



**INYO COUNTY
LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

P.O. DRAWER Q
INDEPENDENCE, CA 93526
PHONE: (760) 878-0201
FAX: (760) 878-2001



Ted Pedersen, Executive Director

MINUTES

**INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
BISHOP CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
377 W. LINE ST., BISHOP, CA 93514**

June 16, 2010

ITEM No. 1 Roll Call

Commissioners Present:

Bob Kimball
Doug Thompson
Susan Cullen
Beverly Brown
Bruce Dishion

Others Present:

Beth Himelhoch, IMAH
Seth Barlow, Bishop Paiute Tribe
Forest Becket, Caltrans
Ryan Dermody, Caltrans
Rick Franz, Caltrans
Jill Batchelder, ESTA
Susan Patton
Troy Patton
Selma Calnan
Courtney Smith, Inyo County
Linda Baffrey, Inyo County

ITEM No. 2 Public Comment

Susan Patton of Cartago addressed the commission regarding the widening of Hwy 395 in the Olancha/Cartago area. She said she has lived there for six years, and there has been only one meeting about the four-lane during that time. She mentioned hearing about a survey regarding the preferred alignment, but had not seen it, and most of her neighbors had not seen it either. She said she had heard that Caltrans is favoring the west alignment. This plan would curtail business. She had heard that Mammoth Mountain Ski Area season pass holders were sent a survey. She is concerned that Caltrans is looking more for outside input than feedback from locals in Olancha and Cartago. She also said there are Indian burial grounds, as well as other historic sites in the area. She requested that another public meeting be held with Caltrans.

Bob Kimball added that he believes Caltrans is planning more meetings.

Forest Becket reported that Caltrans is now completing the project report. It is almost ready for review, and then they will have another public meeting to discuss and explain the alternatives. He said the survey had been web-based, as well as in hard copy format. He said they were looking for opinions from locals and inter-regional travelers alike. He noted that this is the highest profile project in the district, and all opinions will be brought back to the project manager.

Bob Kimball commented that he feels the opinions of the people in the community are more important than those of the traveling public. Tourists don't have a vested interest; they just want a four-lane highway. The survey was informational only.

Beverly Brown asked that Caltrans use public land, and try to limit the taking of private land.

Susan Patton commented that the maps that were used at the last meeting were old, and didn't show some of the homes in the area.

Doug Thompson commented that the western alignment would take less private property than the current route. He said he is impressed with Caltrans' response to issues.

Ms Patton said the owners of the Ranch House Café have circulated a petition regarding preferred alignments, and the owner of the local gas station also has concerns. She said this piece of the four-lane is dangerous, as tourists travel at high rates of speed.

Doug Thompson commented that people speed through Lone Pine also. The four-lane will not help with speeding.

Forest Becket suggested the possibility of a workshop at an LTC meeting.

Ms Patton distributed copies of a letter detailing many of her concerns regarding the various Olancha/Cartago Four-Lane project alignment possibilities.

ACTION ITEMS

ITEM No. 3 Request Commission approve minutes of May 19, 2010

Forest Becket noted that the minutes reflected a proposed 15% pay cut for Caltrans. This number should have been 5%. There would also be a 5% reduction in benefits, and one floating flex day per month.

Susan Cullen moved to approve the minutes of May 19, 2010 with the noted correction.

Bruce Dishion seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

ITEM No. 4

a) Request Commission adopt Unmet Transit Needs Findings as presented by staff.

b) Request adoption of Resolution #2010-05, a Resolution regarding unmet transit needs.

Courtney Smith read the definition of Unmet Transit Needs and "Reasonable to Meet". He presented a summary of all the comments that were made at the Unmet Transit Needs Hearing. He noted that the issues raised could be divided into several categories. These are: 1) general comments about possible reduction in services, 2) requests for scheduling changes, 3) general comments about ESTA, 4) possible unmet transit needs that ESTA

staff was able to clarify are already being met, 5) unmet transit needs that don't meet the definition of reasonable to meet, and 6) questions about ESTA policies. The findings indicated that this year there are no new transit needs that are reasonable to meet. He said staff would ask ESTA to evaluate evening routes to the college.

Bob Kimball noted that given the large area of the county, it would not be reasonable to travel many miles (such as to Darwin) to pick up only one passenger.

Bruce Dishion commented that he is amazed by the number of buses backed up at Kmart during the day, that leave empty, yet there are no buses available for evening routes.

Mr. Kimball suggested that ESTA try to streamline the operation, by changing some route times to allow for other service.

Courtney Smith pointed out that the Resolution states that no TDA funds are being allocated for local streets and roads, but revenues to transit have decreased.

Beverly Brown commented that this is significant, as many of the streets in Lone Pine are down to gravel in places. It is hard to understand empty buses when there are other needs.

Doug Thompson asked about the question from Daniel Steinhagen of IMACA regarding roles and responsibilities. Mr. Smith explained that Mr. Steinhagen represents a community advocate group. His were technical questions, but not unmet needs. These questions will be further evaluated in the future.

Mr. Kimball stated that he has requested a more comprehensive report from ESTA that shows the fare box ratio, to see if changes need to be made.

Doug Thompson moved to approve the Unmet Needs Findings as presented by staff. Bruce Dishion seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Beverly Brown moved to adopt Resolution #2010-05, a resolution regarding unmet transit needs. Susan Cullen seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

ITEM No. 5 Request Commission adopt an amendment to Appendix B of the LTC Operations and Procedural Manual.

Bob Kimball asked if this amendment had to do with allocations for bicycle facilities. Courtney Smith explained that in 2009/2010, the Commission started setting aside 2% of TDA funds for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This requires the LTC to adopt rules for claim submissions by the City and/or County for pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The proposed amendment adds two new TDA claim forms to Appendix B. One of the forms (pages 1 and 2) is directed to transit claimants and will help address concerns raised in the Triennial Performance Audit such as noting the requirement for a CHP terminal inspection. The other form (pages 5 to 7), will establish a procedure and criteria for the allocation of TDA bicycle and pedestrian set aside funds.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities claim form prioritizes types of projects. That is: "Bicycle storage racks and lockers, maintenance of bicycle and/or pedestrian facilities, matching funds for eligible project components, and any type of bicycle or pedestrian facility project that can be demonstrated to not be eligible for other types of funding" are prioritized over other types of eligible projects. The reason these types of projects are prioritized is that they fit within the general level of funding available through TDA set

aside and they provide funding for types of projects (especially maintenance) that are not available through other sources. The submission date of November 1 was selected because it falls within the middle of the period when Bicycle Transportation Account claims are made. If the County or the City is looking for matching funds for a project, they can reserve the TDA funds before submitting the application. Mr. Smith asked the Commission if there are any other types of bicycle and/or pedestrian projects they would like to prioritize. The language can be amended to include those types of projects. Mr. Smith mentioned that IMAAA does not need to meet the CHP terminal inspection requirement since their vehicles carry less than 10 people.

Bob Kimball noted that the LTC funded a bikeways plan for both the City and County and asked if there are already criteria related to this. Mr. Smith said the bike plan is especially related to Bicycle Transportation Account funding. He said that the allocation of TDA funds to the bike and pedestrian set aside requires additional language in the TDA manual that is separate from the bike plan.

Mr. Kimball asked if the city or county had gone after any of the other available bike money. Courtney said the county had applied for bike lanes on Ed Powers and Red Hill Roads but that they had not heard back from the State if the application was successful. Bob asked if TE could be used for environmental and TDA for the actual work. Courtney said that this is possible although the TDA funding amount usually is not enough for construction. Ryan Dermody clarified that TE money is programmed in the STIP.

Beverly Brown asked if maps and "Share the Road" signs would be eligible. Courtney said they are eligible, and that the priority list could be expanded to include maps and signage.

Beverly Brown moved to adopt an amendment to Appendix B of the Operation and Procedures Manual with signage and maps added to the claim form as priority types of projects. Doug Thompson seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

ITEM No. 6 Request Commission adopt Resolution # 2010-06, a Resolution apportioning local transportation funds for the fiscal year 2010/2011.

Courtney Smith explained that staff is proposing a slightly different tact in apportioning and allocating TDA funds. That is, the allocations are being made through one resolution to apportion the funds and one resolution to allocate the funds. Courtney Smith explained that the TDA estimate is less than was previously thought, so the allocations are reduced to correspond with the likely amount. ESTA is claiming funds as a CTSA and also requesting a Section 5311(f) match. ESTA staff had previously thought the State would provide this match, but the program has been delayed and is slow to be implemented.

Susan Cullen moved to adopt Resolution #2010-06, a resolution apportioning local transportation funds for the fiscal year 2010/2011. Bruce Dishion seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

ITEM No. 7 Request Commission adopt Resolution #2010-07, a Resolution allocating local transportation funds for the fiscal year 2010/2011.

Bob Kimball asked if the totals on the Resolutions are correct, and Mr. Smith said they are. They agree with the revised estimate on page 2 of the staff report.

Beverly Brown moved to adopt Resolution #2010-07, a Resolution allocating local transportation funds for the fiscal year 2010/2011. Bruce Dishion seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

ITEM No. 8 Request Commission adopt Resolution #2010-08, a Resolution approving the FY 2010/2011 Overall Work Program.

Courtney Smith said the comments from the State regarding the OWP were generally positive. Changes made in response to the comments were underlined throughout the document.

Doug Thompson moved to adopt Resolution #2010-08, a Resolution approving the FY 2010/2011 Overall Work Program, and authorizing the Executive Director to sign the Transportation Planning Process Certification and the OWPA. Beverly Brown seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Beverly Brown thanked staff for their hard work.

ITEM No. 9 Request Commission approve the Certifications and Assurances for FTA Section 5311(f) grant for the operation of the CREST inter-regional bus route in the amount of \$90,480 and authorize the Inyo County LTC Executive Director to sign.

Jill Batchelder reported that the CREST bus goes to Reno four days a week, and to Lancaster three days a week. The southbound numbers are up. This route connects with Metro link. The northbound route is up slightly after being impacted by the winter air service. There is no summer air service to Reno; there is service to L.A. year-round.

The 5311(f) funds for next year amount to \$458,000. 55% comes from federal grants. Inyo and Mono counties each have a match of \$94,080, and Kern COG will contribute \$24,000.

Doug Thompson moved to approve the Certifications and Assurances for FTA Section 5311(f) grant for the operation of the CREST inter-regional bus route in the amount of \$90,480 and authorize the Inyo County LTC Executive Director to sign. Susan Cullen seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Bob Kimball asked if this money was for bus purchases only. Ms Batchelder said no, it could now be used for operating expenses.

Doug Thompson said he is impressed with the additional funding ESTA has managed to procure, saying they would be in bad shape without it. They have an operational agreement with the Forest Service and the town of Mammoth Lakes.

ITEM No. 10 Request Commission ratify letter to Caltrans transferring the cost savings from the Inyo County Barlow Lane ARRA project to the City of Bishop Hanby Avenue ARRA project.

Courtney Smith said that, because of time constraints, and the desire for ARRA funds to remain within Inyo County, the Commission is being asked to ratify the submittal of a letter to Local Assistance to transfer savings from the Barlow Lane ARRA Project to the City of Bishop for the Hanby Avenue ARRA project. Bob Kimball said there have been numerous problems because of old pipes beneath the street. These pipes are believed to date from about 1930.

Bruce Dishion moved to ratify a letter to Caltrans transferring the cost savings from the Inyo County Barlow Lane ARRA project to the City of Bishop Hanby Avenue ARRA project. Beverly Brown seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

None

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

ITEM No. 11 ESTA Report

Jill Batchelder distributed route information through May of this year, and for the same time period the previous year, showing the fare box amount for each route.

She stated that the cost for operation is \$58 per hour per vehicle for the regular buses, and \$101 per hour per vehicle for the CREST bus.

She said the Mammoth Express runs three times a day, and makes a turn around for the south CREST connection. The Bishop fixed route has not been meeting the 10% fare box. Bob Kimball asked if ESTA had considered raising the rates for Dial – Ride, except for the seniors and disabled. Ms Batchelder responded that the current promotional rates have increased ridership, and actually made money. A suggestion was made that they could raise the cost of Dial a Ride to “wean” people off, or only offer Dial a Ride to seniors and handicapped people. Jill noted that Dial a Ride ridership is highest at the beginning of the month. Bob asked if preference were given to seniors, and Ms Batchelder said it is.

Doug Thompson asked if there is a senior citizen on the advisory staff. Ms Batchelder said, not on a formal basis, but they are on the Social Services Transit Advisory Committee, and ESTA works closely with the senior lunch program, and Sterling Heights. Jill said all Dial a Ride requests are logged in with the name, date, and location. Waits are tracked, with the average being 15 or 16 minutes.

ITEM No. 12 Tribal Report

Seth Roberts thanked staff for their consultation with the tribe regarding the OWP and transportation concerns. He said they are still waiting for their road project to start - just waiting for a right of way stamp. He noticed that Fort Independence also has a contract on standby, and they are also just waiting on paper work. The Bishop tribe has received some maintenance funding. They are working with ESTA for bus shelters.

ITEM No. 13 Caltrans Report

Forest Becket reported that on Line St. past Red Hill Rd, there would be 5-6 foot shoulders and bike lanes, as part of an ARRA TE project.

Doug Thompson asked if there would be a barricade between north and south bound traffic north of Independence by the airport. Mr. Becket said no median divider is proposed. If it had been noted as a problem, it would have been addressed.

Ryan Dermody reported that there is only \$7.2 million of BTA money statewide. District 9 has had no successful applications for 10 years.

He noted that, regarding the STIP, many roads are not eligible for ARRA. Some old projects could get funded. The CTC programs the amounts, but costs can change drastically.

Riverside Bridge is on a dirt road north of town. The structure is deficient. Money is finally coming in to replace it.

ITEM No. 14 City of Bishop Report

None

ITEM No. 15 Executive Director's Report

Status Report for County STIP, TE, and HBP Projects

A progress summary was given to the commissioners. STIP projects: Schabbell Lane and Ed Powers are finished and awaiting reimbursement for final invoice. Work on other projects has been suspended because of the suspension of STIP allocations. TE projects: Dehy Park and the Eastern California Museum Transportation Wing are both in the environmental phase. Bridge Projects: Riverside Bridge has been approved to advertise upon receipt of federal approval to proceed. Preliminary studies are being done for Sabrina Bridge.

ARRA Projects: Construction is complete on Barlow Lane. An RFP has been released for the Virtual Transportation Museum.

ITEM No. 16 Reports from all members of the Inyo County LTC

Bruce Dishion and Beverly Brown thanked staff for their work.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

ADJOURNMENT

Bob Kimball adjourned the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

Attest:

Ted Pedersen, Executive Director

by Linda Baffrey, Secretary