

Mono County Local Transportation Commission

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MINUTES

September 9, 2019
(Adopted October 7, 2019)

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS: Jennifer Kreitz, John Peters, Fred Stump
TOWN COMMISSIONERS: Sandy Hogan, Lynda Salcido, John Wentworth
COUNTY STAFF: Gerry Le Francois, Tony Dublino, Garrett Higerd, Hailey Lang, CD Ritter
TOWN STAFF: Dan Holler
CALTRANS: Brent Green, Austin West, Cindy Arima
ESTA: Phil Moores
PUBLIC: Don Condon

1. **CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair Fred Stump called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. at the Town/County Conference Room, Minaret Village Mall, Mammoth Lakes. Attendees recited pledge of allegiance. A moment of silence was observed in commemoration of Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Don Condon announced event at village Saturday. Drive- electric day 11-5, free rides. One of 300 such events across country.

3. **MINUTES**

MOTION: Approve minutes of August 12, 2019, as amended: 1) Jennifer ~~Halferty~~ Kreitz; 2) Item 7B: Add Sandy Hogan and Matt McClain (*Kreitz/Peters. Ayes: 5. Absent: Abstain: Hogan.*)

4. **CALTRANS:** Brent Green introduced new Caltrans manager, Cindy Azima. New Caltrans director: Toks Adetocunbo Omishakin from Tennessee. Planning and environmental, not engineer. Into Walk/Bike/Ride inter-city development, complete streets, agencies SB 1 funding controlled. Presented bar graphs on Tioga opening. Lower volumes when lower gate open, upper not (out and back). Colors show eastbound and westbound.

Olancha/Cartago (O/C) getting public and press engagement. Lack of education on status. Key dates: comment ended Oct 2015. FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) signed. State and federal November 2017 statute of limitations. Articles in newspaper. Acquired ROW. "Ready to List" milestone May 2020. Ask CTC for money already programmed.

Stump: Matt Kingsley's district supportive, also community support due to historic carnage.

Wentworth: Southbound cars drove dirt roads west of 395 on Labor Day weekend. Kreitz: Traffic backed up from Lone Pine. Will send image.

Ready to list = going to bid? *Right before going to bid.*

How long? *Three months. Construction summer 2020.*

District 9 is doing its own strategic plan, reaching out by phone to LTC commissioners. *Stump: One from Town, Peters from North County, Stump from South County.*

Green: Challenges: growing, shifting population, safety, serving disadvantaged; homelessness. Free charging to public at Inyo sites.

Stump: Crestview had utility capacity. Edison getting capacity?

Green: 5% of Caltrans workspaces dedicated to ZEV. Not enough power. Caltrans sites must be in State right of way. Lee Vining maintenance station for workforce, not public. Urban areas have greater options.

Hogan: Bishop to Nevada an issue, so maybe look at Lee Vining site. Gus Hess park has one level 2.

Green: Level 3 chargers at rest stops. STIP (State Transportation Improvement Program) funds O/C, behind, overextended. Mono Basin RPAC had Caltrans and CHP at solar pavilion. Bridgeport Valley next.

COMMISSIONERS

Jennifer Kreitz Sandy Hogan John Peters Lynda Salcido Fred Stump John Wentworth

Potential traffic on 120 due to Tioga Inn? *Le Francois: Terry Erlwain there.*

Green: Video presentation on drone technology later. Surveying for environmental.

Le Francois: ECTPP (Eastern California Transportation Planning Partnership) meets in Ridgecrest Monday, Sept. 16, to talk about MOU projects.

Peters: Can't attend. Someone else? Questions on how long Saturday work on Aspen/Walker project. Concern: Curve south of 108 narrow, potential for lingering frost on road. Not as much work there. Doing great job, figured out make best of difficult situation. Concerns with safety for workers.

Kreitz: Planned events for The Parcel, looking at ingress/egress onto Center Street, 1,000 residents. No intersection with Hwy 203. How Caltrans get involved? *Green: Whole area will be looked at.*

When will Caltrans be involved? *West: During environmental with CEQA document, traffic study, signal, pedestrian beacons.*

Kreitz: CEQA to changing master plan. Maybe no SP.

Wentworth: Ongoing talks with Caltrans on this, conceptual overviews published Friday. Preferred alternative. Get Caltrans input prior. *West: On email list.*

Traffic studies part of environmental? *West: If significant impact, triggers need for traffic study.* Hogan: Roundabout?

Kreitz: Conceptual plan for site, environmental triggered for phase not entire project. *West: Can't phase, look at whole project.* Kreitz: Already dangerous to turn left with five lanes of traffic.

Wentworth: Footprint of street infrastructure will not change radically, so look at it. *Hogan: Two other access points.*

Stump: Next meeting confirm Caltrans engagement to pass along to constituents.

Salcido: Bring Caltrans in for guidance as appropriate.

5. TRANSIT

A. **Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA):** Phil Moores noted every five years need SRTP (Short-Range Transit Plan) to guide investing money and time. Planning grants: sustainable communities and strategic partnership. RTPA (Regional Transportation Planning Agency) rural counterpart of MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization). ESTA is sub-applicant. Two plans: SRTP and coordinated community services plan. Combine surveys, meetings, etc. Both plans on one grant application. Matching funds covered with time spent. 11.47% of amount with in-kind contribution with staff time applied toward match. Due: Oct. 11.

Stump introduced new Mono CAO Steve Barwick to commissioners, who stood in acknowledgment.

Moores: Two LTCs (Mono and Inyo), picked Mono because did it last time. Documents already done. Le Francois: Typically combine forces with Inyo County. *Moores: Plan for both counties.*

MOTION: Adopt Resolution R19-09 approving Sustainable Transportation Planning Grants & authorize LTC's co-executive director & ESTA's executive director to sign application (*Hogan/Salcido. Ayes: 6-0.*)

B. **Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS):** Gerry Le Francois noted YARTS 20-year event on Thursday. Corless will emcee, Hogan will attend also. Mono was one of original three signatories to start YARTS. Second annual meeting to review SRTP. Dropped June Lake Loop due to low ridership, moved to express mode. Five Mammoth stops, three Lee Vining stops could change.

6. LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

A. **California Surface Transportation Infrastructure Investment Principles:** Hailey Lang presented routed information.

Wentworth: In light of federal administration's hostility to California, working with fuel standards. Factor into that? Maybe some issues.

Le Francois: RCTF (Rural Counties Task Force) noted California's push to get voice heard. Talk to individual congressional representatives.

Peters: Attended CSAC (California State Association of Counties) in Sacramento last week. Time sensitive as Congress is back: streamlining project delivery, rolling NEPA into CEQA, FLAP important to maintain, highway bridge program (50 in Mono County). Heavily debated. Key priority is to advocate for continued ways to increase revenue balanced with cost-cutting regulations. Ask for 20-year gap in federal gas tax increase. Instead ask for fee accommodation, new formula for feds to embrace declining revenue from gas taxes. CSAC voted to modify draft proposal to keep program alive. Back to DC this week, likely topic somewhere. Infrastructure in California. Regional approach to Congressional representatives.

Salcido: CSAC, advocacy groups give good voice. LTC in addition? *Peters: Opportunities down road.*

Wentworth: Digital 395, EV make us stand out. Congressional election next year, maybe more involvement.

Stump: Request for letter for LTC to review, support perceived opportunities. Stay nonpartisan. Ask staff to compose letter.

Peters: Senate sees reauthorization this year, Congress next year.

B. Tioga Pass opening: Tony Dublino recalled midwinter scramble to allow assisted snow removal operations. NPS (National Park Service), Mono County, MMSA (Mammoth Mountain Ski Area), and Caltrans partnered for resources. Caltrans already up to gate in May. Mono plowed 8-9 miles into Tuolumne Meadows. Hoped to open week or two later. Spent \$20,000 on resources plus MMSA. Wanted more time for economy to feel infusion when Tioga opens (sole priority albeit selfish). Done May 23, partial opening month later.

Dublino met with Yosemite staff and MMSA's Clifford Mann. Mud slide onto road in meadow, hazardous road justified continued closure. Olmsted Point is problem due to avalanches. His understanding was that once reached crews, road was clear, but large hanging snowfield on Olmsted Point had to be gone. Unable/unwilling to allow concessionaires to Tuolumne, housing for law enforcement, so weeks went by before services in place to open road. Olmsted no surprise to Mann, thought NPS should allow MMSA to push snow down, across road from Olmsted, ready to do it himself. Pales in comparison to what Mammoth Mountain does every winter. Could start to push snow off Olmsted before plows clear road. Disappointed to have crews go up and spend resources only to get latest opening since 1983 (July 4). Mann agrees to robust operating plan to get snow off Olmsted. Elected officials could engage in strategies to open road at earliest way safely with available resources.

Hogan: Kathleen Morse, former Mammoth district ranger, is director of implementation now.

Dublino: Some shuffling of positions, staffing changes. The time is now. NPS felt same, suggested different hierarchy may lead to different outcome. *Kreitz: New superintendent, Mike Reynolds, seems open.*

Wentworth: Issues on housing, gateway communities' relation to federal assets.

Stump: Part of problem is NPS's revolving superintendents.

Kreitz: Third generation living in Valley, Superintendent Reynolds' heart is in this region.

Stump: Each year a conundrum. Propose to all signatories amendment to consider alternative for Olmsted Point. If willing to consider, prepare letter of support from LTC.

Wentworth: Olmsted is snow management issue. Consider getting staff in from east side.

Dublino: Olmsted plus contingency plans. Logical solutions. Get conversation started so trickle down to those on ground. Amendment to operations plan. Bring back to LTC.

Wentworth: NPS unit on Reds Meadow Road, so Town will have same issues with NPS.

C. Reds Meadow opening: Dan Holler compared now with future. Hwy 203 on up still MMSA and Caltrans. NPS (National Park Service) has no authority on road. ESTA for safe access. Get gate open with USFS approval. Condition of road itself, not just snow. Town crews or contractors. Bottom of road pretty beat up. Lots of opinions on getting it open.

Hogan: TOT goes to Madera County. Bottom of road always washes out, needs repairs. Not within Town, but within INF (Inyo National Forest). Maybe with Town taking lead on road, contribute some TOT for maintenance.

Stump: Mono pushed on Madera, got rebuffed. BOS discussed modification of agreement with Madera.

Wentworth: Town will be in middle in couple years. Engagement with Madera will be elevated.

Stump: Original Mono letter had Town letter along with. Push from Town side. Who coordinate with? Stacy Corless.

Hogan: Find out how much TOT Madera gets.

Wentworth: Dublino's agreement into play with Reds. All recreation based stuff.

Hogan: USFS thinking about concessionaires not fees. Visitors go down just to see valley.

Wentworth: NPS idiosyncratic, want inter-valley transit services. Need good model.

--- Break: 10:44-10:54 ---

D. RTP workshop: Gerry Le Francois honored request for detailed, redline copy. Ch 6 = Financial Element. Fiscal protections on maintaining road expire this year. EV (Electric Vehicle) policies amended. Overarching reality is new Housing Elements from Town and Mono. CEQA addendum is basis.

Hailey Lang noted nothing major in policy, but technical data, new requirements from 2017 guidebook. More actionable-type performance measures. All relevant financial data on LTC projects to reflect current state of finances for Mono and Town. Wayfinding plan incorporated by reference.

Wentworth: Word doc? *Lang: Redlines from reformatting.* Wentworth: Electronic version to LTC? *Lang: Highlight in blue movements. Amend by December 2019. How incorporate with Walk/Bike/Ride.*

Kreitz: On public outreach, consider enhancing non-English speaking. Talk directly with Latinos.

Le Francois: Most communities spent time/energy in 2015, comfortable with current documents. Bridgeport had no revisions.

Green: No specific comments. *West: Circulate around office.*

How account for inflation's effect on construction costs? *Lang: Embedded within numbers.* How capture nebulous element? Figures are best information available, may be more expensive.

Green: California Transportation Commission tells what inflation factor to use. SB 1 at 4%, redone at 3%. SB 1 has much work, not straight percent. Contractor availability, hauling costs, etc.

Higerd: Email with other counties. Bidders and prices a concern. Cost escalation occurring now. In RTP, get some numbers on table. Look at annually in updating CIP.

Stump: Place where LTC and local entities could set priorities? Dropping or delaying was option. Maintain local flexibility.

Le Francois: SB 1 under purview of BOS. Taking Public Works' CIP (Capital Improvement Program). Town has something similar. LTC is RTIP/STIP. Do horse trading before LTC sees it. Predominant pots of money: RTIP and ITIP (Interregional Transportation Improvement Program) for our MOU projects. Mono works with Town. CTC does not allow formula-based approach. Every two years get RTIP.

Higerd: RTP is long-term plan that's inclusive, exceeding available funding. STIP cycle based on actual numbers.

Wentworth: See what's programmed, reprioritize every year. Things change. Resources on transportation projects utilized for other projects as well.

Higerd: Every year retooling, looking at potential funding sources, some more secure than others. Recommendation: reading off what already vetted, implementing plan adopted.

7. ADMINISTRATION: A. Kelly Karl applied grant last cycle, not enough time. Spoke with Caltrans. Tie into local and regional transportation projects. Competitive past local filtering.

Wentworth met with June Lake Trail's Sarah Chapman, in for Jil Stark.

West: Had PID (Project Initiation Document) for trail maintenance on Loop, on hold now. Look at outreach on regional level on and off highway.

Grant over years or one year? *Le Francois: One year. Caltrans trying to help use this process for future rehab work. Planning done up front.*

Wentworth: Local government commission? *Le Francois: MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) statewide helped rural RTPAs (Rural Transportation Planning Agencies). Nonprofit group.*

8. COMMISSIONER REPORTS: **Salcido:** The Parcel will ~~intercept~~ coordinate with planning. **Peters:** None. **Hogan:** Saw SB 1 signs everywhere on Central Coast, showing where money's going. **Wentworth:** Likes new agenda format. NPS stuff interesting. Labor Day traffic. Parcel discussion. Accelerated effort to address housing issue. Sustainable recreation. **Kreitz:** ~~The Parcel is a version of MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization); discretion on where to put money. No room to talk about housing and mobility that would bolster viability.~~ Talking with NPS' Mike Reynolds, major renovation in Tuolumne with impacts on parking, shuttle services. **Wentworth:** Invite Kathleen Morse for presentation. **Stump:** Commended agency on three routes for Gran Fondo. Record number of participants. USFS wrapping up Springs Fire.

9. INFORMATIONAL: No items

10. UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS: Transit needs process update, 2020 RTIP & MOU projects, and RTP review with commission; letter to NPS for update on Tioga opening; Dublino on NPS; CSAC support letter; building principles in bylaws.

11. ADJOURN to at 11:45 a.m. to Oct. 7, as October 14 is a holiday

Prepared by CD Ritter, LTC clerk