



**INYO COUNTY
LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

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Douglas Wilson, Executive Director

MINUTES

INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**Boulder Creek RV Resort
2550 Hwy 395, Lone Pine, CA 93545**

January 21, 2009

9:00 a.m. Bob Kimball opened the meeting.

ITEM NO. 1 Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Bob Kimball
Beverly Brown
Bruce Dishion
Frank Crom
Doug Thompson
Marty Fortney, alternate

Others Present: Robert Ennis, C&C Railroad
Ryan Dermody, Caltrans
Forest Becket, Caltrans
Tom Hallenbeck, Caltrans
Destin Dishion, City of Bishop
Dave Grah, City of Bishop
John Helm, ESTA
Doug Wilson, Executive Director
Ted Pedersen, Inyo County
Courtney Smith, Inyo County
Linda Baffrey, Secretary

ITEM NO. 2 Public Comment

None

SCHEDULED ITEMS

None

ACTION ITEMS

ITEM NO. 3 Introduction of new Commission members

The Inyo County Board of Supervisors appointed Beverly Brown to the Commission. They re-appointed Richard Cervantes, and appointed Marty Fortney as alternate. Beverly Brown introduced Ted Pedersen, who will be the new Director of Public Works for Inyo County.

ITEM NO. 4 Secretary of the Local Transportation Commission - Request approval of minutes of the meeting of November 19, 2008.

Frank Crom moved to approve the minutes of the meeting of November 19, 2008, and Bruce Dishion seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0, with an abstention by Beverly Brown.

ITEM NO. 5 Election of Officers for 2009

Frank Crom moved to appoint Bob Kimball as Chairman, and Beverly Brown as vice chair for 2009. Bruce Dishion seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0

ITEM NO. 6 Request Commission adopt Resolution No. 2009-01, a resolution allocating \$18,207 of the California Transit Security Grant Program (CTS-GP-STAA) funds to the Inyo County Public Works Department for security fencing at the vehicle storage area at the Eastern Sierra Transit Authority headquarters, and authorizing the Executive Director to sign any documents related to this grant.

Courtney Smith explained that the submission of the grant application must come through the ICLTC. The Inyo County Public Works Department will hire a contractor to do the actual construction of the fencing. The fencing will cost \$35,000. This application is for \$18,207, which is the full amount available to the County at this time. The remainder will need to be applied for next year. The funding can accumulate for up to three years.

Frank Crom suggested that a security camera would be a useful purchase for the vehicle storage area.

Mr. Smith said that a camera is an eligible Transit Security Grant purchase.

Frank Crom moved to adopt Resolution No. 2009-01, a resolution allocating \$18,207 of the California Transit Security Grant Program funds to the Inyo County Public Works Department for security fencing at the vehicle storage area at the Eastern Sierra Transit Authority headquarters, and authorizing the Executive Director to sign any documents related to this grant. Beverly Brown seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

ITEM NO. 7 Fiscal Year 2009-2010 Transportation Planning Grant Workshop

Forest Becket announced a call for applications for Transportation Planning Grants for Fiscal Year 2009-2010. He said that he has full application packets available for anyone who needs one. Several are state-funded. These include 1) Environmental Justice: Context Sensitive Planning, 2) Community-Based Transportation Planning, and 3) Partnership Planning. The Community-Based Transportation Planning grant is to integrate transportation and land use. MPOs and RPAs, cities and counties, transit agencies, and tribal governments can apply directly.

There are also three federally funded grants: 1) Statewide Transit Planning Studies, 2) Transit Technical Planning Assistance, and 3) Transit Professional Development. Mr. Becket stated that there are no workshops scheduled, but he is willing to assist with applications.

ITEM NO. 8 Presentation of Regional Transportation Plan Draft as prepared by Fehr and Peers

Courtney Smith presented the Draft Regional Transportation Plan that was prepared by Fehr and Peers. It is available for comment at the public libraries and on the ICLTC website. Mr. Smith mentioned that there is new project selection criteria on page 70 that may be of special interest to the cities and counties. The final RTP will be brought to the ICLTC for approval at the February or March meeting. Part of the packet is a power point presentation giving an overview of the RTP. Any questions or concerns can be directed to LTC staff.

ITEM NO. 9 Discussion of Unmet Transit Needs Process

Doug Wilson stated that Unmet Needs hearings are required to be held before TDA funds can be allocated to streets and roads. He mentioned that money has not been available for streets and roads for the past several years. Mr. Wilson asked if the commission was interested in participating in unmet needs workshops this year instead of formal hearings. They would be noticed and conducted in much the same way as the formal hearings that have been held in the past. He said the main difference would be that a formal report would not be presented to the state.

Bob Kimball said that he likes the idea of workshops.

Bruce Dishion stated that it makes no difference if it is a formal or informal process.

Beverly Brown said she feels that public input is important, but thinks a workshop would be just as effective.

Marty Fortney stated that many of the Aberdeen residents use public transportation, and this will be a good opportunity for them to voice their needs.

Doug Thompson related that in the past, a request had been made, and then not addressed until the following year. He feels that this will be a good vehicle to get information from the public.

The consensus among the commissioners is to hold two public workshops to discuss unmet transportation needs, one in the north part of the county, and one in the south.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

ITEM NO. 10 Eastern Sierra Transit Report

John Helm of ESTA reported that ridership has increased 20%, mostly in the Mammoth area. He attributes this to a good snow season, and some adjustments to scheduling.

He said there has been an overall increase of 41% in productivity, explaining that this is the measure of passengers per hour. He also noted that this will change somewhat as they will not be counting the time before the bus arrives at its starting point, or the time after it goes out of service until it arrives back at ESTA headquarters.

Mr. Helm said that the Short Range Transit Plan was adopted, and they are now waiting for the hard copy.

He stated that prior to January, a person couldn't travel from Lone Pine to Reno in one day. This has now been accomplished by a scheduling change.

He said the largest service area is in the City of Bishop. The fixed route is not as effective as it should be. Efforts are being made to encourage more people who currently use Dial-a-Ride but are capable of using fixed routes to use the fixed route buses.

Mr. Helm stated that the southern route to Lancaster is now running three times per week. It had previously ended in Ridgecrest. While the CREST bus now does not go to Ridgecrest because of time constraints, there is a direct connect to Ridgecrest via Ridgecrest Transit Services. Riders to Ridgecrest now have an extra hour for shopping, etc. while the bus continues on to the Metro link in Lancaster. Metro link takes only another 30 minutes to L.A.

John Helm reported that Eastern Sierra Transit had been recommended for full funding for three of four grants applied for under FTA Section 5316 and 5317, which would entail \$170,000 per year for two years. He said the FTA still must approve it, and they should receive the money in May.

Mr. Helm said that this fiscal year has seen ESTA in good shape, with no problems maintaining service, partly because of the lowering fuel prices, and the supplemental revenues from the counties and cities.

Bob Kimball asked if ESTA is on schedule for repayment of these loans, and Mr. Helm said they are.

Mr. Helm said that they are expecting no STA funds next year, which will decrease their budget by \$130-140 thousand.

Doug Thompson commented that some links to shared service providers on the ESTA website don't reciprocate.

Mr. Helm noted that posters are being put in bus shelters, highlighting the Lancaster route.

Mr. Thompson said that many hikers from other countries come to the Eastern Sierra, and the new link from L.A. will be valuable.

Bob Kimball said that we need to remember that Dial-a-Ride was originally created for the elderly and the handicapped. Dial-a-Ride was not created to serve the general public.

Frank Crom suggested raising the price of Dial-a-Ride for the general public.

ITEM NO. 11 Tribal report

None

ITEM NO. 12 Caltrans Report

Tom Hallenbeck welcomed Ted Pedersen, the new Executive Director, and congratulated ESTA on the two latest additions to the CREST route.

He reported that bids will open for the Sherwin Grade project on the 27th of this month. This will make over \$100 million currently committed to projects in Inyo County.

He said that the voters approved bonds, and work is continuing on the Manzanar/Independence four-lane project.

The pooled monetary investment board will continue to fund ongoing projects.

The CTC is approving no funds for new projects. He noted that the bond fund/general fund and the State Highway Account are separate.

He said that they have not been told to stop the Sherwin project.

He reported that Caltrans has been involved, through the OES, with the Oak Creek emergency. They have removed the diversion of Oak Creek, and it is back close to its original path. It will involve long-term maintenance. The size of the culverts under the highway has been increased.

Mr. Hallenbeck said all State agencies will have furlough on the 1st and 3rd Fridays for the next 17 months because of the State budget situation. This does not involve necessary maintenance or supervision of ongoing highway projects.

There will be a public hearing at the end of January regarding the furlough issue.

If the economic stimulus plan for infrastructure passes, this will mean \$3 billion for California. Projects must be ready within 30 days. The Coso rest area rehab project would qualify.

Frank Crom commended Caltrans for all their help.

ITEM NO. 13 City of Bishop Report

Dave Grah welcomed Ted Pedersen.

He reported that the South 2nd Street project will open January 31, and is scheduled to start March 2. This will include the removal of 26 trees.

Grove Street sidewalks are in the environmental phase now, and final design is underway for Project A. This will also involve the removal of trees.

There is a draft environmental document for West Pine and Sneden St. projects.

Bus stops are still on hold. There are two path projects that will come up fairly soon.

The City has submitted 10 projects for the economic stimulus plan.

Bob Kimball asked if these were projects which had been on hold. Mr. Grah said that they are on the list because they can be delivered quickly.

Bruce Dishion asked if the money is guaranteed for the 2nd Street project. Mr. Grah said that it appears to be at this time.

ITEM NO. 14 Executive Director's Report

Courtney Smith stated that Fehr & Peers transportation consultants' initial scope of work included a variety of transportation Planning related tasks. One of these tasks was to prepare a Traffic Calming tool kit specializing in traffic calming measures appropriate to rural areas. They are not currently under contract to complete this task. A traffic calming tool kit is included in the OWP as a task. Public Works staff is less than excited about this project. Since the tool kit involves both the City and the County, he asked for feedback from the Commission.

Bob Kimball commented that there are many different types, and he feels it may not be worth consideration.

Dave Grah noted that Bishop has proposed the use of traffic calming measures on two projects, but in each instance, the public was strongly against the use of them.

Doug Wilson said that by the next meeting, Ted Pedersen would be the Executive Director. He said he has enjoyed working with Caltrans, ESTA, the City of Bishop, and the LTC. He commented that cooperation among the local agencies is the best he has ever experienced.

ITEM NO. 15 Reports from all members of the Inyo County LTC

Doug Thompson commented on the progress of the four lane work at Black Rock and Independence/Manzanar.

Bob Kimball commented that the Eastern Sierra Visitor Center was built with the cooperation of 13 agencies.

CORRESPONDENCE – INFORMATIONAL

Letter from Granite Construction regarding Independence Four-Lane Project

Letter from Caltrans regarding TE and STIP projects

2nd Quarter Financial report and OWP invoice

ADJOURNMENT

Bob Kimball adjourned the meeting at 10:25 a.m.

Attest:

Douglas Wilson
Executive Director

by Linda Baffrey, Secretary