

Mono County Local Transportation Commission

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MINUTES

February 11, 2019
(Adopted March 11, 2019)

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS: Jennifer Halferty, John Peters, Fred Stump

TOWN COMMISSIONERS: Sandy Hogan, Lynda Salcido, John Wentworth

COUNTY STAFF: Gerry Le Francois, Hailey Lang, Garrett Higerd, CD Ritter

TOWN STAFF: Haislip Hayes

CALTRANS: Brent Green, Austin West

ESTA: Phil Moores

PUBLIC: Lynn Boulton, Sierra Club

1. **CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair John Wentworth called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m. at the Town/County Conference Room, Minaret Village Mall, Mammoth Lakes. Attendees recited pledge of allegiance.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

3. MINUTES

MOTION: Approve minutes of January 14, 2019, as amended... 1) Item 6A: third-from-last graph, Stump wanted to ask Edison to speak to Benton Paiutes ~~tribe~~ who ~~own~~ own property along US 6; 2) Item 6B: Peters thought ~~sea~~ 5G change in technology could create bigger gaps. 3) Item 10A, second graph: Sidewalks to Aspen Village, farther up? *If not bus maybe pedestrian access.* 4) Item 10C: ~~Matina Natina~~ used on Convict Lake, Walker projects. *(Peters/Halferty. Ayes: 6-0.)*

4. **ELECTION OF CHAIR** (County) Fred Stump & **VICE-CHAIR** (Town) Lynda Salcido. Prepare thanks to Wentworth. Salcido will seek guidance from experienced members. Stump recalled Salcido on Mobility Commission during Swall Fire.

5. **COMMISSIONER REPORTS:** **Hogan:** Thanks to Town and Caltrans for teamwork on verbal and financial support, very impressive. When she chaired mobility commission, why not plow sidewalks? No money, no public works support. After many years creating sidewalks, sees coordination that wasn't there earlier. **Peters:** Thanks to Caltrans crews for keeping roads open, especially Greg Miller who texted info for Bridgeport on closures, escorts; Mono PW with Dublino leading charge; and road crews doing what's expected. Only one bermed-in driveway compared to many in past. New guys. New CHP commander, Chuck Mairs (invite to meeting), lives in Bishop. Kudos to Wentworth, CD Ritter. **Wentworth:** Pedestrian mobility: Excellent job on sidewalks, huge difference. Town has messaging service. Federal shutdown looming again, looking dicey. Mountain Adventure Conference. **Halferty:** ESTA board canceled in January. **Salcido:** Walkways amazing, people carrying grocery bags, groups at bus stops. Nasty emails about berms. New drivers. Communication from non-techies. Radio? TV? Phone to call? USC bus stuck in June Lake, 35 peeps, no chains. Shelter open. Caltrans always does great job moving a lot of snow. **Stump:** Sign up for Code Red, especially with avalanche danger. Mono homepage. Used at June Lake and Swall Meadows. Address-sensitive. McGee has not slid yet. Backcountry skiers parking on streets and in driveways at Swall interferes with Mono snow removal operations. Mono website lists road closures. **Peters:** Transfer station not open, attendant could get there, no good way to communicate. Solution: Open an hour today, get word out to public about 1-2 pm. Alternate mechanism? **Stump:** Redo winter summary. **Wentworth:** Have reports meeting by meeting, so stay on top instead of big summit. **Peters:** Lower-elevation snow sticking around. Bridgeport has most sustained snow on ground in a decade. Coordinated effort by Caltrans, Mono, CHP.

6. LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

COMMISSIONERS

Jennifer Halferty Sandy Hogan John Peters Lynda Salcido Fred Stump John Wentworth

A. Electric vehicle policy: Hailey Lang outlined policy document for staff and public. Draft version, so iterations will be made. Last week Mono staff on permitting checklist to incorporate into policy document.

New document? *Update, merge. Le Francois indicated Lynn Boulton, Don Condon, and Rayjean Fellows have been pushing LTC on this, and Lang was hired. Adopt STIP (State Transportation Improvement Program) this year, update RTP (Regional Transportation Plan) , align with four-year adoption cycle, eight-year Housing Element cycle.*

Hogan noted Town was not mentioned. *Hayes indicated it will be in same database.*

Le Francois will talk with Sandra Moberly and Haislip Hayes for broader-level document.

Does document line up with State mandates? *Lang reviewed State and regional policies. Need guidelines/framework. Adopted documents valuable for competitive grants.*

Wentworth cited Town's Walk/Bike/Ride policy. Meeting this week to bring ebikes into policy; claimed Mammoth Lakes is national leader on ebikes.

Michael Baker study separate from hazardous materials? *Le Francois indicated RPA dollars will look at hazardous materials and ancillary EV policy, GHG (greenhouse gas) reduction, wayfinding plan. Documents in draft form. Will Mono formally adopt wayfinding program?*

Peters predicted gridlock with only type 2 chargers. *Le Francois thought Baker study was broad. Urban areas getting more funding. No word on why byway was bypassed.*

Green **learned** a lot, was impressed. Halferty thought it lays everything out, well organized. As of Jan. 1, federal tax credit half of what used to be. Add under 7.2: Locals would benefit regional residents. Salcido found it a great doc. Obj 7.2: Call out health. Stump was surprised at level of detail so quickly.

Stump saw EV problem during polar vortex when battery life cut in half. Dispersed charging a way to combat. Link to Town information; saw no reason Town would quibble.

Hwy 203, visitor center? Lang noted Mammoth Lakes was removed from Baker-created map. Include incorporated area. Unsure about orientation. Le Francois thought usually legal size.

Boulton found it thorough. Suggestions: 1) Objective: Connect with Nevada regional plans 395 north, 95 east. Regional charging plan. Nevada has special name for 95. 2) Purpose: Educate business owners on opportunities, also promote, market charging stations. Le Francois: Not discouraging, Bridgeport Shell station, staff outreach at Coleville. Mono has EV charging policy, grant opportunities available. Private industry probably needs to step forward. Boulton noted mini-marts make more money than gas, so add charging stations. 3) Adopt-a-charger as funding source? 4) Action items: Raising permit fees. What would fee be if not waived? *Le Francois saw it as part of building permit fee (square feet, habitable vs storage), not simple fee. Plans checked in-house or by outside plan checker.*

Stump: Mono has done solar systems. Mono fees waived. Not in document yet, Mono could investigate waiving fees. *Le Francois indicated only BOS can waive fees.*

Next step? Le Francois cited items to update in RTP, take whole package to RPACs, Planning Commission. Circulation Element is the RTP. Parallel track.

Wentworth wanted to make sure to talk about what Town's doing. Hogan wanted extra chapter for "in development, in process."

B. Airport development: Haislip Hayes stated any development would impact new road. Working on projects with FAA, grant prospects. Renting maintenance facility. Most equipment on pneumatic tires that road supports. See impact on connecting current access road and terminal to Airport Road. Interface between land and airport.

Stump indicated BOS has action items related to Airport Road. Need new maintenance building. Charter service interest has increased, thereby increasing traffic in/out.

Higerd updated Airport Road Reconstruction Project. Tomorrow BOS will consider contracts with Caltrans for project funding – the Federal Base Agreement and Program Supplement Agreement. Originally programmed in 2014, project was delayed in 2016 STIP cycle. Environmental phase moving forward, with construction set 2020-21 fiscal year. Will coordinate with Town, especially on environmental work related to airport fencing project that will reconstruct road with upgrades (bike lanes both sides, curve at intersection of Hot Creek Hatchery Road for smoother travel).

Wentworth wanted Town Council to get sense of what's proposed. Footprint would be helpful.

Stump was concerned that three to four years should have thought about it, all that happens at discretion of Town Council, staff. Want capacity for Mono to see where are with road. Invest STIP money, Town serious about this airport.

Hayes stated Mono is not working in vacuum; resources on ground, working together. Truly Mono project accessing Town facility. Inform all involved.

Higerd noted scope: Fix road, add bike lanes, intersection improvements for traffic flow into airport. Maybe legally change "Hot Creek Hatchery" off 395 to Airport Road all way to airport.

Hogan recalled years ago mitigation was connection to Benton Crossing Road. Hayes stated requirement not being pushed but could come back.

Higerd cited right-of-way issues. Hayes indicated would go to Town Council before LTC.

Stump noted emergency access leads directly onto runway.

C. INFRA support letters for Kern and Inyo counties grant application: Hailey Lang described letters for Kern and Inyo counties. Le Francois: MOU projects, Caltrans tried to pull non-STIP dollars. Spring 2021 not summer 2020.

--- BREAK: 10:20-10:30 am ---

7. ADMINISTRATION

A. LTF estimate documentation: Quarter-percent sales tax. Updates in May and June on where money goes. LTF (Local Transportation Funds) and STA (State Transit Assistance) components with Unmet Transit Needs near end of fiscal year. Longstanding LTC policy on how dispersed.

B. Update on MOUs, history: Gerry Le Francois included PowerPoint in packet. SB 45 in 1990s gave chance to determine where RTIP (Regional Transportation Improvement Program) dollars went. Teamed up with other counties to maximize projects too big for any one entity (Black Rock in Inyo County and Independence/Manzanar). Described funding shares. Potential RTIP amendments. Shares dollars are not always available. More than \$3 million, but State may have loaned elsewhere. CTC (California Transportation Commission) allocates when money's available. Freeman Gulch (FG) broke into three segments. Four-county MOU for Adelanto to SR 58. Wentworth and Green attended FG-1 ground breaking. Kern COG (Council of Governments) concerned with more dollars in Bakersfield area, not eastern area. Agency involvement on extremely large projects. \$12 million contributed by Mono. With notice, any county could ask to be removed. State and CTC very supportive of MOUs.

Hogan expressed skepticism about Kern bailing out. Overall, discussion on where visitors come from. Looking at O/C (Olancho/Cartago) since 1998. Le Francois indicated State is overseer of all funding. Kern paying back O/C advance from Mono.

Dynamics changing on MOUs? *Le Francois: At ribbon cutting Kern preferred to spend in Central Valley. Disappointed in costs of projects. Talk on how to move forward FG-2 and FG-3. Maybe different formula for less than 10%. Once 2016 STIP was upside down, informal session over summer to talk about projects. Meet in spring to talk about southern 395.*

Green noted Kern COG wanted to fund SR 46 (fully funded now). May press to support FG-2. District 6 out of Fresno handled entire Kern County, but District 9 got eastern half that broke off from District 8 6. District 9 showing up at front table, eastbound truck-climbing lanes on SR 58. On path to better relationship with Kern COG.

Le Francois was unsure if legal to co-mingle county shares for projects. Big chunk of taxpayer money on bigger projects. SB 1 might get better share.

When do SB 1 dollars go into STIP cycle? *Le Francois: Trying to pay back borrowing. Not know.*

Stump thanked Green for working with Kern COG.

C. Government shutdown impacts: Stump had no hard data. Wentworth wondered about IKON effect of different people coming to Mammoth; chaos and dysfunction. Green thought FHWA unaffected, but resource agencies delayed or shut down projects. Higerd saw NEPA process OK, moved forward. Wentworth noted dependence on environmental affected.

D. Governor's budget impact on transportation & housing summary from California State Association of Counties: Peters called proposal optimistic, giving a lot of what various entities hoped for. Will it come to fruition? Detail at hearings. Peters is co-chair. Realignment dollars not support what State mandates require. Tree mortality, etc. putting money on table to support what State hoping to see. Budget hearings, lobbying before May revision. SB 1 staying alive. Will report on CSAC meeting.

Green stated CTC discussed few weeks ago. Lot of money in general fund. SB 1 not general fund money. Clear from SB 1 authors dollars only for transportation.

Halferty advocated incentivizing housing to not lose transportation dollars. Town and Mono working on Housing Elements. Salcido wanted to stay in tune with fast-moving target. Advocacy needed. Hogan cited huge needs but maybe others even farther behind. Halferty thought some jurisdictions not have many.

What does State use? *Halferty indicated Metro Planning Organization divvies up, so HCD gives to outlying areas. Inyo, Mono, Alpine "frontier" counties. Not working, all in flux.*

E. Wildlife fencing letter to LADWP: Stump noted presentation two meetings ago. Proposed edits/comments? Include USFS in group in graph 1 (use USDA).

MOTION: Authorize USDA/Forest Service letter. (*Salcido/Peters. Ayes: 6-0.*)

8. TRANSIT

A. Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA): Phil Moores saw no starting problems, but maintenance issues with snow equipment. Different equipment on ESTA routes. Pulled in from higher elevations, wind caused whiteout

problems. Buses slid off road, towed. Challenges. Meet with Town midweek on upcoming weather. Canceled February board meeting, looking toward March. Still awaiting federal grant on new building in Bishop. Hopefully STIP money comes. Useful life and replacement of vehicles. Talk with Hailey on EV policy. All rural transit agencies need plan by 2023, purchase by 2026. Years just roll by. Terrain, weather affect battery usage, etc.

Stump had concern about chargers used up.

Moore indicated universal for buses due to weight, compatible charging stations. Exclusive use due to service demand. Can't just drive up and wait.

Industry looking into prototypes of electric buses? *Moore noted other counties taking hits.*

Stump noted power to weight to torque = physics.

Hogan mentioned elevation differences for YARTS.

B. Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS): Highways 120 and 41 closed indefinitely. No report. Le Francois noted YARTS adopted SRTP (Short-Range Transit Plan). Thanks to AAC (Authority Advisory Committee) and representatives for input on that project.

Bus replacement addressed? *Light on federal earmarks.*

Hogan noted fleet has aged. Need 12 new buses by 2022. Funding thin, reserves exist. Tuolumne County has gotten free ride as pilot project for 12 years. Pilot programs should be only three years. NPS (National Park Service) gives Tuolumne money. Mono contributes to YARTS; Tuolumne does not.

9. CALTRANS

A. Activities in Mono County & pertinent statewide information: Brent Green will have been here four years on March 1. Attended CTC (California Transportation Commission) meeting to secure funding for Aspen-Fales shoulder widening and Little Walker shoulders. If out to bid exceeds limit, can get 20% above. Little Walker came in 104% over, so did not request. Based on asphalt estimate on other projects. Requested and got 41%. After SB 1 was approved, construction costs went up and up. Out to bid again, combining projects so only one contractor. New asphalt plant now. Bid opens April 8. Wildlife crossing working on PID (Project Initiation Document) by Austin West. Identify roles, responsibilities of different agencies. West noted membership is same as CPT (Collaborative Planning Team) subcommittee. National nonprofit and LADWP included.

Green cited SHOPP (State Highway Operation & Protection Program) projects with lots of injuries to top, just under "collision severity reduction." SB 1 category gone. Looking for funding. Wildlife does not get points like humans. Snow removal: Only closure is SR 158. Avalanche areas haven't broken free yet.

Stump noted signage at Oh Ridge for detour is Mono's responsibility. Could Caltrans assist if necessary? *Sno-cats formerly transported emergency personnel.*

Can Caltrans work on Mono roads? *Green stated it could off the books if doing a project. State wouldn't use State taxpayer dollars on County road.*

If State highway closed, access to lower SR 158? Lower Rock Creek Road to get to Tom's Place?

Green noted Peters gets cooperation from State. Instant fax to Sacramento by Quickmaps application Austin West serves on traffic management team. Road closures are CHP calls. On weekend West worked 16-hour shift till 9 am next day. National Weather Service (NWS) can do very narrow estimate of weather conditions. If area has slides, wait for event. If NWS can predict, close before it happens. Closed SR 140 twice, event happened afterward. Winter debrief: Maybe not done a lot here but agencies had ongoing dialog on lessons learned.

Wentworth wanted lessons learned. Get calls from irate people. Worked on that, improving. Town declared state of emergency last weekend, caught between State's declaration.

Green: Use "green" diesel for CARB standards, so not impacted fleet.

Wentworth noted next storm with high snow levels. Be in sync with State, not left holding bag. Did FEMA paperwork; State wording improper, so lost lots money. Lessons from 2017: State needed to recognize and document with climate change to be eligible for relief.

Stump read Town's mission statement. Roof of hospital shoveled, but not far enough for heavy snowpack impacts, weight on buildings leading to collapse. No mention on all of that. Lose nothing by getting authorization. Mention all if emergency declared. Get more global emergency declaration, including fuel reimbursements. Salcido noted CalOES has resources to tap into.

Wentworth asked that State agency not leave out snow in emergency declarations.

Unnamed speaker noted fire hydrants buried on Meadow Lane in Mammoth Lakes. Dug out three times. Hogan indicated could prevent by talking to snow removers to watch for clearly marked hydrants. Under fire district not Town.

10. INFORMATIONAL: Wildlife crossing letter: Tim Taylor, CDFW

11. **UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS:** 1) OWP draft to Caltrans by March 1; 2) EV policy update as info item; 3) Coordination with Town (add chapter). Wait till April? Plan for winter debrief.

12. **ADJOURN** at 11:59 a.m. to March 11 or April 8, 2019

Prepared by CD Ritter, LTC secretary