



INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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Clint Quilter, Executive Director

MINUTES

INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**Bishop City Council Chambers
377 W. Line Street
Bishop, CA 93514**

May 17, 2017

9:02 a.m. Pat Gardner called the meeting to order.

ITEM NO. 1 Roll Call

Commissioners Present:

Bob Kimball
Doug Thompson
Dan Totheroh
Rick Pucci
Laura Smith
Pat Gardner

Commissioners Absent:

Jim Ellis

Others present:

Mark Heckman, Caltrans
Rick Franz, Caltrans
Stephen Winzenread, Caltrans
Jill Batchelder, ESTA
John Helm, ESTA
Beth Himelhoch, IMAH
Deston Dishion, City of Bishop
Tim Noyes, California Highway Patrol
Peter Bernasconi, Bishop Paiute Tribe

Joan Stathem
Denise Hayden, Secretary
Courtney Smith, Staff
Clint Quilter, Executive Director

ITEM NO. 2 Public Comment

None

ITEM NO. 3 Secretary of the Local Transportation Commission – Requests approval of the minutes of the meeting of April 19, 2017.

Jill Batchelder from ESTA noted that a correction needed to be made to the report that she gave at the April meeting regarding the State Transit funding requirements. The minutes read “ESTA is exceeding the 10% farebox ratio on all routes.” It should have read “State Transit Funding required a minimum farebox ratio of 10% which ESTA far exceeds.”

Motion to approve the minutes as corrected was made by Commissioner Dan Totheroh and seconded by Commissioner Doug Thompson. Motion carried 3-0 with Commissioners Laura Smith, Rick Pucci and Pat Gardner abstaining from the vote. (Staff and Counsel confirmed this constituted a valid quorum and vote after a review of the LTC By-Laws).

ITEM NO. 4 Request Commission conduct a public hearing to gather input on unmet transit needs.

Courtney noted that the meeting of the Social Services Transit Advisory Council was held on March 9th and the notes of this meeting are being presented today for the Commission’s review. Courtney continued to explain the definition of an unmet transit need. He then asked Pat Gardner to open the public hearing.

There was no one in the audience or Commission wishing to speak on the unmet transit needs hearing. Motion to close the hearing was made by Commissioner Laura Smith and seconded by Commissioner Dan Totheroh. Motion carried 6-0

ACTION ITEMS

ITEM NO. 5 Request Commission approve Resolution No. 2017-03, a resolution to 1) approve the Overall Work Program for the Inyo County LTC for FY 2017/2018, 2) authorize the Executive Director to sign related documents and 3) allow staff to make minor technical changes if required.

Courtney stated the Draft OWP was also sent out for review to local planning partners including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), City of Bishop, Eastern Sierra Transit, and the five tribal governments in Inyo County. As a result of a letter from District 9, changes were made to the document. The changes are summarized in the “Response to comments” and also show in the draft OWP through the “track changes” function. Caltrans comments were focused on the eligibility of specific tasks to receive

Regional Planning Assistance funds. The ICLTC is required to adopt the OWP by June 30, 2017.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2017-03 was made by Commissioner Rick Pucci and seconded by Commissioner Laura Smith. Motion carried 6-0

ITEM NO. 6 Request Commission approve Resolutions No. 2017-04 a resolution approving 1) the FY 2016-2017 Federal Exchange Program and State Match Program Agreement, Agreement No. X17-6134(023) with the California Department of Transportation in the amount of \$57,507, 2) apportioning and allocating Regional Surface Transportation program funds to the County of Inyo and City of Bishop based on population, and 3) authorize the Executive Director to sign the Agreement.

The Streets and Highways Code allows counties of less than 200,000 people to exchange Regional Surface Transportation Programs (RSTP) funds for nonfederal State Highway Account funds. This is highly advantageous as the State funds are not restricted, whereas the Federal funds are restricted to work on roads that have a Federal designation in accordance with federal project requirements.

This agreement is received during the fourth quarter of the current year and it normally takes somewhere from four and six months to complete the paperwork and to receive the funds. Staff has been in contact with County and City fiscal staff to let them know how much of these funds will be received in the 2017/2018 fiscal year.

The table on page 2 of the staff report shows options for the apportionment of the funds to the City and the County. In the last several years the LTC allocated the funds to the City and County via a population based formula and staff recommends using this split. Staff received an estimate of RSTP funds to be available last November. The amount the LTC has been actually allocated is about 50% of the estimate. Staff asked Caltrans Local Assistance what their source was and their reply is attached for reference. Staff recommends approving the resolution.

Motion to approve Resolution 2017-04 was made by Commissioner Rick Pucci and seconded by Commissioner Dan Tothoroh. Motion carried 6-0

ITEM NO. 7 Request Commission approve Resolution No. 2017-05 that: 1) approves the submittal of a 2017 Federal Transit Administration Section 5311 apportionment grant with Eastern Sierra Transit Authority as the sub-recipient of \$102,344; and 2) authorized the Executive Director to sign all required certifications and assurances.

Jill Batchelder said historically these funds have been allocated to ESTA to be used as operating assistance but these funds are eligible for capital expenditures as well. They are for rural areas specifically. This is a Program of Projects which would allocate these funds and this year Inyo County has been allocated \$100,059.00. The program funds will assist ESTA in the operational costs of the overall Inyo County transit system.

Motion to approve Resolution 2017-05 was made by Commissioner Doug Thompson and seconded by Commissioner Laura Smith. Motion carried 6-0.

ITEM NO. 8 Request Commission approve Resolution No. 2017-06 that: 1) approves the submittal of a 2018 Federal Transit Administration Section 5311 apportionment grant with Eastern Sierra Transit Authority as the sub-recipient of \$102,344; and 2) authorizes the Executive Director to sign all required certifications and assurances.

Jill reported that Caltrans has put forth two years of apportionment funding for the fiscal years 2018 and 2019. This is for the apportionment for the 2018 fiscal year. Inyo County was allocated \$102,344 in Federal funds and ESTA proposes to use these funds for operating assistance as well. ESTA is seeking approval of the Program of Projects and approval of the Resolution authorizing ESTA to use these funds.

Motion to approve Resolution 2017-06 was made by Commissioner Laura Smith and seconded by Commissioner Bob Kimball. Motion passed 6-0.

ITEM NO. 9 Request Commission approve Resolution No. 2017-07 that authorizes the Executive Director to sign the Certification and Assurances for the Federal Transit Administration Section 5311(f) continued funding for operating assistance for the Eastern Sierra Transit Authority US 395 inter-regional bus route in the amount of \$226,559.88.

This is for inter-city routes that connect city routes to rural routes. This is the funding that ESTA has used to operate the Lone Pine to Reno route and the Mammoth to Lancaster route. ESTA is requesting approval of a resolution that authorizes the signing of Certification and Assurances. The LTC is being requested to certify that there are sufficient funds to operate the routes. With this grant funding opportunity it is a 55.33% federal match. That comes out to \$181,436.00 of local matching funds to be split between Inyo and Mono County's Local Transportation Commissions. Inyo County's portion will be \$90,718.00 and will be requested with the 2017/2018 budget.

ESTA is also required to coordinate transportation with other agencies and as a CTSA and public transportation for the area they do coordinate with the other agencies with discounted bus passes as well as the coordination with Kern Regional Transit. The last certification is to show that the program meets the requirements for the STIP, which it does.

Bob Kimball asked what the difference was between the 5311 and 5311(f). Jill proceeded to explain the differences between the two to the Commissioners.

Motion to approve Resolution 2017-07 was made by Commissioner Dan Totheroh and seconded by Doug Thompson. Motion carried 6-0.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

ITEM NO. 10 Receive a presentation on the State Route (SR) 168 Draft Transportation Concept Report (TCR).

Mark Heckman of Caltrans District 9 stated that his office has been working to upgrade all of the Transportation Concept Reports (TCR) for State Highways in District 9 in the past five years. These two (State Route 168 and State Route 127) are the last of them. These are long range documents going out for 20 years. On page 17 on the draft is the concept that Caltrans has identified over the next 20 years. Mostly it is widening the shoulders and the reallocation of space in Bishop, going from five lanes down to three with bicycle lanes and shoulders. Caltrans is also proposing a light at South See Vee Lane and West Line Street (SR 168). The document also proposes additional ADA facilities in the City of Bishop. Other projects include widening the shoulders in areas such as Westgard Pass. If there are any comments on this document, please contact Mark Heckman. It is Mark's goal to have this draft completed by the end of June.

Laura Smith inquired about the proposed ADA projects. Mark explained what the plans were for the City of Bishop. Laura also asked what the yellow bumps were for on the corners. Rick Franz joined in and explained that these are for blind pedestrians to let them know that they are approaching an intersection.

Rick Pucci asked about the light at See Vee and West Line Street (SR 168) and when this was anticipated to be complete. Mark explained that because of funding reasons, this project was split into two projects. The project initially proposed to include both the proposed lights on See Vee Lane (at West Line Street to the south and North Sierra Highway to the north). The north intersection of See Vee Lane and Highway 395 will be first and it will be next summer or next fall. The south end intersection of See Vee Lane will be in 2019.

Dan Totheroh asked about the proposed five foot widening on SR 168 between Starlite Drive and Ed Powers. Dan suggested a project for a deceleration lane at Starlite Drive. Dan went on to explain the dangers involved in trying to slow down to make the turn onto Starlite Drive when others behind you are accelerating to go up the hill. They don't slow down behind you; they will cross the double yellow line into oncoming traffic to get around you. Mark agreed that it would be a good idea and he will look into adding that as a project in the TCR.

Mark mentioned that if there were any additional comments and/or questions to contact Courtney Smith and he will get them to Mark. They need to be in by the end of June.

ITEM NO. 11 Receive a presentation on the Draft TCR for SR 127

Mark Heckman said that SR 127 is one of the more remote routes in our area and it goes from Baker to the Nevada State line. The main thing on this route is the lack of shoulders. They would like to add some turnouts and vista points. Mark also stated that they would like to perfect the easement with the BLM for this route. There is also work being done on the culverts in this area to allow for better run off during the monsoon season.

ITEM NO. 12 Discuss strategy with respect to the upcoming California Transportation Commission town hall meeting in Mammoth Lakes on September 13-14 and provide direction to staff.

Courtney Smith stated that the CTC is convening a town hall meeting in Mammoth Lakes on September 13th and 14th. This is a great opportunity to communicate our issues of concern to the CTC commissioners.

Commissioner attendance is encouraged. If necessary, staff will advertise this as a special meeting to comply with the Brown Act. The basic format of the meeting will be:

Day One

- Begin around noon with a lunch attended by the CTC commissioners, members of the Inyo County Local Transportation Commission (LTC), Mono County LTC, Kern Council of Governments (COG), other interested local elected officials, county and city officials, etc.
- Meet from around 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. This is an opportunity to discuss significant transportation issue (recent or planned transportation improvements, transportation needs or issues, future plans, etc.). The purpose of the town hall is to inform CTC commissioners about the issues that impact the region and are unique to the Eastern Sierra.

Day Two

The participants in the town hall join in a tour from around 9:00 a.m. to noon. The basic purpose of the tour is to allow CTC commissioners to see in person some of the issues that were brought forward on day one. Topic areas to be presented by staff and the commissioners from Inyo County LTC, Mono County LTC, Kern COG, Town of Mammoth Lakes, City of Bishop and Caltrans District 9.

Potential Site Visits

The field trip will only have three hours. Mono County LTC gave a similar presentation to their commission and identified potential tour stops including: Lake Mary bike facilities; FLAP projects – Rock Creek Road, Convict Lake road, and Reds Meadow Road; and a gondola ride to the top of Mammoth Mountain. It does not appear to me to be worth the struggle to lobby for the CTC to come down to the Bishop area given the time constraints. I'm not sure how much we gain by showing the CTC the Pine to Park bicycle path or Ed Powers Road bike lanes. We certainly should let the CTC know the City and County's past successes on Active Transportation Program projects and also the plans for the future. On the field trip, County staff or elected officials could give a brief introduction to the Rock Creek Road Federal Lands Access Program grant application.

Courtney continued that the basic message from the Inyo LTC centers around the high cost of completing four-lane projects on US 395. The LTC began setting aside funds for the construction component of Olancho-Cartage in the 2008 STIP. Since that time, only cost increases have been programmed to City and County projects. The only new projects with RIP funds since the 2006 STIP Augmentation, Warren Street and West Bishop Resurfacing were created only by moving funds from other projects.

The funding of Olancho-Cartago is a top priority, but it has come at a high price. Even with the MOU partnership, the expense of funding Olancho-Cartago for around \$45 million has put local agency projects on the back burner.

With the negative 2016 STIP, the Interregional Improvement Program funds were pulled out and our funding partners withdrew their MOU shares. It is not yet clear what shape this MOU will take in the future. However we proceed, our local agencies see a need to program new projects in the upcoming STIP cycle to keep them vested in the STIP process.

My recommendation would be to have a commissioner summarize that point. If City or County staff or commissions choose, they could further detail local agency project goals.

Other potential issues to discuss could be:

- The new Active Transportation Program has been difficult for our agencies to complete with due to relatively low average daily traffic numbers in a rural area. Inyo would prefer a standard amount of funds being allocated to the Inyo County Local Transportation Commission. The LTC would then release a competitive call for local projects. With the program as it is now, it appears the only option may be to use RIP or Road Maintenance and Repair Act funds. The ATP is designed for another place beside Inyo County.
- Highway connectivity issues in the County (SR 190, 178, 168)

Rick Pucci stated that it would be important to have CTC staff come to the Bishop area so that they can fully understand our area and the importance of our projects. We don't want to miss the opportunity to get their attention to show our projects and the need for continued funding.

Mark Heckman explained what the CTC commissioners are here for. He also explained that the commissioners will be driving through Inyo County on the way to the meeting. These are the people that vote on items for our area. We need to reach out to them; this is a big deal to have them here.

Doug Thompson added the importance of making them aware of the Olancho-Cartago project and the Inyo County LTC's contribution to the Freeman Gulch project. Since they can't drive down to the areas that we want to show them (Olancho) it is important to showcase our area with a slide presentation or PowerPoint. Doug also mentioned that the new industrial center in Reno is going to increase truck traffic in our area and this also needs to be brought to their attention.

Bob Kimball asked about SB 1 and wanted to know about the payback timeframe of STIP debts. Mark Heckman has not heard of a payback plan as of yet. This is a 10 year plan. This is a good opportunity to ask the CTC staff when funds would be available.

Rick Pucci thanked Caltrans for the work that they do to help bring forward transportation improvement projects in Inyo County.

ITEM NO. 13 Receive the third quarter invoice of Rural Planning Assistance funds in Fiscal Year 2016-2017.

Courtney reported that this staff report is for information purposes. No amendments to the OWP are required. For the first three quarters in FY 2016-2017, \$153,916.57 or 67% of the FY 2016-2017 RPA funds were expended. It is anticipated that these funds will be fully expended by the end of the year.

ITEM NO. 14 Receive the FY 2015-2016 fiscal audit of the Inyo County Local Transportation Commission.

The Fiscal Audit is provided for the Commission's reference. This is a required annual audit and the LTC is complying with State audit requirements. No action is required of the Commission. There were no questions.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

ITEM NO. 15 ESTA Report

John Helm started with the Bishop Creek shuttle route. He went up to Bishop Creek this weekend and saw a large sink hole near the dock that is going to need to be repaired. There is still a lot of snow up there and so it appears that ESTA will not be able to start this route on Memorial Day weekend as originally planned. The road is plowed and you can get to Lake Sabrina and parts of the lake are clear but none of the trails are open for hiking. This helped to make the decision to delay the starting of this route until June 17th at which time they will begin the 7 day a week shuttle through August 20th and then on weekends and holidays from August 26th through October 15th.

Jill Batchelder gave an update on the non-emergency medical transportation program and stated that ESTA did receive additional funding of \$50,000.00 to extend the program approximately two years. There are 82 people currently participating in the program right now. There are a lot of people in the Tecopa area participating in this program because they have to travel so far for their medical needs. There are also quite a few from the Walker-Coleville area that participate as well due to their remote location. It has been a very rewarding program to work with.

For Mule Days, ESTA will be running the shuttle on Thursday, Friday and Saturday and Sunday. They will also be running the Nite Rider shuttle as well. They are offering the Lone Pine Express for those that want to come up for the parade. This is on a reservation basis so that they are not sending down a bus that will be empty.

Doug Thompson asked about the Red's Meadow route and said that he heard that it may not even open this year. John Helm will be attending a meeting about this subject and basically said that the Forest Service asked that no one call them and ask because they don't know yet.

ITEM NO. 16 Tribal Report

Peter Bernasconi – Stated that there was a Tribal transportation symposium that was held with Benton, Bridgeport, Lone Pine, Independence and Bishop Tribes in attendance. There are grant funds available for certain safety projects if you have a safety program in place. The Bishop Tribe applied for and will be rewarded funds for a safety program. Bishop is hoping to have their safety program in place by August so that they can apply for funds in September. The Bishop Tribe has also received grant funds to purchase school buses for the Head Start program.

ITEM NO. 17 Caltrans Report Quarterly Project Update

Mark Heckman gave the quarterly report that lists major projects for Inyo County. The south See Vee Lane light project, environmental will be complete winter of 2018 with construction to begin in fall of 2019. North See Vee, environmental is to be completed this winter and construction will be in the winter of 2018. Mark offered to answer any questions regarding any of the Caltrans projects. He also mentioned the Caltrans City of Bishop ADA project. Construction is to start this winter.

Mark also brought the Caltrans Freight grant information up. District 9 has been approved to begin the study on the freight in the district. One of the components in this study is to create a task force that will be made up of people from San Bernardino County, Kern County, Inyo County and Mono County. You will start to see work on this beginning this summer. This is going to be a three year grant that will plan for projects 30 years down the line for freight improvements. One thing that you might not be aware of is there is another huge industrial center proposed to be built in Moreno Valley near the I-60 and I-215 intersections. This is slated to be even bigger than the Reno/Tahoe industrial center. US 395 sits right in the middle of I-60 and I-215. The freight grant is a \$250,000.00 contract lasting three years.

This is going to be a big industrial center. It is called the World Logistics Center. You can go on their website to read more about it. The Caltrans counterparts in southern California notified District 9 to make them aware of this large project because it is going to affect our area. The studies are going to explore what kind of freight is moving through our valley, how many trucks, are they full or empty. Most of the statistics for our area show that 65% of the trucks in our area are empty. Where are they parking? This is what the sub-contractor will be studying to see how this will impact our area, eastern Kern County and Mono County. There is a chance that some of the Commissioners will be asked to sit on the task force.

A brief discussion was held about the need for a large truck stop being built in our area.

ITEM NO. 18 City of Bishop Report

Deston Dishon said the Seibu to School route is moving quickly. The City is hoping to build it this summer or early fall. They were thinking that they had to work around the school schedule but the school is on board and want it started as soon as possible. On May 22nd,

the City Council is set to adopt the environmental for the Spruce, Hanby, East Yaney sidewalk project.

ITEM NO. 19 Executive Director's Report
County Quarterly Project Update

Courtney Smith gave an update on County projects. For West Bishop – CTC allocated funds in March. Construction delayed because of high water table, it will be rescheduled when the water table has dropped.

South Lake – FHWA in PSI phase with Design Surveying currently. Construction anticipated in Federal Fiscal Year 2020.

Dehy Park – Construction primarily complete, still need to plant Saltbrush for mitigation.

South County Striping & Rumble strips – PS & E underway. Construction anticipated to begin in 2018.

Clint Quilter stated that the County is about to complete the last project part of the Gully Washer emergency from 2013. The Board just awarded the contract for construction on Upper Trona-Wildrose Road. This work will begin on June 1st. There is some bird nesting that they have to wait for before the project can begin.

The Rocky Road emergency resulted from this winter's heavy storms. Whitney Portal is open and has been for some time. It looks like the slurry that was used as a temporary fix seems to be holding up well. The County will be starting the permanent restoration soon. On Horseshoe Meadows Road, we expect to have an emergency opening (one lane open) by June 1st, hopefully by Memorial Day Weekend. The construction design on this is going to be a huge undertaking given the unstable steep slopes.

The Road Department is doing a lot of work to make sure that all of the culverts are clean in anticipation for the heavy late spring and early summer runoff. The County has also acquired a permit with Fish and Wildlife which will allow us to move forward with emergency action with just an e-mail notification. Water will start flowing down the Bishop bypass at the rate of 10 cfs today. Right now Edison has a good control on the water flow because the lakes are not full just yet.

ITEM NO. 20 Reports from all members of the Inyo County LTC

No comments from any of the members except for Laura Smith to wish everyone a Happy Mule Days and a reminder to not put your chairs up early on Main Street for the parade.

Bob Kimball noted that he has an old couch that he is going to put out early because nothing was said about not putting out a couch for the parade!

CORRESPONDENCE:

None

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at: 10:25 a.m.

Attest:

Clint Quilter
Executive Director

By: Denise Hayden, Secretary