Sangre de Cristo Ranch Owners, Inc. **Membership Meetings** **www.scrocommunity.org**	**Zoom link** Zoom meeting ID: 834 9260 1289 Zoom passcode: 543203

SCRO Quarterly Membership Meeting for Fall 2025
Saturday, November 1, 2025, 10:00am-12:00pm on Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Bracketed numbers show the related time marks within the video recording of the meeting

Call to Order [01:08]

The meeting was called to order at 10:00am by the meeting chairperson, Board Member Frase.

Guest speaker [02:08]:

Costilla County Wildfire Ready Action Plan (WRAP) & Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)

Daniel Boyes, Executive Director, Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project (RGHRP)

(See attachment titled, "Costilla County Wildfire…")

Roll Call [45:35]

Board members:
President: Nancy Frase – PRESENT
Vice-President: Jo Way – PRESENT
Secretary: Mike Powell – ABSENT
Treasurer: Mara Rodriguez-Walters – PRESENT
At-Large Member: Steve Navratil – PRESENT
At-Large Member: Scott Cessac – ABSENT
At-Large Member: Position VACANT

Four of six board members were present at roll call.

General members (identified at a later time in the meeting):
Margie Palmer
Tim Palmer
Troy Way
Chris Cuff

Three general members were present at roll call; a fourth member joined at 11:48am.

Four board members and six general members are required for a quorum; thus, a quorum was not established.

Review of Agenda [46:46]

The membership considered requests for modifications to the agenda; no requests were heard.

Due to the lack of a quorum, a vote could not be held to approve the agenda. The membership continued with the meeting as if the agenda had been approved.

Review of meeting minutes [47:10]

The membership considered requests for modifications to the minutes from the August 2nd, 2025, annual membership meeting. (Note: The agenda and Board Member Frase mistakenly referred to them as the "September 4th board meeting minutes".) One request was heard from Board Member Frase: The title of the minutes should be changed to "SCRO Annual Membership Meeting".

Due to the lack of a quorum, a vote could not be held to approve the meeting minutes. The draft meeting minutes will be re-presented at the next membership meeting for approval.

Introduction of board members [47:48]

The board members in attendance introduced themselves, along with the board candidate (Margie Palmer) who will be considered for appointment to the board during the November 6th regular board meeting.

At the end of the board introductions, general members in attendance were identified.

Updated website [56:50]

Board Member Frase provided a summary of recent updates to SCRO's website. These updates include:

- Up-to-date meeting minutes & governing documents
- Social events
- Maps
- SCRO's progress on community and administrative priorities
- Fixed the "wonkiness" of webpages on mobile interfaces

Board Member Frase accepted an action item to create direct access to the "contact/dues" webpage on the homepage of the website.

Announcements [58:53]

Board Member Frase reviewed the upcoming social activities, membership meetings, and board meetings listed in the agenda, noting that details for all events will be posted to the website. She also noted that Board Member Powell is coordinating all the social activities; he can be reached by sending an email to communityscro@gmail.com (the email will be forwarded to Board Member Powell).

Board Member Way called attention to community events (not sponsored by SCRO) that are scheduled for those same days and may conflict with SCRO's planned events:

- Fort Garland Museum is going to have a Christmas Toy Drive on November 22nd from 10am to 2pm
- On December 20th, it is tradition for community members (from the community at large, not just SCRO members) to go to Mrs. Rio's in San Luis and then go to the town's holiday event (parade, gift give-away, etc.) that is located just down the street from Mrs. Rio's.

Community-focused priorities: Access to water [1:01:15]

Board Member Frase highlighted one major update to SCRO's website, which is the addition of webpages related to SCRO's priorities. There are two types of priorities and there is a webpage for each of those types: community-focused (access to water, trash service, wildfire preparedness, etc.) and administrative (how meetings are conducted, how elections are conducted, bylaws, etc.). All priorities that are currently on the board's "radar" are listed on these "priorities" webpages. Users of the website can "drill down" on any given priority to read what progress has been made on that priority. General (non-board) SCRO members and community members are encouraged to explore these webpages while considering which efforts to which they would like to contribute.

Concerning the community-focused priority of access to water for cisterns, Board Member Frase noted that Fort Garland Water and Sanitation District restored their bulk water sales for cisterns about a month ago. Thus, the short-term water crisis has been resolved. However, there is still the long-term concern that access could be shut off again at any given point in the future.

Board Member Frase reviewed the handout contained in the agenda packet labeled "SCRO-Led Facilitation…" As a prelude to the review of the handout, she noted that SCRO's board is waiting to hear back from their water rights attorney on what next steps, if any, the attorney recommends the board take.

The "SCRO-Led Facilitation…." document outlines how SCRO might help facilitation communication within the community and between governmental and private entities who are taking steps to address this long-term concern and provide as much support to those entities as possible. If some part of the identified solution is not being addressed by any established entity, SCRO might consider taking proactive steps to fill that hole. However, SCRO's preferred approach is to encourage the community to implement solutions. The document illustrates the components of the problem/solution and assigns each component to a specific board member who is to liaison with the community regarding that component.

Community-focused priorities: Social connection [1:09:12]

Board Member Frase noted that Board Member Way has prepared a presentation for the board on social connection but has not yet had a chance to present it to the board.

Board Member Frase summarized the steps the board has already taken to enhance social connection within the community, especially in the wake of the SCRO meetings being moved to a Zoom format. Those steps include:

- Encouraging people to meet in small groups (i.e., brunch at someone's house) to attend the Zoom meetings as a group

- Working towards creating a hybrid meeting space where people could attend either in person or on Zoom; there are technological challenges associated with this that will take time and money to address
- Working towards creating a community meeting space (clubhouse?) that would be funded and managed by SCRO and/or the Ranches community

Community-focused priorities: Economic development & growth [1:10:30]

Board Member Frase noted that Board Member Way has prepared a presentation for the board on economic development and growth but has not yet had a chance to present it to the board.

Board Member Frase mentioned that she had, in the agenda packet, used the term "master plan" in relation to this agenda item. However, since the publication of the agenda, she has come to realize that the better term would be "comprehensive plan." A master plan typically captures the plan for the placement of geographic zones and infrastructure for a community; that is not – at all – what this plan would be about. Rather, it would be about things like community culture, priorities, assets, problems that need to be solved such as water, fire, theft, etc. and how we might fix those problems, how we improve employment opportunities, how we might keep a grocery store in town, how we can have better representation in local government, how we attract a satellite medical office, how we establish affordable housing, and so on. The term "comprehensive plan" would better fit for such a plan. Board Member Frase mentioned her plan to lead the development of a comprehensive plan for the Ranches community (action item #310).

The board is working to provide, on SCRO's website, a listing of local businesses that are willing to serve the Ranches community. The business owners would not need to be a member of SCRO or even a member of the Ranches community. However, listings for businesses owned by SCRO members would be highlighted in some way.

Administrative priorities: Governing documents [1:12:44]

Board Member Frase noted that SCRO is currently a 501(c)(4) nonprofit. This means that we are unable to apply for grants needed for the larger projects we would like to implement. The board is considering how we might either reorganize as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, or partner with 501(c)(3) nonprofits that could act as financial agents for such grants.

The board is working on creating a strategic plan for SCRO. While the aforementioned comprehensive plan would apply to the Ranches community (and maybe Ft Garland?), the strategic plan would be specific to SCRO and how SCRO wants to interact with the community. Board Member Frase mentioned her plan to lead the development of a strategic plan for SCRO (action item #309).

SCRO currently has articles of incorporation (the most superior form of organizational legislation) and bylaws. If there is a conflict between those two legal instruments, the articles of incorporation would supersede the bylaws. The board is working to create a set of protocols that detail how SCRO implements the requirements listed in the two existing instruments. For example, the bylaws stipulate how often board meetings need to occur while the protocols would stipulate on what days, at what time, and in what venue those meetings would occur. Also, the bylaws do not indicate whether there will be guest

speaker presentations at the membership meetings, but the protocols might provide some guidance on that and on how the guest speakers are to be recruited. The protocols could provide guidance on, for example, how many social events we typically plan in a year. As the protocols are created, the board will likely find specifications that really should be in the bylaws rather than in the protocols. In that case, we could rewrite the bylaws and articles of incorporation when/if we reorganize as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

Administrative priorities: Finances [1:14:48]

Board Member Frase reviewed the financial summary from the past three years that was included in the agenda packet. The related internal financial audit is still ongoing so it is unclear if the figures contained in the summary are fully accurate. However, they are likely substantially accurate. Board Member Frase provided the reason she included three years' worth of data in the summary: The activity level of SCRO has vacillated dramatically over the past several years which makes developing a realistic budget, based on history, challenging. The solution is to include data from multiple years.

Three years ago, there was $42K in the checking account. There is now $21K. That trajectory is unsustainable and a redirection of that trajectory should be reflected in our current budget.

Our main source of income has been membership dues. Three years ago, there were 175 members; there are now about 30. Thus, this revenue stream needs to be restored and/or replaced.

Board Member Rodriguez-Walters provided an update on the San Isabel Electric we recently received for coop credits. She stated that she was able to confirm, through confirmation of our EIN, that those monies really do belong to Sangre de Cristo Ranch Owners, Inc. (SCRO) and not Sangre de Cristo Ranches, Inc. (Forbes organization that developed the subdivision). The credit relates to a time, decades ago, when SCRO had some kind of meeting or office space for which electricity was purchased from San Isabel. Board Member Rodriguez-Walters noted that she will provide a more detailed explanation to the board (action item #311).

Board Member Frase reviewed the top expenditure categories over the past three years. The biggest expense, at just over $6,000, has been the recent hiring of the water rights attorney. Next is general liability insurance and officer bonds at about $5,800, which merits research to determine if we can reduce that cost. We have spent about $5,200 for food for meetings, which seems excessive.; given the current state of our budget, this may not be an option. The accounting software subscription (Aplos) started at $60/mth and is now $169/mth; Board Member Rodriguez-Walters is looking into other options (action item #312). As for the storage unit, Board Member Rodriguez-Walters took an quick inventory of the contents of the unit and conduct a more in-depth inventory of the contents as she has time; she will work on getting the organization's historical paperwork (6-8 bankers boxes full) scanned and digitally preserved, and the remaining items (Christmas decorations, grill, etc.) disposed of so we can stop paying rent on the storage unit. She has provided a summary of options for where/how the digital records could be stored.

Board Member Way has been working on a draft budget to be reviewed by the board in the near future. A balanced budget may not be possible this year, but it is something the board can work toward over the next few years.

Board Candidate Palmer inquired about the dues cycle (when are dues to be paid, when do memberships expire, is there any prorating, etc.) Board Member Frase responded that the board decided a while back that memberships run with the fiscal year (August 1 to July 31) and that they are prorated as the year progresses; the related details are on the dues webpage. During this discussion, it became apparent that the treasurer (Board Member Rodriguez-Walters) had not been made aware of this decision (a decision made before she joined the board) and she had been reaching out to members about renewing their dues on their anniversary date. Apologies were extended for the confusion.

Board Member Navratil commented on the dramatic loss of membership and how that loss of income places the organization's longevity at risk. He believes the best option is to dissolve SCRO in its current state, disperse its assets to another nonprofit and to reorganize as a 501(c)(3). This reorganization would allow donations to SCRO to be tax deductible and would encourage donations, especially from larger businesses.

Administrative priorities: Communication strategy [1:31:24]

Board Member Frase noted that Board Member Navratil has been leading the effort to develop a communication strategy. He is currently working on a proposal for a member forum and a blog on SCRO's website. We are also working on setting up a social media presence and a mass email/MMS notification interface. We are also looking at restarting the newsletter and creating a newcomers packet.

Board Member Navratil noted that our website host (wix.com) provides plug-ins for a member forum and a blog at no additional cost. He suggested that we create a sample forum and/or blog that the board could explore before deciding to implement these features on the website. He also recommended that we publish the newsletter on a more frequent basis (monthly?). He noted that the main purpose of our communication is to encourage community members to get involved in SCRO. He noted that the newcomers packet could be modeled after other geographical area's packets and should be provided to the community at no cost; it should contain information about and provided by community agencies such as the local government, Trinchera Ranch, etc.

Board Member Rodriguez-Walters showed a sample of SCRO's hardcopy newsletter from several years ago and reviewed the type of content present in that newsletter. Board Member Navratil noted that, if the newsletter were provided in a digital format rather than a hardcopy format, there would be no printing or mailing costs. He also highlighted the revenue opportunity that could come from ads in the newsletter and that it might be easier to fund the newsletter if we were a 501(c)(3). He noted that our communication efforts might create the opportunity for SCRO to hire an employee or two; those employees could be, for example, high school students that we teach how to manage communications for SCRO.

Board Member Frase noted that SCRO's newsletter has been published since the early years of SCRO, its publication stopped about three years ago. Board Member Rodriguez-Walters mentioned that there is likely a subset of the local population that is used to a printed copy of the newsletter and may have difficulty accessing it digitally; she would like to provide an option for people to receive the newsletter in printed form.

Board Member Frase noted that we need to be careful that income from ads does not make up a significant portion of our overall income as that could place our nonprofit status at risk.

SCRO Member Cuff expressed his strong desire for the newsletter to be restarted as his father (who was the original owner of the Cuff property) looked forward to receiving the newsletter and then sharing the newsletter with Member Cuff (the current owner of the Cuff property). The newsletter gave both father and son a sense of belonging to the community even though they didn't live here, and Member Cuff chose to keep the property after his dad passed away because of that sense of belonging.

Board Member Frase noted that the board has many efforts in progress and it will take time to get things accomplished. Community members are encouraged to get involved in these efforts so more progress could be made in less time.

Community input and board member comments [1:44:48]

Board Candidate Margie Palmer expressed her support for restarting the newsletter. SCRO Member Tim Palmer noted that, based on his 40+ years of working with nonprofits, he knows that a very clear purpose statement is needed to direct the choices and actions of the organization, and a clear articulation of the benefits of being a member is needed to attract participation from the community.

Adjourn [1:46:09]

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45am.