Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad Commission Meeting

November 7, 2026

1. The meeting was called to order at 9:00AM. Due to severe weather damage, this meeting was held virtually.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of Agenda Moved by Kim Smith-Casford, seconded by Billy Elbrock. Passed unanimously.

4. Approval of the Minutes from the August 15, 2026 Regular Commission meeting Moved by Kenneth Bitten, seconded by Kim Smith-Casford. Passed unanimously.

5. Presidents Report: Marvin Casias

The season started rough. At the beginning of the season all the RR wanted was water. The season ended with far too much water. There was damage all along the ROW. The RR is now into repair mode on the equipment. Work on completing the annuals is being done. Work to improve the passenger cars will be done this off season. The Osier building has been winterized. Equipment that is not used in the winter has been winterized. Equipment has been inspected to determine any repairs required. There are multiple problems on the ROW, washouts, rocks, etc. A sinkhole was found on the track near Cumbres. The discovered damages will be documented. Inspection of the track from Cumbres to Chama will be done Monday. Marvin reports he and John Mathews will take a motor car from Antonito to Chama to assess the damages. This assessment will be used to develop a projected cost to perform the repairs. There is the issue with the approach to the Chama river bridge. There are also issues in the Chama yard. The issues will be addressed as quickly as possible to get the repairs moving forward. The water around the ROW needs to go down some more before repairs can begin in some places. All of the needed repairs will be expensive. The effort needs to be monitored well, so as not to waste money. Marvin indicated he wanted to provide a better report, but the water levels need to go down to make assessing the issues safer for the track crews. Commissioner Graybill mentioned the pictures of the approach to the Chama river bridge, and how extensive the damage is. Bridge inspectors will be in Wednesday to review the status of that bridge. The Chama River bridge will be inspected first, then later the Lobato bridge. The track crew has looked at the Cascade bridge. That one looks fine. The RR would like the inspector to check the Cascade bridge as well. Part of the reason for the Monday inspection is to determine what the bridge inspector should look at.

6. Operations Manager's Report: Steven Butler

The Chama depot got hit with water. There was about 2 inches of water in the waiting room, dispatch office and safety office. Most of the mud has been removed from the depot. There were fans placed in the waiting room to dry things out. The flooring looks to be in good shape. No buckling. In the Chama yard, water was flowing from the campground almost down to the wye. In the campground area, there is still debris on the tracks. There are some washouts in the yard, near switches where the water was turbulent. There is general debris scattered throughout the yard. The water that flowed down the main line entered the parking area. At one time, at the large drain in the parking lot, the water was sixteen inches deep. The storm sewer flowed extremely well through the entire event. Quite a few items near the depot got moved around. A lot of that has been graded out. There is a need to get some gravel in the parking lot as it is currently kind of mucky. Most of the debris in the parking lot has been removed. Everyone knows about the approach to the Chama River bridge being washed out. Steven reports that yesterday he had a chance to look at the headgates to the Chama river ditch. The river filled in the ditch diversion. The headgates are buried in fresh gravel. In some areas, it is three feet deep. The river has moved away from the diversion. The RR will need to get with the state water engineer as the river is now deeper, below the ditch level. The bridge engineer will look at that as well. Marvin talked about the stuff at Tanglefoot Curve. There is an issue with a culvert there.

Operations, the railroad went back to two trains a day in September. There was a need for double headers on many Tuesdays. That was a popular day for groups, thus needing a longer train. There were two days when diesel 114 was called in to run a train. In one case, it hauled the train from Antonito to Osier, where a steam train took it from Osier to Chama. The 489 ended up with a cracked side rod. It was replaced by one from 492. Near the end of the season 489 had a failure of some piston rings. Piston rings have been fabricated, the cylinder has been machined. The installation will be performed in the next few days. 489 will be used in Antonito for its Christmas trains. This summer, 489 had 99 days of service, 487 had 77 days, 488 had 56, 463 had 47, 168 had 9 days of service. There were 288 service days between 5 locomotives. The beginning of the season saw several hot boxes on some of the cars. That settled down after the first couple of weeks. There were a few flat wheels that needed to be swapped out during the year. The 168 has been winterized in Antonito. Its annual will be next spring. 315 is winterized in Antonito, its annual is due in September. There are a few trips planned for it this coming summer. 463 is in Antonito. It will have an annual, no major work planned for it. 484 is out of service for its 1472 work. Work will resume on 484 once work is complete on 492. 487 is in Chama and will be running its Christmas trains. After Christmas, it will receive its annual, and hopefully replace its

smokebox. 488 is winterized in Chama. It will receive an annual and have some work done on its firebox to clean up a problem with an old weld repair. 489 will be getting staybolt work. 492 will continue its boiler work. Most of the staybolts that need to be replaced have been cut out of it. It will get a Flannery staybolt pattern like the D&S did on their 493. The staybolts where the firebrick exists will be replaced, should it need to be converted to oil. The chassis for 492 is in Chama. Work on it will continue over the winter. An old frame repair will be x-rayed to determine if it needs further work. Piston rods are ready. There are new cylinder heads and valve heads made. The wheels and axles have been inspected. There is work required for two axles. The journals on #3 and 4 will be worked. Finally, new tires will be put on. Diesels 15 & 19 are both in service. 114 is in service and has antifreeze in it for the winter. The coaches are getting their annuals this year. The cars are currently in Chama. The fourth parlor car is nearing completion. It is hoped work on that car can continue over the off season. The pavilion at Cumbres Pass is complete as of two weeks ago. Tables and chairs are being ordered for it. There are at least four events planned for it this next summer. Commissioner Graybill pointed out how the pavilion will be great, so the RR can host special events at that location.

7. Financial Managers Report: Alysia Martinez

Alysia said she was covering the first quarter of the FY. HPA saw a decrease in revenue over prior year. Expenses were lower than prior year. Total revenue for Commission, which includes grants and support from both states are fairly consistent from prior year. Expenses decreased from prior year, about $40,000. For CTO, there is an income decrease on the P&L statement. That is due to a decrease in ticket and retail sales, roughly $600,000 compared to the prior year. Total expenses did decrease from prior year. Operational income is higher than prior year. The goal for the future is to grow revenue. For the new season, the RR will largely revert to the old schedule. There will be a few weeks in the next season where one train a day will run. That will change the revenue situation a bit. As the railroad moves into the winter, capital work gets underway. Capital funds from NM will be spent. Assistance for the flood recovery will be sought. When Marvin can derive an estimate, NM can be reached out to for funding. There are other items beyond flood recovery that need work. Cashflow will be closely monitored. Commissioner Graybill commented on how the railroad had a bad financial year. The delay in opening due to wildfire danger, as well as the fire danger throughout the season. He understands that some customers would possibly not book, knowing there was a chance their train might get cancelled. Also, the news media will pick up bad news but not jump on the good news. The railroad learned the ramifications of the modified schedule offered this season. Another rough spot was opening late due to extreme fire danger and closing early due to flooding. This was a very painful season. The railroad has a fine team of people to get through these challenges.

8. Marketing Report: Robert Stefanski

2026 was a challenging year. Since the last meeting, the railroad hosted four special events. Locals' appreciation, Galloping Goose 5. That brought in 525 riders, $86,000 in revenue. By September, the RR narrowed the gap of ridership and revenue to nearly 2025 levels. In September, $1.02 million in revenue, slightly below 2025. By fall, the passenger revenue was about as expected for the fall season. October was slightly affected by the early closure, revenue was down from prior year. Revenue per web site session increased 8.5% year over year. The web site helped drive sales to the higher class cars. To date, we have 24,008 passengers, $3.7 million in revenue, including the Santa trains. The top booking drivers are Google Ads, followed by search engines, referrals from tourism websites, like visit Albuquerque.org, and finally direct e-mail. Top excursions were the All Aboard Chama, bringing in over 7,800 riders, $1.4 million in revenue. This was followed by the All Abord Antonito, 5,400 riders, $893,000 in revenue. The Chama Limited brought in 3,200 passengers, $479,000 in revenue. The railroad made 728 known media placements. Up 45% year over year. Media such as Travel and Leisure, 5280 Magazine, and the Denver Post carried stories of the RR. One of the other important accomplishments was the start of customer satisfaction surveys sent out in July. Nearly 600 responses were received. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive. 94% said very good or excellent. About 61% said this was their first trip on the RR. A question on the survey was how many trips were made on the RR. 6 people replied more than 100. One person claimed 150 times. The survey also helped the RR learn how the riders discovered the RR, how they book, their demographics. This will assist the RR in further marketing. The season will wrap up after the Santa trains next month. This year, deluxe class is offered. To date, 1,646 riders are booked, including the school trains, about $21,000 in revenue. Deluxe class is sold out on several trains. This year, the RR will be involved with the Parade of Lights in Antonito. Looking to 2027, the web site will be improved including the online booking experience. We will make it easier for potential customers to compare the different excursions, and the different classes of service. Also, we will simplify the steps required for ticket purchase. 2027 tickets will up for sale very soon, likely this coming week. There are good numbers within group travel. So far, 22 groups booked. That will bring in 3,254 riders, $385,000 in revenue. Ridership and revenue are not currently where they need to be. Lessons learned in 2026 will be applied to 2027. The RR is looking to creating a strong 2027 season. Commissioner Bitten mentioned that the RR is getting the schedule out two months earlier than last year. The data driven marketing will help the RR be more effective in its outreach. Providing nothing prevents trains from running in 2027, ridership should be much improved, in part due to marketing changes for 2027. Bringing back the core schedule should help. Commissioner Smith-Casford said that she really likes Robert's data driven marketing. His attention to detail is

appreciated. Commissioner Graybill mentioned that other tourist railroads around the country were down 5%-15%. The RRs decrease should be compared against the other RR's. The economy was a big issue. It always gets that way in an election year. The high cost of gas for the C&TS is an issue, due to its distance from population centers. He was happy to hear about the guest surveys, and how most people were pleased with their experience. It was also nice to win Best Tourist Railroad in the US this year as well. He thanked the voters for doing so, early, and often. He hopes to repeat the feat next year.

9. Local Affairs Report: Billy Elbrock, Kim Smith-Casford

Commissioner Smith-Casford went first. She reports that Chama is in a state of shock. There is still much to be done after the flooding. There are several inaccessible motels south of town. The community is waiting on a FEMA emergency declaration. Repairs to the river require that declaration first (so the money is available). She has been working with NM officials for the Chama efforts. She also understands that reach out to CO will be involved, knowing of the damage to Tanglefoot curve in CO. CO has already requested their FEMA declaration. It is understand that the governor of NM is trying to declare the entire state in the FEMA declaration. Kim provided NM a ballpark figure regarding the damage. Better damage figures will come in when Marvin & John assess the track damage. She commented on how Chama as well as the RR are some of the most resilient people she has ever met. The community will get through it. By opening day, it is hoped this is all a distant memory. She is also pleased that a modified version of the Christmas trains will run in Chama. It will be very important for the community. There is also a big community event that weekend. She thanked the RR for addressing the issues to the best of their abilities. Commissioner Elbrock followed up by stating that the community was wondering if there would be Christmas trains in Chama. He also mentioned the community is resilient and will survive. Commissioner Graybill asked anyone that can, come on and ride the Christmas trains, and show your support for the communities. He said that there is a lot of competition for Christmas trains, but the C&TS has a much lower price point.

10. Capital Projects Report: Ken Bitten

Since the last meeting, much of the focus has been on locomotive 492 and the water systems along with trackwork and items associated with our busy fall season. Of course, priorities shifted dramatically several days ago. Restoration of the approach to the Chama River bridge became a priority, even as we regrouped to cover our photo freight and Christmas train obligations. We also must contemplate restoration of our water management systems in the Chama area. Further, there is the washed-out culvert at Tanglefoot Curve. We also anticipate that these historic floods have loosened and shifted things at higher elevations which will probably result in further damage to the line as winter

weather takes its toll. These projects all involve complex planning, permitting, coordination with outside parties and logistics.

Of course, we still have other capital projects which need to progress. Even though we have had force reductions, the scheduled repairs to our serviceable locomotives are essential to our continued operation. Progress must continue on 492 to ensure that we have enough motive power available after the coming year. Inspections and upgrades are still needed to the rolling stock fleet as is completion of the new parlor car to accommodate increased demand for premium service. While our capital project list has increased dramatically, our management team will still need to progress our existing projects as quickly as our limited resources allow.
Commissioner Graybill agreed that capital money must be watched very closely. He hopes that there will be reimbursements for the flood recovery efforts. Such money is not a sure thing yet.

11. Tracks Across Borders Byway: John Bush

The payments made by the RR for the smart phone app ended sometime this year, thus the app is no longer available. The phone app provides detailed information while driving the byway, riding the bus as well as riding the train. He hopes that funding by the RR for the app can be restored. It is the only funding by the C&TS provided to TABB. The D&S provides all of the printing needs. The cost of funding for the app is about $2,700 per year. John has provided information to various RR people of the usefulness of the app to the RR and Chama. One goal of the app is to keep customers in the Chama area for an extra day or so. The TABB website has been updated (tracksacrossborders.com). The road west out of Dulce is passable but not really recommended at this time. Right now, it is the only access to Juanita. The 500 & 161 are both closed. Juanita to Arboles is closed. The Jicarilla have supplies and materials and food should Chama need help. Navajo Lake is up 57 feet as of Thursday, gaining about a foot per day. It is now about 81% full. It did reduce the flooding downstream. The bridge and tank at Navajo are fine. The bridges at Juanita are OK, there is no report at Gato at this time. Getting replacement stock cars for Dulce is on hold. The Jicarilla are planning for demo work of the two cars in Dulce in the next few weeks. The Friends will have someone work with the Jicarilla people regarding the metal parts. Work continues with the owners of the Rio Chama campground to gain two stock cars from them to replace the Dulce cars. There have been more sign bases gained. Permission has been gained to use those bases in NM. There is a desire to add a sign at the overlook of the Chama yard on Terrace Ave to promote the byway and the RR. A sign at Monero is desired, as well as Dulce. It is also desired to extend the byway to reach the CO border.

Commissioner Smith-Casford let John know that the sign on Terrace Ave will need Department of Transportation approval. They have guidelines for line of sight, etc. She didn't want John to place a sign, just to have to take it down due to DOT. Mr. Stefanski let John know that work to restore the phone app is in the works. There were several issues with the Apple side regarding transfer of ownership. It is on the radar to get the app back on the air. There are some updates that should be applied to the app (the information it displays).

12. Friends of the C&TSRR Report: Henry Sandles, Executive Director

Henry mentioned that a couple of members have been working with the Jicarilla's regarding the stock cars. They are eager to work with the Friends. Some of them want to join the Friends. This should be helpful in getting the stock car display there in good order. The Friends are following what is going with the flood recovery efforts in both Chama and Antonito. They are there to help. There are 1,690 members in the Friends, down a little bit, but 85 members have been gained since May 31. The Friends are down a great deal in the volunteer efforts. There has been outreach to labor unions and other various companies to seek retirees that may be interested in joining the Friends. The final Friends board meeting of the year was October 23. They talked a lot about board governance. The board governance manual is being reworked. The board approved the 2028 work session schedule, as well as the 2027 schedule. Session A will begin one week later, Memorial Day. There will be a one week break between session B and C. He then went on to read the revised core values of the Friends. At the final meeting, the President of the Pikes Peak Trolley museum gave a talk. On October 24, the board had a chance to visit the trolley museum. Henry was impressed with their restoration work. It really helped him understand the work on baggage car 163. The Friends have a new educational partner, Adams State University. Work is now beginning with the Adams State professional development department. Work with them will include getting box car 3223 to operation. The Friends are working with Central Community College in Albuquerque and the Northern New Mexico Community College in Espanola. The Friends are interested in having joint staff meetings with the RR. This gives the Friends and the RR a better chance to work together. He is looking forward to getting together with the managers of the RR. There have already been talks regarding the Christmas trains. The Friends would like to provide some volunteers to assist with the RR's effort on those trains. One goal of the staff meetings would be to include information of the other side on their website. He would like to see joint fund raising activities. All the commissioners recognize just how valuable the Friends are to the RR.

13. New Business

13a. Approve/Disapprove 2027 Regular Meeting Dates

Feb 20 Antonito
May 22 Chama
Aug 21 Antonito
Nov 06 Chama
Approval moved by Kim Smith-Casford, seconded by Kenneth Bitten. Approved unanimously.

13b. Approve/Disapprove Resolution 2026-004: A Resolution to Adopt an Open Meeting Policy

Approval moved by Kenneth Bitten, seconded by Kim Smith-Casford. Approved unanimously.

13c. Approve/Disapprove 2027 Assignment of Officers

Assignment of officers will not change:
Mark Graybill-Chairman
Kim Smith-Casford-Vice Chairman
Ken Bitten-Secretary
Billy Elbrock-Treasurer
Approval moved by Kim Smith-Casford, seconded by Kenneth Bitten. Approved unanimously.

Audience Questions

John Bush asked when the RR would run 2 trains a day in 2027. Answer: First two weeks of June will be one train a day, the last two weeks will be two. That will go thru the second week of August. The last two weeks of August will be one train a day. Then back to two in September to the end of season.

14. Old Business

None.

15. Executive Session

None.

16. Actions following Executive Session

None.

7. Adjournment. Moved by Kenneth Bitten, seconded by Billy Elbrock. Approved unanimously. Adjourned at 9:57 AM

Next regular meeting date: February 20, 2027, 9AM in Antonito, subject to change if required

** An Executive Session may be called at any time during the meeting, pursuant to Commission Policy and Practices Manual v8.0, adopted May 20,2023 regarding limited personnel matters; strategy preliminary to attorney-client privilege pertaining to threatening or pending litigation in which the public is or may become a prticipant, discussion of the purchase, acquisition or disposal of real property or water rights by the public body. The Governing Body may revise the order of the agenda items considered at this Open Meeting.

Commission meetings are open to the public. If you are an individual with a disability who needs an auxiliary aid, service, or other accommodation to attend or participate in a hearing or meeting, please contact the Commission office at 575.219.3306 at least 3 days prior to the meeting so that accommodations can be made accordingly.