

# Mono County Local Transportation Commission

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## MINUTES

April 9, 2018  
(Adopted May 14, 2018)

**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:** Fred Stump, Stacy Corless, John Peters

**TOWN COMMISSIONERS:** Sandy Hogan, John Wentworth, Shields Richardson

**COUNTY STAFF:** Gerry Le Francois, Wendy Sugimura, Megan Mahaffey, Michael Draper, Garrett Higerd, CD Ritter

**TOWN STAFF:** Grady Dutton, Haislip Hayes,

**CALTRANS:** Brent Green, Austin West, Terry Erlwein, Tom Nipper

**ESTA:** John Helm

**SSTAC:** Maggie Palchak, Molly DesBaillets, Rick Franz, Finlay Torrance, Megan Foster, John Helm

**PUBLIC:** Bill Boyes, CHP; Ted Carleton, The Sheet; David Easterby, State Farm; Wendi Grasseschi, Mammoth Times;

1. **CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair John Wentworth called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. at the Town/County Conference Room, Minaret Village Mall, Mammoth Lakes. Attendees recited pledge of allegiance.
2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Mono CAO Leslie Chapman introduced interim Public Works Director Doug Wilson.
3. **MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Approve minutes of March 12, 2018, as amended: 1) Item 4, last line: Town/Mono position for **transportation recreation** resources not named. 2) Item 5C, graph 2: Alt **fueling recharging** stations; 3) Item 5C, graph fourth from end: Caltrans not want to get into business of **vehicle charging stations**; 4) Item 6B, line 2: Agreement **not need formal signature will need formal signature but may proceed without formal agreement**; 5) Item 7B, graph two: Supervisors YARTS kickoff met last Friday, minus Corless and Gardner, who were at Mono Supervisors meeting; 6) Item 6A, graph sixth from end: doing eBike maps programs... graph fourth from end, but **construction** duration could be shortened. (*Hogan/Stump. Ayes: 6-0.*)

4. **UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS. OPEN PUBLIC HEARING:** Michael Draper outlined public process and defined terms. John Helm mentioned Antelope Valley RPAC requested DAR transport to Gardnerville for medical services. Peters stated reimbursable avenues already exist. Find someone to transport, get reimbursed for fuel and expenses. Request was without knowledge of other option people are using. Sometimes direct transport for seniors. Maybe look at what ESTA operates, how DAR could potentially be part of matrix. Helm documented all that came up at past meetings. Hogan saw frustration of asking/not receiving as communication issue. Meet once/year. Mono gives money to transit. SSTAC brings up every time. Mono gives communities chance to speak. June Lake ridership funded, but then dropped off. Public service as well as employees. Transportation is huge, long planning effort, some back in the 1990s. Maybe a wish list? Input opportunities wonderful. LTC needs to hear from SSTAC. Stump recalled Tri-Valley repeatedly showed up, denied. 50% of budget goes to medical transport for seniors to cities. Transportation budget stressed. Senior programs regionalized by State. Eastern Sierra Area Agency on Aging. Inyo has more seniors, so administers program and provides meals. Inyo BOS is governing board, encouraged to come to LTC. Peters serves on same commission. What about Inyo and Mono LTCs work together? Stump talked to Inyo Supervisor Toheroh, Inyo LTC already part of it. Encouraged them on presentation to Mono LTC. Lack of specialists impacts senior population. Home-delivered meals have gone up by a third. Rather than more June Lake, consider senior transportation. Corless hears Old Mammoth needs reliable, long-term transportation solution for seniors and getting kids to school. Hogan recalled things often moved into a project, even if long range. Peters thought "not unmet need" should not be discounted or become moot point. Formalize as request that could see funding one day.

### **SSTAC comments:**

**Molly DesBaillets:** Recently learned at First 5 Spanish speakers call to arrange transportation. Mechanism to partner with DAR (Dial-A-Ride). Bilingual interpretation for DAR specifically.

**Maggie Palchak** cited connectivity Bishop to Mammoth, Whitmore Pool, Convict and Crowley. Need lifts on buses operational, drivers knowledgeable. Situation improving dramatically.

## COMMISSIONERS

Stacy Corless Sandy Hogan John Peters Shields Richardson Fred Stump John Wentworth

**Finlay Torrance** cited low-paid workers, workforce housing shortage, more daily buses to/from work, standard of living. More consistent service to enjoy resources here, not just worker commute.

**Megan Foster:** Thanked for Walker Friday DAR, which was on wish list long time, finally happened.

**Molly DesBaillets** suggested revising matrix.

**John Helm** announced meeting at Town Wednesday afternoon for public input.

Stump cited contingency for senior program, small amount of funding awarded. Aging population, limited economic capacity. Appreciated staff here today. Citizens impatient with bureaucratic impediments. When wanted to reduce speed limit from 60 mph in Chalfant, District 9 tried to help but Caltrans headquarters denied.

Cost to reestablish Gray Line? Helm stated \$120,000-\$150,000. Dedicated small bus for that area. Fix ~~for~~ to be completed this summer. Turnaround farther out Old Mammoth Road, much more convenient at no additional cost. **CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING.**

5. **COMMISSIONER REPORTS: Stump:** See above. **Corless, Hogan, Holler:** None. **Peters:** Five-year road CIP (Capital Improvement Program) presentation to Antelope Valley and Bridgeport Valley in ~~April 14~~ May 23. Funding to gas tax important. Almost opening Green Creek bridge, spearheaded by Garrett Higerd. Should be award-winning. Spring runoff washed out temporary bridge. Stump showed up at Mammoth Yosemite Airport to greet Mrs. Peters returning from Colombia. **Wentworth:** Climate change group convened by State in San Francisco on Monday. Need Town and County to participate. Ambitious website: resilientcalifornia.org Extracts defining our region need local eyes. Climate change program not optional. USFS leadership team on sustainable recreation conference. Mountain Venture Summit focus on mountain communities. Organizers coming to Mammoth next year.

## 6. LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

**A. Unmet transit needs expectations:** Gerry Le Francois recalled LTC allocated money to roads in 2002. Need for SSTAC to meet, gives once-a-year snapshot, what's working, what's not. Important information gleaned.

Rick Franz suggested patterning after Inyo: SSTAC meeting prior to LTC so all on same page not random.

Sugimura indicated SSTAC used to meet separately prior, held its own public hearing. Authority to do that. White paper suggested consolidating SSTAC and LTC hearing. Historically not go to RPACs yearly, intermittent. Same input over and over, nothing done, but good things came out of it – Walker DAR, June Lake shuttle.

Hogan saw coordination missing. Maybe schedule meetings earlier. Complainers eventually start being part of solution. Corless thought LTC could capture things that don't even qualify this time. Peters thought some requests could qualify as community need.

Stump viewed impact as more global than just transportation. Don't need to speak up, not listen to me. People disengage, why show up? When continually blow people off on 60-mi stretch of highway, people are lost.

**B. Recent US 395 accidents south of Bridgeport:** Fred Stump requested this discussion after last week's BOS meeting. Desire to push forward in more immediate sense. Seven fatalities since first of year demand attention. BOS sent item to Caltrans for immediate action. Requested LTC ask for action. Willing to divert Conway Summit money, look at this area.

Brent Green suggested crafting letter after facts on table: Expectation for Caltrans to do something; can do some things without headquarters approval. Seeking LTC help. First responders never want to go to a fatality, Caltrans responds as well. Caltrans challenge is section of road in good condition, capacity 4x what's there. Very unusual. Causes not exactly same. Preventive solutions good in some situations, not in others. Guard rail not up for discussion, as fixed objects sometimes worse. Same goes for other fixes. Terry Erlwein sees both sides working with sheriff and CHP. Final parting words: drive safely.

CHP's Bill Boyes noted huge increase in fatalities despite fewer accidents. Enforcement is part of puzzle. Factors include DUI, cell phones and weather. No reason for some collisions. Ten fatalities since last May. CHP reached out to Caltrans at once. Simple solution: Daylight headlight section (10-20% reduction). Would drivers see it? Make difference? Rumble strips show reduction. Takes time, money, community support. CHP's 20 staffed officers average 700 citations/month, 9-10 DUI/month (way too high). Sheriff and CHP proactively try to prevent. Been to seven of eight collisions personally. Not just certain areas but throughout county. No specific location. Lots due to speed, crossing over double yellow, unsafe turn. May never know what caused last four fatalities.

Erlwein stated Caltrans sees accidents as first responders. Daylight headlights takes agreement between Caltrans and CHP. Rumble strip in problem areas could be proposed for next fiscal year, but controversial in Mono. Very loud, multiple requests to remove when too close to [people]. In long term, shoulder widening with time and space to react reduces 50% of all accidents. Doing so already. Double yellow not as simple as it seems. Huge lack of passing opportunities.

Modify project already approved? Considered projects on 395. Four lane top Conway to Bodie Road. Reprogram? Erlwein cited relieving pressure of passing south of Bodie Road.

Green indicated funding should not be an issue. Widening needs environmental study.

Peters urged proactive approach by all agencies. Get statistical data current, no backlog of info. Maybe reduce speed limit. Nevada into Mono 55 mph, but Sonora to Conway 65 mph. Signage can be distracting as well as informative. Constant construction or winter conditions increase risk to traveling public and officers. How to heighten awareness? Center lane passing in Walker: Impact to first responders and FPDs can't be quantified. Behavioral Health has held debriefings. People are concerned, fearful. Work together toward solution, be proactive.

Corless wanted specialized messaging for deer migration. Assuage local travelers. Temporary signage? Erlwein thought it could slow people down. Caltrans lives in liability land, so careful of type of signage. Direct attention to road and how driving. Portable message signs are set by survey. Maybe write an edict on two-lane undivided highway. Speed limit = speed everybody's driving. Stump wanted Chalfant included in any legislative fix.

Erlwein found pennant-shaped signs on wrong side of road are effective short term. Downtown Walker signs within two weeks.

In recent four-fatality accident, CHP Boyes found no evidence of illegal passing. Speeding noted earlier, crossed yellow line.

Sheriff Braun concluded can't ever know how it happened. Inattention: coffee cups, phones iPads, radio. Maybe medical incident. Working together with Caltrans and CHP on speed, unsafe passing. As coroner, see this. Hard on everyone to see and deal with aftermath that's destroying our community. People who know roads stress enforcing and following rules. Many running late, put phone out of reach. If important, will call back.

Dave Easterby of State Farm noted increased traffic on two-lane stretch of highway. Edict in his office – come with problem, come with solution. Widening shoulder well worth it. From insurance standpoint, largest increase of accidents = distracted driving.

Le Francois noted future LTC and BOS items. Could authorize letter to District 9 on short-term actions. Longer term: Other funding sources. Passing lanes either direction from Bridgeport.

Stump favored several short-term actions by Caltrans. Letter stating problem, acknowledging Caltrans response, supporting those actions. Go to Caltrans headquarters, encourage its support. Noted rumble strip impact in canyon during summer.

Peters thought with Mono's good rapport, maybe go directly to CTC about two-lane issue. Emphasize that fatalities draw high level of professionalism, and State needs to back these efforts.

CHP Boyes has accurate statistics up to March 19. Of 195 traffic fatalities last year, 3% in our area. Driving is dangerous. Pay attention. Defensive driver will survive. Any fatal accident is too many.

Haislip Hayes thought in Cycle 9 call for projects, \$140 million could help.

Erlwein wanted any message that meets criteria specifically related to traffic control. Tailor messages.

Hogan noted Nevada's focus on distracted drivers, especially cell phone. CHP Boyes announced distracted driver awareness month in April. Social media messages from CHP or sheriff to younger demographic.

Peters wanted passing lane ahead signs vs. wondering. Erlwein noted signs placed at four miles and two miles.

**Summary of suggestions:** Double-yellow lines, shoulder widening, passing lanes, reduce speed limit, daylight-headlight sections, rumble strips, guard rails, reduce driver distractions and inattention, signage (passing lane ahead, portable message signs, and pennant-shaped signs on wrong side of road).

--- Break: 10:50-10:56 a.m. ---

**C. LTC audit 2016-17:** Megan Mahaffey distributed audit and gave an overview of the LTC financial statements. Described various funding streams that get distributed through the LTC. LTF (Local Transportation Funds) is largest pot of money & could perhaps pay for some of the unmet needs depending on the claimant process, majority to ESTA.

LTF fund balance above projections? *Disperse 15% reserve, 49.3% to Town, 35.7% to Mono.*

**MOTION:** Accept 2016-17 annual audit (*Holler/Corless. Ayes: 6-0.*)

**D. Annual LTF estimate from auditor-controller:** Megan Mahaffey explained that the LTF (Local Transportation Funds) is funded through TDA (Transportation Development Act) which also funds STA (State Transit Assistance). Focus on transportation programs and transit. Ability to request allocations through claimant process. Back in June.

Dollar amount compare? *Projecting more.*

STA applicable to Mono/State/Town roads? *Transit safety.*

Helm noted STA funds always are for operations or capital projects such as bus purchase. Efficiency standard is involved. Operating costs/hour not rise faster than inflation. Drought affects operating costs.

Gray Line turnaround? Helm responded potential exists.

**E. Overall Work Program (OWP) 2018-19:** Gerry Le Francois cited carry-over items based on LTC input. Tied RTP update with two-year RTIP. Wildlife issues: Looking at wildlife crossings. Commission input: airport planning (MMSA no longer supportive of expansion of Mammoth Yosemite airport), regional trails, emergency access routes,

threats specific to this area, traffic calming in Mammoth Lakes and Walker, Bridgeport/Bodie visitor center, Digital 395 aspect of corridor management plan, single point of information sharing.

Stump indicated Mammoth Mountain no longer supportive of expansion of Mammoth Yosemite airport. Bishop may develop.

Le Francois cited outreach to RPACs. Intelligent Transportation.

Wentworth saw need for single point of information sharing. Maybe LTC go to ESCOG. Who's telling what's going on? Regional trails, airport planning, emergency access routes, threats specific to our area. Not write off rural sections of state. Get things on radar. OES (Office of Emergency Services) Monday interested in talking with Mono. Traffic calming in Mammoth.

**F. 2018 Regional Transportation Improvement Program:** Gerry Le Francois noted two amendments proposed: Modify Eastside Lane rehab phase 1, and Town move funds related to oversight. CTC adopted 2018 STIP, so get these changes to CTC.

Garrett Higerd described SB 1 as juggling projects. Impact is unavoidable delivery delay of a year for Eastside Lane, moving forward. Paper routing through CTC got lost in shuffle. Allows Town project with heavy federal oversight

**MOTION:** Adopt Resolution R18-03 amending the 2018 Regional Transportation Improvement Program.  
(Hogan/Corless. Ayes: 6-0.)

## 7. ADMINISTRATION

**A. Resolutions:** Fred Stump does not bike but is grateful to Johnston when walking bike lanes. Brent Green noted Caltrans had "Larry's list" of ~20 wishes, many of which have occurred. Caltrans prepared its own resolution for Johnston. Scott Burns266 was described as unflappable. His behavior model allowed a lot to work even then targeted.

**MOTION:** Adopt resolution for former Commissioner Larry Johnston, adding "initiated trails plan in Mammoth."  
(Wentworth/Hogan. Ayes: 6-0.)

**MOTION:** Adopt resolution for retired director Scott Burns, adding "consummate professionalism and demeanor, set the tone." (Hogan/Peters. Ayes: 6-0.)

## 8. TRANSIT

**A. Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA):** John Helm reported ridership rebounded in March, strong increases in many routes. Four finalists for his position fell by wayside, but he has prospect in mind. Interviews at end of April. Helm's departure date: May 21, not May 1.

Stump asked about replacement of damaged Tom's Place shelter. Helm has shelter available.

**B. Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS):** Sandy Hogan noted AAC (Authority Advisory Committee) met April 2 but lacked a quorum. Short-Range Transit Plan is under way. ~~VIA~~ YARTS buses need replacement. Helm cited two runs to Yosemite Valley from Mammoth, no longer a Tuolumne-only run.

## 9. CALTRANS

**A. Traffic operations concerns in Mono County:** See above.

**B. Activities in Mono County & pertinent statewide information:** See above.

## 10. QUARTERLY REPORTS

**A. Town of Mammoth Lakes:** Grady Dutton updated sidewalk projects and mentioned receiving appreciation of cooperation on Reds Meadow Road.

**B. Mono County:** Garrett Higerd noted systemwide safety analysis. Call for projects includes guard rails, striping and signage. Airport Road environmental process with Town by July or August. SB 1 funding \$30 million five-year road CIP (Capital Improvement Program). Repeal effort likely on ballot. Stump noted repeal could resurface in future years. Corless indicated Prop. 69 protects money for transit projects.

**C. Caltrans:** Brent Green predicted a robust construction season. Only programmed projects appear in report, not maintenance. Peters requested earlier notice on construction.

## 11. INFORMATIONAL: No items

**12. UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS:** 1) wildlife fencing; 2) YARTS short-range transit; 3) safety letter on US 395; 4) OWP comments; 5) budget; 6) Mammoth/June Lake focus on YARTS, tied in with Town; 7) unmet transit needs; 8) SB 1 support for Prop. 69; 9) airports in OWP; and 10) pass openings

13. **ADJOURN** at 12:25 p.m. to May 14, 2018

*Prepared by CD Ritter, LTC secretary*