over 3,600 unique students have taken CICC courses.

Mr. Hess stated by 2025, CICC anticipates there will be 65 Colorado high schools involved; 5,000 students enrolled; and 1,000 students employed from CICC job placement. Mr. Hess thanked the Pikes Peak Regional Building Department for making this all possible through contributions made by contractors / property owners through the permitting process handled by the Department.

#### 4. **CHANGES/POSTPONEMENTS/NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING**

October Regional Building Commission meeting date and time: Thursday, October 28, 2021, beginning at 2:00 p.m. The meeting will be conducted in a hybrid form: in person at the Pikes Peak Regional Development Center, 2880 International Circle, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80910, Room 100-14, and virtually via a program called Microsoft Teams Live events. Sufficient and timely instructions for public participation will be made available at: <https://www.pprbd.org/Information/Boards>.

#### 5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT SCHEDULED ON THE AGENDA**

**Public comments on items not scheduled on the agenda shall be limited to three (3) minutes.**

There were no public comments.

#### 6. **ADVISORY BOARD REPORT**

Roger Lovell appeared and presented the Advisory Board Report.

#### 7. **BUILDING OFFICIAL REPORTS/NON-ACTION ITEMS**

##### a) Financial Statement through August 31, 2021.

Erin Garcia presented the financial statement for the month of August 2021. She said for the month of August, the operating cash balance ended at \$14,999,828 with a cash balance as a percent of budget of 75 percent. She said the monthly revenue was \$2,127,695, which year-to-date is 77 percent of budget. Ms. Garcia stated the expenditures were \$1,285,379, and year-to-date expenses were at 57 percent of budget. The net gain for August was \$842,316, and year-to-date net income is \$3,927,035.

##### b) Building Report through August 31, 2021.

Matt Matzen presented the Building Report for the month of August 2021. He said there were 364 single-family houses permitted in August, which was 15.35 percent less than this time last year. He stated there were 34 commercial building permits, which was a

decrease of 51.43 percent difference from this time last year. Mr. Matzen said the total valuation of permits issued in August for residential homes was \$125,918,421, which was 22.55 percent less than this same time last year; and year-to-date the total valuation of residential permits was \$1,338,924,968, which was an increase of 15.61 percent from this same time last year. He stated the total valuation for commercial permits was \$116,021,161 for the month, which was an increase of 51.21 percent from this same time last year. Mr. Matzen stated the total valuation year-to-date across all permits was \$2,865,178,795, which is an increase of 6.95 percent from the previous year. He said there were six permits with a valuation over \$3 million in August.

c) Plan Report through August 31, 2021.

Jay Eenhuis presented the Plan Review Report for the month of August 2021. There were 485 single family plans, which was a decrease of 4 percent compared to August of the previous year; 105 new commercial plans, which was an increase of 228 percent; and a total of 1,903 plans for the month of August, which was an increase of 21 percent compared to August 2020. Mr. Eenhuis stated the Plan Review Department performed 5,497 solo reviews in August, and 479 walk-through reviews, for a total of 5,976 logged reviews for August 2021, which was an increase of 14 percent from the previous year.

d) Inspection Report through August 31, 2021.

John Welton presented the Inspection Report for the month of August 2021. He stated August was the busiest inspection month of the year; and second busiest inspection month in the past five years. He said the inspectors in all departments did a total of 31,441 inspections in August, with a total of 74 field inspectors. Mr. Welton said each inspector averaged 19.7 inspections per day, and the average available time per inspection was 18.6 minutes. He stated the Department recently filled a plumbing and mechanical inspector positions.

## 8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) HB21-1025: Nonsubstantive Emails and Open Meetings Law.

Jina Koultschitzka appeared and gave a brief summary of HB21-1025 regarding Nonsubstantive Emails and Open Meetings Law.

b) Resolution 2021-1: Electronic Signatures.

The Regional Building Commission reviewed Resolution 2021-1 with Department staff and approved said Resolution to continue to allow the Department to execute documents by electronic signature in order to remain operational and highly efficient during in-office, remote, and/or hybrid operations.

c) Resolution 2021-2: Continued Electronic Participation.

The Regional Building Commission reviewed Resolution 2021-2 with Department staff and approved said Resolution for continued electronic participation specific to the conduct of regular and special public meetings, including quasi-judicial matters and executive sessions of the Department, in accordance with the meeting procedures adopted pursuant to the Colorado Sunshine Act of 1972, C.R.S. § 24-6-101 *et. seq.*, to protect life safety and welfare of the employees of Pikes Peak Regional Building Department, the jurisdictions the Department serves, and the industry and communities thereof; to increase the public's participation in matters of Department business and facilitate the ability of volunteers and elected Commissioners to fulfill their attendance and duties during times when they may not be physically present at meetings; and to humanize government and its operations. Continued remote operations were determined necessary for the continued preservation of the public peace, health or safety; the continued normal governmental operations of the Department; and the continued participation by the public in matters of Department business.

9. **COMMISSIONER REPORT(S) OR COMMENT(S)**

Carrie Geitner stated during a recent trip to Washington DC, it was brought to her attention that there is a national housing crises, and government "should not be in the way of slowing things down". She complimented Department staff on "how well it is working in not standing in the way of slowing things down."

10. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEM REQUESTS**

There were no future agenda item requests.

11. **EXECUTIVE SESSION REQUEST**

Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b), and (e)(I), the attorney for Pikes Peak Regional Building Department is requesting an Executive Session with the Regional Building Commission regarding a conference with the attorney for Pikes Peak Regional Building Department for the purpose(s) of:

- i. receiving legal advice from the attorney for the Department on specific legal question(s) regarding pending litigation and resulting claims; and
- ii. determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations; developing strategy for negotiations; and instructing negotiators specific to the pending litigation and resulting claims.

Douglas Bruce vs. City of Colorado Springs, Pikes Peak Regional Building Department, Roger Lovell, El Paso County, and Mark Lowderman, as the El Paso County Public Trustee; U. S. District Court, District of Colorado, Civil Action No. 1:21-CV-2427.

J. D. Vigil Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc. vs. Pikes Peak Regional Building Department,  
District Court, El Paso County, Colorado, Civil Action No. 21CV31009

(Virginia V. Koulchitzka, Pikes Peak Regional Building Department Attorney; and Roger N.  
Lovell, Pikes Peak Regional Building Official)

The Commission voted unanimously to move into Executive Session at 3:21 p.m.

A motion was made by Tom Strand to come out of Executive Session at 3:51 p.m., seconded  
by Carrie Geitner; the motion carried unanimously. Chair Tom Strand stated no decisions  
were made during the Executive Session.

## 12. **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 3:53 p.m.

**Work Session** (will start at the conclusion of the regular Regional Building Commission meeting  
and not earlier than 2:30 p.m.)

## 1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Tom Strand called the Work Session to order at 3:54 p.m.

- a) Introduction, Presentation, and Review of the 2022 Budget (*non-action item; the 2022  
Budget will be presented for a vote and a recommendation for approval during the  
October 28, 2021 meeting*).

Roger Lovell appeared and presented the Draft 2022 Budget. He stated this is a work  
session; the 2022 Budget will be brought before the Advisory Board and Building  
Commission during the October meetings for final approval. It will then be presented to  
the Board of County Commissioners and Colorado Springs City Council for their  
approval. He stated with this schedule, the Department should have an approved Budget  
by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year.

Mr. Lovell stated 2021 has maintained the unprecedented challenges to our community  
and the entire nation that 2020 introduced. March 15, 2020, marked the date the  
Department implemented remote operations in a strategic effort to limit the spread and  
minimize the impact of COVID-19 on Department staff and the construction industry.  
March 15, 2020, is the date the Department's mode of operations successfully changed  
with the goals of adaptation and improvement. The Department continues to adapt and  
learn in real-time how to face new challenges while continuing to support the  
communities and construction industry.

Mr. Lovell stated the 2021 fiscal year has been one of a kind with novel permitting numbers, as follows: 3,568 single family permits issued through August of 2021, an increase of more than 15.61 percent over the same time period in 2020, and an increase of more than 34.9 percent over the same time period in 2019; and 380 new commercial permits issued through August of 2021, an increase of more than 31.49 percent over the same time period in 2020, and an increase of more than 46.72 percent over the same time period in 2019.

Mr. Lovell stated to date, the Department and its continued operations are what sustain a thriving construction industry and resulting local economic impacts in the El Paso County and Woodland Park regions. The construction industry continues its operations and continues to show strength in 2021 with strong projections into the 2022 year. As of August 31, 2021, the valuation for single family construction stands at \$1,338,924,968 representing an increase of 15.61 percent over the same time period in 2020 and an increase of 36.04 percent over the same time period in 2019. Through August 31, 2021, the total valuation for new commercial construction stands at \$705,301,096, a decrease of more than 14.96 percent over 2020 that is due to the Amazon projects permitting in 2020 with a combined valuation of \$368,902,409; taking that project aside, the remaining substantial increase in new commercial construction valuation in 2021 is due in part to a number of large commercial projects.

Mr. Lovell stated while new commercial and new residential construction remain strong, the entire construction industry is busy. Total construction valuation, to include new commercial, new residential, and additions and alterations stands at \$2,865,178,795 as of August 31, 2021, an increase of 6.95 percent over the same time period in 2020 and an increase of 11.37 percent over 2019.

Mr. Lovell stated among the accomplishments for the Department this past year are an increasingly efficient Licensing and Permitting Department; a growing and very efficient Plan Review Department; continued growth in the Department's online services; continued same day inspections; continued support of attainable housing through Floodplain Map Revisions for the Cheyenne Creek LOMR and the Sutherland Creek Hydrology Study; and the new satellite location for the Department on the north side of Colorado Springs.

Mr. Lovell stated the Department's strategic goals are: Technology enhancement; website and contractor dashboard enhancements; code development; data compilation; future planning and sustainability; and continued change to be adaptive, successful, and sustainable.

Mr. Lovell stated the 2022 Budget does not propose any fee increases. The Department has not increased fees in the last 16 years and has no intention of doing so. The Department continues to maintain the lowest fees in the State of Colorado for single family housing, and second lowest in the State for new commercial projects. This Budget

extends for the sixth consecutive year the Department's Licensing Reward program for contractors (excluding fire licensed contractors) that have been licensed with the Department for at least 3 years, remain in good standing, and have no "administratively closed" status permits at the time of renewal of their license. If such criteria are met, the qualifying contractors may renew their license / registration at no cost. Those licensing fees range from \$75-200 per contractor, and in the past five years the non-collection of such fees has resulted in approximately \$300,000 annual savings to those qualifying contractors. As of August 31, 2021, 1,058 licenses and registrations have been renewed at no cost.

Mr. Lovell stated in 2021, the Department continues to experience an increased demand for services while also continuing to navigate the COVID-19 Pandemic and uninterrupted, continued hybrid operations, when needed. As with other challenges, Department staff has adapted and remains flexible in order to serve the Pikes Peak Region, but additional staff is needed and the need for such has been specifically identified and budgeted for in this Budget. Exceptional service requires sufficient number of exceptional employees; in order to attract and maintain a quality workforce, the Department must compensate its employees fairly.

*Chair Tom Strand left the meeting at 4:15 p.m. and a quorum was maintained.*

Mr. Lovell stated the Advisory Board requested the following: (1) a consideration for an increase of the contemplated and budgeted modest cost of living increase; and (ii) details on the vehicle(s) replacement cost(s), as projected in the draft Budget. He stated the current Budget has a 3.5 percent cost of living increase for Department employees, and RBD staff believes the Department can accommodate a 4 percent cost of living increase for Department employees. Mr. Lovell stated the projected fleet replacement is partially due to lack of available inventory in 2021; there were approximately ten vehicles that the Department was not able to purchase this year due to the shortage. He stated this Budget anticipates purchasing approximately 32 vehicles at an average cost of \$15,000 per vehicle after trade. He stated there are currently 102 vehicles in the fleet.

Mr. Lovell stated the 2022 Budget anticipates \$23,852,690 in revenue, an increase of 19.5 percent over the 2021 Budget and an increase of 23.8 percent over the 2020 Budget. This balanced budget anticipates \$23,852,690 in expenses, an increase of 19.5 percent over the 2021 Budget. As submitted, this budget provides for a sustainable Building Department, increased public access and service, expansion of core Department services, and increased efficiency with no increase in fees providing a positive impact on the construction industry and communities served by the Department.

Erin Garcia gave a brief summary of revenue and expenditures. She stated there are a number of expenses incorporated into this Budget as start-up costs for the new facility.

2. **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Roger N. Lovell".

Roger N. Lovell  
Regional Building Official

RNL/lfg

Accommodations for the hearing impaired can be made upon request with forty-eight (48) hours' notice. Please call (719) 327-2989.

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