

# Mono County Local Transportation Commission

PO Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
760.924.1800 phone, 924.1801 fax  
[commdev@mono.ca.gov](mailto:commdev@mono.ca.gov)

PO Box 8  
Bridgeport, CA 93517  
760.932.5420 phone, 932.5431 fax  
[www.monocounty.ca.gov](http://www.monocounty.ca.gov)

## MINUTES

December 8, 2014  
(Adopted January 12, 2015)

---

**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:** Larry Johnston, Fred Stump **ABSENT:** Tim Fesko  
**TOWN COMMISSIONERS:** Jo Bacon, Sandy Hogan, Shields Richardson, alternate John Wentworth  
**COUNTY STAFF:** Scott Burns, Jeff Walters (videoconference), Gerry Le Francois, Garrett Higerd, Megan Mahaffey, C.D. Ritter  
**TOWN STAFF:** Peter Bernasconi  
**CALTRANS:** Ryan Dermody, Dennee Alcala, Michael Beauchamp  
**ESTA:** John Helm

---

1. **CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair Jo Bacon called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. in the Town/County Conference Room at Minaret Village Mall, Mammoth Lakes, and attendees recited the pledge of allegiance.

2. **INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSIONER SHIELDS RICHARDSON.**

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Peter Bernasconi outlined Town projects nearing completion.

4. **MINUTES:**

**MOTION:** Approve minutes of Special Meeting November 3, 2014, as amended: 1) Item 4, line 7: **At a previous meeting, Tom Hallenbeck** committed to looking at organizing all data...; 2) Item 5, Wheeler Crest: Commissioner Stump wanted emergency egress route from **Rimrock Ranch** lower portion **back to** Swall Meadows Road...; 3) Item 7A: ...Reds Meadow shuttle with ~~43,000~~ **130,000** trips...  
(Hogan/Johnston. Ayes: 3. Absent: Fesko. Abstain due to absence: Richardson.)

5. **ADMINISTRATION**

A. **Local Transportation Fund & Audit:** Megan Mahaffey noted overage of \$54,045.63 above projected and \$44,045.63 above allocated. Priority list set up? *Will do breakdown for percentages in January.*

B. **Regional Transportation Plan (RTP):** Gerry Le Francois outlined Ch. 4 last month on community policies, will discuss Ch. 3 on regional policy now. Mono uses RTP as its Circulation Element, unlike many other Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs). Financial element was rewritten last year. Ch. 3 has 12 topics, including land use issues, economic factors, and environmental issues.

**Policy 3, Obj. 3.1:** State, Town, County endorse "fix it first." SB 743 approved, looking at CEQA level of service on streets de-emphasized. Formatting errors exist.

**P. 78:** June Lake CAC wants to emphasize YARTS (Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System) shuttle stops.

**P. 79-82:** Greenhouse gas section is new. Baseline for GHG analysis will be more prominent, go after competitive dollars. Allows smaller projects to tier off new GP EIR, not do their own analysis.

**P. 80, Obj. 2.4:** Bike and trails plans rephrased as Active Transportation Plan (ATP), on competitive basis.

**P. 80, Obj. 3.4:** Electric vehicles, charging stations. Commissioner Johnston asked about natural gas. Not as good as electric, but cost-effective if natural gas source exists, which Eastern Sierra does not have. Exists at China Lake, Tahoe, and Reno. Effort by Inyo/Mono to have liquefied brought in, depressurized. Not enough vehicles are convertible. If fueling stations have liquefied gas, potential exists. Propane has conversion

question. John Helm stated YARTS uses conventional ~~diesel~~ propane, which, according to Commissioner Hogan, is not as good for elevation changes. Commissioner Stump thought propane storage facilities would be an issue. Can't support compression ratios to run vehicles at altitude. Compression does not support heavy vehicles. Johnston: Distribution system in ground at Mammoth Lakes for natural gas (yellow pipes)? Peter Bernasconi stated they're used for propane.

**Policy 4:** Note: Part of videoconferencing was paid by LTC. Environment: Deer kills become wildlife/vehicle collisions. Caltrans and staff met on this issue.

**P. 86:** Livable communities: Acknowledged Caltrans and Mono on Bridgeport Main Street. Other communities are working with Opticos Consultants. Johnston cited no system for evaluating success/non-success. Issues with head-in from across street occurred at first, but since then most are complying. Ryan Dermody stated Caltrans looks at accident rates and compliance. What would Johnston like to see? Johnston: Criteria, such as percentage parking right way, traffic flowing, and no use of center turn-lane for passing. Commissioner Hogan recalled Dan Burden visited long ago, set things in place. Le Francois indicated Burden did not say how to implement. Dermody emphasized "fix it first." Long-term maintenance is a big issue.

**Policy 2:** Rebrand bikes and pedestrians with Active Transportation Plan (ATP).

**P. 88:** Operational improvements: Mono and Caltrans did "intelligent transportation plans." Referenced in current RTP. Existing, insert here.

**Policy 6:** Service level E will change how monitoring occurs.

**P. 89:** Cell towers: Limited private property land base. Add reference to Digital 395, working on implementation plan.

**P. 90:** Non-motorized ATP to rebrand. Policy 3 is new: Dollars are now competitive. Guidelines are under State review. Talk of dropping match, which would help rural areas.

**Obj. 4.2:** LTC Handbook has non-motorized policy, but tendency to look at non-motorized after the fact. Replace defunct Mobility Commission with Planning and Economic Development Commission.

**Obj. 1.1:** Inyo/Mono prepared coordinated public services plan.

**P. 94-95:** Public participation: User groups have changed, will consult Town staff. Outreach plan with Native Americans to deal with sovereign nations.

Submit questions/comments to Le Francois. Next version will be in legislative format via email and posted on LTC website. Timeline? *Major rewrite for MAP-21 and federal funding in December 2013.* Scott Burns cited EIR on RTP, coordinate with other planning docs. Work with Town on GHG (greenhouse gas) analysis. Tie-in with Housing Element? Burns: Consulting HCD on SB 375, not clear on how to implement. Stick with five-year cycle on RTP, go to eight-year cycle to coincide with Housing Element.

**Ch. 5, Action Element:** New RTIP/STIP cycle in 2016. Why is SR 203 not on list of state highways for access (p. 149)? *It will be. Mono is trying for quantifiable measures as well as qualitative.* Commissioner Stump thought reconfiguration in Bridgeport was to prevent passing and control speed. Intent was to maximize parking spaces within length of road, which dovetails with accident data. Objectives can provide helpful direction toward evaluation metrics. Ryan Dermody cited a sense of place as well. Commissioner Johnston asked if back-in parking was designed for traffic calming. Dermody: Prevents backing out conflicts with roadway traffic. Alternate Commissioner Wentworth: How is this effort going to engage with USFS, Collaborative Planning Team, Digital 395 sites, and trailheads? Integrate stakeholders into process, and get regional partnerships working together.

6. **COMMISSIONER REPORTS:** **Hogan:** Conway Ranch easement has closed. **Johnston:** California State Association of Counties (CSAC) meeting said State has \$2 billion surplus, but formulas eliminate surplus and most money goes to schools. Most State revenue comes from capital gains taxes. Funding sources for transportation projects are not keeping pace with vehicle miles, as electric vehicles pay no gas tax. When do electric vehicles pay fair share of road tax? Initiating new systems of logging vehicle miles traveled, possibly a GPS tracking device; will test 6,000 vehicles as source of funding. Should have kept gas tax indexed to cost for gas, not flat rate. Mountain counties on west side are in red zone, but not Inyo and Mono. Garrett Higerd mentioned county engineers association hired one major consultant. Mono has moved toward more-comprehensive view of its roads on more-regular basis. Get new ratings on paved road network next year, compare to 2013 data. Johnston noted grant for biomass facility to heat Bridgeport road shop. **Bacon:** Inyo National Forest mules will be in Rose Parade, one string highlighting transport of fire crews.

## 7. LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

**A. Non-motorized project development process:** Scott Burns introduced annual check-in, requested by Commissioner Johnston. Coincides with new requirements for local and state jurisdictions. Burns cited examples: 1) Meridian Boulevard was first capacity-decreasing STIP project; 2) Mono was at forefront on projects such as sidewalks in Lee Vining, project managers seek input; 3) Caltrans has complete streets policy,

with action plan updated last month; 4) Bridgeport Main Street; 5) Town's safe routes to schools; 6) Applied for another grant to mimic Bridgeport's effort for Lee Vining community; 7) RTP has complete streets, sustainable communities integrated; and 8) Normal planning permit process looks at non-motorized; e.g., parking requirement reduction.

Johnston: Remarkable job in providing for non-motorized. Over time, though, staff changes, so embodying policy in practice is needed. He mentioned three areas:

1) **Meridian Boulevard:** Peter Bernasconi noted Town utilized STIP dollars, reached out to residents at three public meetings with overall concept, and additional outreach via Mobility Commission;

2) **US 395 northbound overlay:** Chip-seal projects extended to shoulders, worked well on travel lanes, but forever remained as impediment to good cycling. Ryan Dermody cited statewide concern in Sacramento, and more sand was added to chip-seal treatment. Commissioner Stump indicated Eastside Velo found shoulder north of 203 much smoother; and

3) **Rock Creek Road:** Eastside Velo was contacted repeatedly, and appreciated overall effort here and at Convict. John Armstrong, former LTC commissioner and president of Eastside Velo, advocated. Garrett Higerd noted Inyo National Forest was integral partner in early grant-writing process, with recreation staff involved early on. Newer concept for FHWA is bike climbing lane, but not downhill. Unique project. Support came way up front and all along. Construction was scheduled with different groups to reduce time and inconvenience. Everest Challenge bike race organizer was involved (project to be completed by next year's race). Johnston: Uphill climbing lane is unique; good experience on Benton Crossing Road as well. Concern about future maintenance of Benton Crossing. Urged Jeff Walters to contact cyclists before chip-seal projects. Dermody: District 9 is working on multimodal plan focusing on bikes and pedestrians; will reach out. Wentworth: Add Lake Mary Road interface in Lakes Basin on measurable outcomes.

## 8. TRANSIT

### A. Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA)

1. **Triennial audit:** John Helm described report as favorable. It's important to compare to other operators throughout state. Implemented service changes during audit period to improve system overall. Pursued funding opportunities and better mileage tracking. Short-range transit plan every five years; awaiting contract from Sacramento. Transit ambassador to improve ridership in Bishop area was suggested, but was declined. Corps of volunteers would be difficult to establish. Visiting senior center and Bishop Care Center to educate on services. Enhance that activity, maybe create new-rider welcome packet. Technical improvements to services, pursue others in future. A needed capital replacement policy would include technical component.

Commissioner Stump asked if drivers keep CHP log books. Helm: Only long distance drivers. Stump: Performance indicators, service provided from rural areas to medical appointments, etc. despite decrease in ridership. How does auditor even know if ambassador would improve ridership? Inyo County is in midst of adventure trails issues, but maybe seek local area input on ridership decrease. Helm: Consultant *does* understand unique nature of area. No discontinued service was recommended.

**MOTION:** Accept ESTA's triennial audit. (*Johnston/Hogan. Ayes: 5. Absent: Fesko.*)

***Richardson departed at 10:35, replaced by alternate Wentworth.***

2. **Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Program:** Patients arrange volunteer driver, ESTA reimburses. Program under way since June will expire June 2015. Extend two years. Coordinated plan was derived from public process. Commissioner Stump noted senior services staff is available to transport; maybe ESTA could reimburse them as well as patient to benefit entire pool in need of service. *ESTA coordinates with entities providing transportation. Reimbursement form asks why service is needed, avoid double-dipping.* Stump: Double-dipping if Mono program doesn't fit? Important to get to medical services. Suggest options.

**MOTION:** Approve ESTA's non-emergency medical transportation program. (*Johnston/Hogan. Ayes: 4. Absent: Fesko, Richardson.*)

B. **Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS):** Scott Burns noted Dick Whittington's presentation to Madera County. Fresno approved its part of MOU. Merced is recruiting an assistant.

9. **CALTRANS**

A. **Quarterly report:** Ryan Dermody added contact information for project managers. Commissioner Johnston commended Caltrans on shoulder-widening projects that create safe place for local and long-distance cyclists. Garrett Higerd thanked Caltrans for training at Tri-County Fairgrounds. Johnston: Hazards of guard rails impaling people has been reported. Future agenda: Are our guard rails that type? Commissioner Stump: Defective manufacturing caused failure of guard rail. Higerd: Caltrans design staff is looking at guard rails. Lawsuit on certain product. Could be paperwork issue, not submitted through proper channels. Johnston: If Mono has poorly designed guard rails, need to address issue. Higerd: Create inventory of guard rails, conduct evaluations, and bring up to current standards. Potential fund improvements with other road maintenance, package to get safety fund. Create better data.

**Activities in Mono County:** Ryan Dermody queried Commissioner Johnston about evaluation of Bridgeport Main Street. Johnston: Need something to evaluate success and/or problems so other communities have criteria on maintenance, accidents, school crossings, and business parking. Final step is enforcement Signing was added after initiation. Scott Burns was contacted by Tahoe, and Dermody recalled the Complete Streets project was mentioned during a panel discussion by Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty at the National Association of City Transportation Officials conference in San Francisco. Johnston: Works OK, but what if there's lots of traffic? Dermody observed back-in parking in downtown Kansas City. Johnston: If plow snow into center lane, how would it work in winter?

Katy Walton's husband died week prior to Thanksgiving. Send a card from LTC? Dermody introduced Michael Beauchamp, acting District 9 director, who gave a brief bio. He commended how small government works, with open communication and good relationships. Commissioner Hogan responded that because Mono is remote, agencies work together, understand problems, restrictions, and constraints.

10. **INFORMATIONAL**

A. **Local Streets & Roads Needs Assessment**

B. **Low-Carbon Transit Operations Program**

11. **UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS:** 1) Link to CSAC item; 2) LTF allocation resolution; 3) RTP; 4) OWP 2015-16; 5) Bridgeport main street evaluation criteria.

12. **ADJOURN** at 11:07 a.m. to January 12, 2015. Bacon requested Wentworth's attendance in her absence.

*Prepared by C.D. Ritter, LTC secretary*