



**INYO COUNTY
LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

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Ted Pedersen, Executive Director

MINUTES

INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**Inyo County Board of Supervisors' Chambers
224 N. Edwards St., Independence, CA 93526**

January 20, 2010

Bob Kimball called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

ITEM NO. 1 Roll Call

Commissioners Present:

Bob Kimball
Susan Cullen
Bruce Dishion
Beverly Brown
Marty Fortney
Doug Thompson

Others Present:

Forest Becket, Caltrans
Robert Ennis, C&C Railway
Ryan Dermody, Caltrans
Brian Biehl, CHP
John Helm, ESTA
Dave Grah, City of Bishop
Seth Roberts, Bishop Paiute Tribe
Brad Mettam, Caltrans
Ted Pedersen, Executive Director
Courtney Smith, Inyo County
Linda Baffrey, Secretary

ITEM NO. 2 Public Comment

None

ACTION ITEMS

ITEM NO. 3 Secretary of the Local Transportation Commission - Request approval of the minutes of the meeting of November 18, 2009.

Susan Cullen moved to approve the minutes of the meeting of November 18, 2009. Beverly Brown seconded the motion. Marty Fortney and Bruce Dishion abstained. Motion carried 4-0.

ITEM NO. 4 Request Commission adopt Resolution #2010-01, a resolution revising the FY 08/09 State Transit Assistance allocation.

Courtney Smith stated that this resolution is to reflect the total amount of STA funds received and disbursed. STA funds were cut due to the State's budget constraints. Brad Mettam explained that the governor's proposal in January was to discontinue STA, but there would be a May revision, and the legislature must act on it.

Doug Thompson moved to adopt Resolution #2010-01, a resolution revising the FY 08/09 State Transit Assistance allocation. Beverly Brown seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

ITEM NO. 5 Request Commission adopt Resolution #2010-02, a resolution allocating \$18,207 of California Transit Security Grant Program funds to the Inyo County Public Works Department for the installation of security fencing at Eastern Sierra Transit Authority headquarters.

Courtney Smith explained that CTSGP funds (\$18,207 annually) can accumulate for up to three years.

Susan Cullen asked if this is the third year. Mr. Smith said it is. The first year's allocation was dedicated to lighting at the ESTA lot, and the second was for fencing. The third year's allocation will also be used for fencing. It will take three years at this funding rate to complete the security fencing.

County staff is working on the security lighting. A survey is being conducted, and they will sublease the area to ESTA. The buses will be located further from the terminal than they are at present. There may be access to grindings from the highway work to use in the parking area.

Doug Thompson inquired about night lighting.

Mr. Pedersen said this would be addressed.

Courtney Smith added that they would comply with the general plan, and install downward shields on the lights.

Marty Fortney moved to adopt Resolution #2010-02, a resolution allocating \$18,207 of CTSGP funds to Inyo County for the installation of security fencing at the ESTA headquarters. Doug Thompson seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

ITEM NO. 6 Request Commission consider approval of a Public Transportation Modernization, Improvement, and Service Enhancement Account Program Expenditure Plan.

Courtney Smith explained that this plan provides general direction for capital expenditures by ESTA over the life of the grant program. Inyo County is scheduled to receive \$661,557 over the life of the grant cycle. Over the first two years, all funds were allocated to Inyo because the Inyo County Auditor was the point of contact for Inyo Mono Transit. Mono County Auditor is now the point of contact since the transition from IMT to ESTA. ESTA has calculated the percentage of funds going to Inyo to be 58%, and 42% to Mono.

Beverly Brown moved to approve the Public Transportation Modernization, Improvement, and Service Enhancement Account Program Expenditure Plan. Marty Fortney seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

ITEM NO. 7 Request Commission approve the ranking of Transportation Enhancement projects for potential inclusion in the 2010 Regional Transportation Improvement Program.

Two TE applications were received in response to a Call for Projects. Caltrans' application was for a sidewalk on West Line, and the County's was for bike lanes on Sunland Drive. A scoring committee ranked both projects. The Line Street sidewalk project scored slightly higher, but it is expected that there will be sufficient funding for both projects.

Beverly Brown moved to approve the ranking of the two TE Projects for potential inclusion in the 2010 RTIP. Susan Cullen seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

ITEM NO. 8 Request Commission adopt the 2010 Regional Transportation Improvement Program.

Mr. Smith stated that the only new funding available is for TE projects and Programming, Planning, and Monitoring. The goal is to finish projects from prior STIPs.

The Laws Project environmental study showed that expensive mitigation would be necessary, and an alternate alignment is not eligible. The design and construction components will be deprogrammed, and funds can be used for other projects.

Dave Grah mentioned that in the TE the Pine to Park and Seibu to School paths were underfunded. The environmental documents were completed for the Pine to Park path, and they will need to start over for an alternate alignment. The latest estimate to restart, and study the alignment is \$60,000.

Bob Kimball asked how assured the city is that a new alignment will be approved. Mr. Grah said that the impacts to local property owners will be less than with the originally proposed alignment.

Mr. Kimball asked if any of the previous money could be recovered. Mr. Grah said that they might be able to “piggy-back” onto some of the previous work.

Mr. Kimball inquired about the Seibu to School Path. Mr. Grah said the current path is on the reservation and in the city. Meetings were held with tribal members to choose an alignment. The tribe has requested that it be outside of the reservation. One possibility is to build a partial path that would connect with the existing one. A concern is keeping adults from walking through the school property.

Bob Kimball asked if they wanted to leave the money allocated. Mr. Grah said it is still a viable project, if only for the school concerns. He said if it were to be in the city only, it would need to cross a creek, raising riparian and environmental issues. Construction would not be until 2012/2013.

Beverly Brown asked what street this path would feed into, and Mr. Grah said it would be Keough Street. He said letters were sent to residents, but only 3 or 4 people attended the meeting. They were not pleased, but reluctantly accepted the idea. Ms Brown asked if the school had been contacted. Mr. Grah said the school has been actively involved. Mr. Dishion asked if the school gates would be closed, so people would be forced to use the new path. Mr. Grah indicated that they would be locked. Mr. Grah explained that the Pine to Park Path would have 12 ft wide pavement, so it could be accessed by fire and law enforcement.

Doug Thompson asked if a master trail plan had been finalized. Dave Grah said they are in the Collaborative Bike Plan. Mr. Thompson asked about conducting environmental work on projects not approved by the community.

Mr. Kimball said he feels it makes more sense to get solid approval from residents first. Mr. Grah again mentioned the survey of Keough Street residents and indicated the City would like to move forward with both projects.

Courtney Smith noted that there is always some uncertainty with programming a project. The initial programming phase is referred to as Project Approval and Environmental Document or PA & ED phase. No matter how much work you do up front to gauge support for a project, you never know for sure until the environmental document is adopted and the project is approved by the lead agency.

Mr. Smith recommended increasing the programming for the Pine to Park Path environmental component from \$40,000 to \$60,000 per the revised estimate of the City to complete this phase. To stay within the target TE shares, he recommended decreasing the programming on the construction component of the Carson and Colorado Railway (Eastern California Museum Transportation Wing) project by \$20,000. The County is currently in the process of revising the scope and the project location for this project. The County will have another opportunity to address funding needs for the construction component as part of the 2012 RTIP/STIP development process.

The West Pine improvement project design component will cost \$197,000.

There has been no change in the Freeman Gulch project.

Olancha/Cartago right of way has been pushed out closer to construction.

The public transportation account for buses is in jeopardy.

Marty Fortney noted that the governor has proposed eliminating the gas tax, but adding an excise tax. This proposal would eliminate all funding for transit. The excise tax would add 10.8 cents a gallon to the state's general fund, and not to transit.

Doug Thompson asked if the Sunland Bike Path and Line Street sidewalks would be included. Mr. Smith said they would.

He recommended that the RTIP be adopted and sent to the CTC as amended, and authorize the executive director to make any administrative amendments.

Bruce Dishion moved to adopt the 2010 Regional Transportation Improvement Program as amended and authorize the executive director to make any administrative amendments. Doug Thompson seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

Doug Thompson requested a bike map. Bob Kimball asked if Caltrans had done one. Brad Mettam said the collaborative bike plan includes several, but recommended that the county do subsequent maps.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

None

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

ITEM NO. 9 ESTA Report

John Helm distributed the December monthly report. He said that all of the increases were from Mammoth Lakes. Many routes are flat or declining, probably due to the economy. He said they had discontinued the night route in Mammoth, and transferred the hours to school routes. The northbound CREST route is down, and there have been minor increases in the Lone Pine to Bishop route.

Mr. Helm said that they are down 5 – 10% from last year. He mentioned that there had been two fare increases, and wondered if that may have driven ridership down.

Bob Kimball asked if they were still able to meet the fare box ratio, and Mr. Helm said they were able to meet the 10% because the fare box ratio is system-wide, which includes the successful Reds Meadow route. He said he recognizes that certain routes may never achieve the 10% ratio.

Doug Thompson said that trailhead parking is needed. John Helm said that the Forest Service is doing a comprehensive study of transportation to trailheads. He noted that there are several private shuttles that provide that service now.

Mr. Helm said that each jurisdiction has special interests, and these are reviewed every six months, with public hearings in select areas.

They will be adjusting their budget. Less revenue is expected, but also less expenses. 40% of their operating budget is threatened by the governor's new budget proposal. He suggested a letter-writing campaign to support transit.

Susan Cullen asked if the vanpool vans were still in operation. Mr. Helm said they are not. He noted that there has been minimal interest, but if fuel prices increase, he thinks the interest will be there.

ITEM NO. 10 Tribal Report

Seth Roberts, Public Works Director for the Bishop Paiute Tribe, thanked the LTC for their support of the West Line Street sidewalk project.

He said the tribe has received \$2 million from the BIA for the reservation roads project. New roads will go between See Vee and Tu Su, and Tu Su and Barlow. He said that many of the lots on the reservation are 4 deep.

Beverly Brown said she had heard that the tribe wants to take over all reservation roads. Mr. Roberts said the tribe would like to eventually be self-governing, but the border roads may remain under county control.

ITEM NO. 11 Caltrans Report

Brad Mettam spoke of the budget crisis. There have been furloughs, and there may be wage cuts.

He said “Stimulus 2” is a \$1.3 billion bill. The State can handle half of this. The rest will probably go to large metropolitan MPOs because of the time constraints. The time constraints will probably make this funding source infeasible for most rural areas.

It has been a decade since District 9 did its last Origin and Destination study.

Mr. Mettam said there would be another Origin and Destination study in February at Benton and Coso, and in March at Bridgeport and Topaz.

ITEM NO. 12 City of Bishop Report

Dave Grah said the work is finished on Grove St, but the city is still working with the contractor because of stop notices. He expects releases to come soon.

Hanby Street is “stimulus ready” for construction. They expect to start in April. Bruce Dishion asked if it would be done by summer, and Mr. Grah said it would.

ITEM NO. 13 Executive Director's Report

Ted Pedersen said the Sunland Bike Lanes project would be combined with the South Bishop Resurfacing STIP project. He said that when the Ed Powers Road STIP project didn't include bike lanes, he received several comments from staff and the public that bike lanes should be included. The County submitted a Bicycle Transportation Account application to build bike lanes on Ed Powers and Red Hill Roads.

The environmental document for the Laws RR Project will be completed to satisfy requirements to finish the project.

County staff, Caltrans, and Carson Colorado Railway proponents have been in discussion examining an alternate project site.

The Barlow / Dixon project will be expanded to include guardrails over the canal.

Courtney Smith mentioned that there would be a Pavement Management workshop held at the County Board of Supervisors meeting on January 26, and training for city and county staff on January 27.

There will be a meeting of the Social Services Transit Advisory Committee on February 25.

ITEM NO. 14 Reports from all members of the Inyo County LTC
Susan Cullen commented that the Sand Dunes project looks good.

Doug Thompson said that access to mountains in winter is needed. Mr. Pedersen said that Glacier Lodge Road is plowed to where the residences are. Mr. Thompson said they could plow 3 ½ miles up Whitney Portal Rd. He noted that the Bishop Chamber of Commerce has a winter use list. He feels that this could create a winter market, and some roads could be kept open if there are not heavy amounts of snow.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

ADJOURNMENT

Bob Kimball adjourned the meeting at 10:45.

Attest:

Ted Pedersen, Executive Director

by Linda Baffrey, Secretary