



Pikes Peak Area  
Council of Governments  
Communities Working Together

**MEETING AGENDA**  
**PPACG LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**  
**August 7, 2023, 8:30 a.m.**

In Person

PPACG Upper Conference Room – 15 S. 7<sup>th</sup> St., Colorado Springs, CO 80905

Microsoft Teams (Video and Audio)

[www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/join-a-meeting](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/join-a-meeting)

Meeting ID: 250 798 905 862

Passcode: TWaYXx

Dial in (Audio Only)

Phone Number: (929) 242-8427

Conference ID: 890 862 782

Meeting will be held in a hybrid format to allow in-person attendance as well as a remote option.

1. Call to Order – Commissioner Stone and/or Mayor Dixon
2. Information Items
  - A. State-wide updates – Dan Jablan, Cherry Point Strategies ☒
3. Discussion Items
  - A. Housing
  - B. Air Quality – Ozone
  - C. Older Americans Act Rulemaking
  - D. State funding for senior services
  - E. 2024 Legislative Priorities
4. Member open discussion
5. Next meeting and potential topics
  - A. Sept. 11, 2023 – 8:30 a.m.

The Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities. Meeting materials are available in text-only and audio formats. Meetings are available to join remotely via Microsoft Teams, and meetings include live transcription for remote and in-person attendees using automated software. Should you require any additional auxiliary aids or services to participate, please contact [ppacg@ppacg.org](mailto:ppacg@ppacg.org) or (719) 471-7080 x139 as soon as possible so that we can do our best to accommodate your needs.

Si necesita ayuda con traducción, llame por favor al (719) 471-7080 x139 o correo electrónico [ppacg@ppacg.org](mailto:ppacg@ppacg.org).

Colorado Roundup - July 2023  
Compiled by Dan Jablan, Cherry Point Strategies

**Mike Johnston Sworn in as Mayor of Denver Denver's new Mayor,**

Mike Johnston, was sworn in on July 17. Johnston, 48, is a Democrat and former two-term state senator. He grew up in Vail, graduated from Yale and Harvard, and most recently headed Denver-based Gary Community Ventures, a major local philanthropic nonprofit. Johnston was elected in June, emerging as the winner out of a field of 17 candidates over two rounds of elections, to replace term-limited Mayor Michael Hancock, who has led the city since 2011. During his first full day in office, Mayor Johnston declared a state of emergency over the city's rising homeless population. As part of the declaration, Johnston said he plans to house 1,000 of Denver's unsheltered homeless residents by the end of the year — those who sleep in public places, such as on the street, in tents or in cars. This is Johnston's first official act as mayor after campaigning to end street homelessness in the next four years, per Colorado Politics. But it's not just the Mayor who is entering office. Denver City Council will have seven returning councilmembers and welcome six newcomers. It will also have a record six Latinas represented on Council. Women will also make up a supermajority on Council, holding 9 of the 13 seats –the exact number of votes needed to override a mayoral veto.

**Denver City Council members are:**

- City Council at-large: Serena Gonzales-Gutierrez and Sarah Parady
- District 1: Amanda Sandoval (incumbent)
- District 2: Kevin Flynn (incumbent)
- District 3: Jamie Torres (incumbent)
- District 4: Diana Romero Campbell
- District 5: Amanda Sawyer (incumbent)
- District 6: Paul Kashmann (incumbent)
- District 7: Flor Alvidrez
- District 8: Shontel Lewis
- District 9: Darrell Watson
- District 10: Chris Hinds (incumbent)
- District 11: Stacie Gilmore (incumbent)

**House Democrats File Lawsuit Against House Leadership:**

Freshmen Reps. Elisabeth Epps (D-Denver) and Bob Marshall (D-Highlands Ranch) have sued the House of Representatives and its leaders, including Speaker Julie McCluskie (D-Dillon), Majority Leader Monica Duran (D-Wheat Ridge), and Minority Leader Mike Lynch (R-Wellington). Reps. Epps and Marshall are alleging that the legislature (including themselves) regularly uses an encrypted messaging app to discuss legislative business and repeatedly holds unpublished meetings between multiple legislators, in violation of open meetings and open records laws.

Rep. Marshall says that the ultimate goal is to get House leadership to agree to follow the law without a court order. He also believes the open meetings law is currently unworkable and he hopes to fix it in the next legislative session.

Voters approved the Sunshine Law by 20 percentage points in 1972 when it appeared on the ballot as a citizen's initiative. One of the law's components requires state lawmakers and agencies to conduct public business in open meetings. The law says that any meeting of two or more members of a state public body, like the Legislature, must be open to the public if any public business is discussed or formal action may be taken. And it says that any meeting where the adoption of policy or a position occurs must be preceded by timely public notice.

In 1983 with the Colorado Supreme Court ruling in *Cole v. State*. Ralph Cole, a Republican state senator, objected to legislative caucus meetings — where members of a party gather to discuss positions and bills — being subject to Sunshine. The court declared that caucus meetings should indeed be open to the public, and it articulated why in artfully persuasive passages like this: “A free self-governing people needs full information concerning the activities of its government not only to shape its views of policy and to vote intelligently in elections, but also to compel the state, the agent of the people, to act responsibly and account for its actions.

### **Colorado Conservatives File Lawsuit to Stop Secret “Quadratic Voting”**

Advance Colorado announced last week they have filed a lawsuit to stop the secret preference polling process used by Colorado Democrats to determine what legislation receives funding each session as a violation of the Colorado Open Meetings Law. You will find the link to Colorado Politics article here:

[Colorado conservatives sue to block 'quadratic voting' by legislative Democrats | Courts | coloradopolitics.com](https://coloradopolitics.com/colorado-conservatives-sue-to-block-quadratic-voting-by-legislative-democrats-courts/)

### **Musical Chairs Under the Gold Dome**

Residents of northwest Denver will soon have a new representative in the state House. Rep. Serena Gonzales-Gutierrez, who has represented the House District 4 since 2019, resigned to join the Denver City Council. She was inaugurated into her new office on in mid-July. Via Colorado Politics, Gonzales-Gutierrez's resignation will be effective on August 4, giving Denver Democrats until September 3 to identify her replacement. The vacancy election is tentatively planned for August 26. At the same time...

State Sen. Rhonda Fields announced she will make a bid for Arapahoe County Commission in the 2024 election. Fields, an Aurora Democrat who has served in the state legislature since 2011, is term-limited out of her Senate seat in 2024. She served six years in the House, and will serve eight years in the Senate at the end of her current term.

### **Kirkmeyer Opts to Stay in State Senate**

Republican State Senator Barbara Kirkmeyer that she won't run again next year in Colorado's highly competitive 8th Congressional District. She's opting instead to seek another four-year term in the Colorado Senate, where she is a member of the powerful Joint Budget Committee.

Following Kirkmeyer's announcement, Weld County Commissioner Scott James announced his candidacy for the Republican nomination becoming the first declared challenger hoping to unseat Democratic U.S. Rep. Yadira Caraveo. Other potential Republican candidates include freshman State Rep. Gabe Evans, Weld County Commissioner Steve Moreno and former state Rep. Dan Woog.

### **Governor's Office Sees Staff Changes**

Governor Polis named a new director of his Office of State Planning and Budget (OSPB) who is no stranger to Colorado politics. The new director is former Speaker Mark Ferrandino (D-Denver), who has been the Executive Director of the Department of Revenue since November 2020. He spent four years on the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) before being elected House Speaker in 2013 and later served as Denver Public Schools' Chief Financial Officer. In his new role, Ferrandino will be responsible for developing the governor's budget proposal. Also, Governor Polis announced the retirement of Anthony Neal-Graves, the Chief Information Officer and Executive Director of the Office of Information (OIT). Polis now has two cabinet level positions to fill in the near future.