

# Mono County Local Transportation Commission

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## SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

October 7, 2019  
(Adopted November 18, 2019)

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**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:** Jennifer Kreitz, John Peters, Fred Stump  
**TOWN COMMISSIONERS:** Sandy Hogan, Lynda Salcido, John Wentworth  
**COUNTY STAFF:** Gerry Le Francois, Tony Dublino, Garrett Higerd, Hailey Lang, CD Ritter  
**TOWN STAFF:** Haislip Hayes  
**CALTRANS:** Brent Green, Austin West  
**ESTA:** Karie Bentley  
**PUBLIC:** Don Condon, Lynn Boulton, David Rosky

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1. **CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair Fred Stump 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. A moment of silence was observed in commemoration of last week's Lee Vining traffic fatality and injuries.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Don Condon reported 100 rides on seven vehicles at EV day, Teslas plus one plug-in Prius. Non-Tesla chargers lacking. Expect ~~33~~ 5 million EVs on road by 2030, need to accommodate. *Peters: Town or MMSA converted yet?* Condon: Unknown.

### 3. MINUTES

**MOTION:** Approve minutes of September 9, 2019, as amended: 3. **Absent Abstain:** Hogan. 8. Salcido: The Parcel will **intercept coordinate with**. Kreitz: ~~The Parcel is a version of MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organizations), discretion on where to put money. No room to talk about housing and mobility that would bolster viability.~~ (*Peters/Salcido. Ayes: 6-0.*)

4. **CALTRANS:** Brent Green attended ECTPP (Eastern California Transportation Planning Partnership) meeting led by Gerry Le Francois, who expressed continued support for MOUs, completing corridor. Aim is safety not congestion relief. Head-on collisions on two-lane sections of Freeman Gulch (FG) and Olancho/Cartago (O/C). MOU boon for everyone to allow counties to share project development. Kern COG still focusing on completion of SR 46 and San Luis Obispo corridors, refocus on truck lanes eastbound on SR 58. No STIP funding this cycle. Representatives of Kern COG board interested in upholding MOU but no additional funding soon on RTIP shares from them. Funding comes and goes over years. If preparation work done, get funding.

Le Francois: Note importance of MOU projects. San Bernardino not party to SR 14 projects; take time, keep chipping away. Bryan Winzenread of Caltrans expressed lack of funding but not lack of support.

Stump: No local STIP shares for FG-2 and 3. O/C fully funded. How far on SR 58 to next district? *Green: More in line with Kern projects. District 9 stepped into all three projects eastbound. Kern politically connected in DC, \$600 million in Bakersfield. Bundle projects on 58 as one project.*

No go for Mono if Kern does not participate? *Green: MOU does not expire for couple years, need to re-up MOU then.*

Le Francois: Mono and Inyo each pay 10%, Kern 40%, and the State 40%.

Wentworth: Federal highway funds threatened by Trump. *Green: FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) said proceed quickly. Now 18-19 states suing federal government.*

Funding separate? *Green: Nothing in general fund impacts transportation.*

Wentworth: No critical safety or construction issue but maybe think of Plan B. If political will in Kern is to not play ball, start thinking down road.

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### COMMISSIONERS

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

Peters: Impossible without MOU to do Conway Passing Lane project. Solely slated as MOU. Plan B for project already in queue?

Le Francois: If MOU dissolves, Mono is on its own. Maybe two or three STIP cycles. Mono relies on SB1, Town not so much. Could partner with Inyo; e.g., Black Rock.

Hogan: Ten years ago, re-upped MOU, some commissioners wanted to pull out. Hope State keeps Kern's feet to fire. Set good precedent for MOUs that State thinks highly of.

Le Francois: Refresh MOU in 2022. Not much said about it by Kern.

How approach? *Le Francois: Two years prior started talking about.*

Stump: Having read MOUs, no enforcement from prior to now, so could drop it and Mono/Inyo would just be out. It's non-binding. Understands SR 58 and 46 issues, but Mono made good-faith commitments, expected reciprocity.

Green: Governor appointed new director. Since then two new CTC (California Transportation Commission) appointments. Whole flavor of State direction is changing. Executive order on reducing carbon emissions. Shift from cars, more inter-city housing, other transportation means, percentage of EV State is aiming for. Governor also looking at Air Resources Board to increase Green vehicle programs.

Green: Rail project more favorable. SB1 designed to fix current infrastructure, not add additional lanes. CTC promoting projects with safety goals not congestion-relief.

How get rationale to line up with State policies? *Hogan: Hopefully Angelenos are skiers, promote FG.*

Kreitz: Talk about jobs, housing, transit links in RTP in clear and obvious way.

Green: K-rail update: Moved to east side, inside of curve. No date of winter suspension. All but one week's work to be done. Mono Cone incident: Law enforcement can't speed through construction zones or go through hard closure. Flagger will call.

Stump: Caltrans comment at BOS tomorrow, attend from Mammoth. *Peters: Meeting with sheriff today in Mammoth.*

Stump: Carries more weight for State department to say. Glad for heads up. BOS next week in Mammoth.

*Green: May just call Sheriff Braun.*

Caltrans assets in power safety shutoffs? *Green: Same messaging as Mono and Town. Not outreach itself, but traffic signals not working. Already dealt many times. No independent public info outreach, no outreach from Edison.*

Wentworth: Town Council met with Edison last week. Edison said no resources to mitigate or no commitment if snow on ground. Safety scenarios.

## 5. TRANSIT

**A. Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA):** Karie Bentley said ESTA operates inter-valley shuttle, readying for winter with creative outreach for drivers at Bishop swap meet. Good summer ridership, statistics later. One new trolley on order. Awaiting word on other funding. ESTA's non-emergency medical transportation program: If volunteer driver is available, program reimburses person at \$.20/mile. Brief application process.

Bentley: Kern Regional Center reach out. *Stump: Ask them to contact service brokers, State changed rules.*

Application on website? *Bentley: For seniors, disabled, low-income. Application process simple, just say have a need, volunteer driver with car and insurance, no income guideline. Protected by HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act). Proof went to appointment. Reimburse person to appointment not driver.*

**B. Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS):** Sandy Hogan read text of YARTS award to Mono, which was original proponent along with Mariposa and Merced. 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of JPA, next year of YARTS itself. Annual meeting in Valley, Gardner and Corless there. JPA had only one member from each county, changed couple years ago to two from each county. Nice luncheon. Executive director attended. Take award to Town Council meeting.

## 6. LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

**A. Transit needs process update:** Convene SSTAC (Social Services Transportation Advisory Council) this winter. Town set March-April on transit needs hearing. Dan Holler working on it. Contractual issues on services Town provides, public comment with specific unmet need. Sit down with ESTA and Town this winter.

Wentworth: Useful for update to Town. Something new to talk about.

Le Francois: June requesting service that's not unmet need.

Kreitz: Requests from public sought.

**B. 2020 RTIP & MOU projects:** Gerry Le Francois noted STIP (State Transportation Improvement Program) fund estimate. RTIP (Regional Transportation Improvement Program) by mid-December. Current balance of \$3 million. Not lot of new money coming in. figuring out where best to allocate resources. No split allocation between Mono and Town.

Where is money set aside? *Shares are in reserve but State likely loaned money. Work with CTC staff doing master balancing act.*

Shares/funds for local projects? *Yes.*

How correspond to prior years? *Five-year funding cycles. Been in \$5 mil to \$6 mil. 2016 was lowest (nothing). Hope SB1 would level out peaks and valleys. Kern noted more robust STIP when MOUs established, projects great, not so much now.*

Wentworth: Town Council priority workshop Oct. 28-29. Discussion of capital transit.

**C. Tioga Pass opening plan:** Tony Dublino noted Mono commits resources when Caltrans gets to gate. Conversed with Gene Smith of NPS. Get pass open sooner rather than later. Not heard back from others. Trying to apply constant pressure on notification and outreach to start conversation. LTC members could mention interests.

Wentworth: Meet with Dublino and Matt Paruolo on NPS-signed grant. *Dublino: Mountain Gate Park?*

Wentworth: No, two grants.

Construction plans next year? *Construction on hard closure and soft closure.* Not spoken about Tuolumne construction plans.

How do construction factors into opening? Huge Tuolumne project, unknown construction schedule.

Kreitz: Add commissioner names to letterhead. Few typos.

Stump: Correct letter, send next meeting.

Dublino: Sooner the better, but opportunity to work on throughout winter. Not urgent. Resource protection as reason for delayed opening. Not want lots of people when meadows are wet.

Peters: Once road is open, means a lot to east side. Olmsted is sticking point.

Hogan: Partial opening seemed to work. With through traffic only, YARTS could run.

Wentworth: Invite NPS's Kathleen Morse (former Mammoth District Ranger) for presentation.

Peters: Put off letter. NPS may have issues, not revisit it every year. July 1 opening not good.

Green: NPS mission is to work with gateway communities. Wentworth: Gateway applies to east and west. Green: Tied to sustainability.

--- Break: 10:40-10:50 a.m. ---

**D. CSAC support letter on transportation issues:** Another Edison power shut-off advisory tomorrow. Gerry Le Francois noted State sending what it wants out of next reauthorization plan.

Typically with CSAC? *Le Francois: No annual position. Bombarded with Legislature issues, RCRC (Regional Council of Rural Counties), RCTF (Rural Counties Task Force) for transportation issues. SB 152 with ATP (Active Transportation Plan), urban areas in power grab.*

Downside to doing this? *Le Francois: Independent commission, not have finger on pulse of a lot of things, rely on other entities.*

Support yes, but unsure about adopting? Hogan: Millions of acres of public land, not just thousands.

Kreitz: Take items as they arise, be more prescriptive on rural need as LTC, not something so generic and sweeping. Be more articulate about what rurals need from proposal under consideration. Specific topics as they come. Letter very broad. *Le Francois: Included it all, really four graphs on CSAC information that apply to LTC.*

Peters: CSAC looks at items all year long. Target specifics for rurals.

Wentworth: Mono state how we fit in, our role.

Kreitz: Letter not specific. Sounds like carte blanche support of CSAC, which may be more urban-centric.

Wentworth: "Regions Rising Together" possible opportunity for Mono. Another bond fund next year.

Le Francois: Staff needs to be alerted to issues of importance.

Stump: Emphasize in letters that rail is non-starter in Mono (no capacity). Point out lack of infrastructure. Need to acknowledge, not punish.

**E. RTP (Regional Transportation Plan) review:** Gerry Le Francois de-emphasized every strike-through. Couldn't get pdf format to work, so Word document instead.

Comments? *Le Francois: Save-as, edit with track changes.*

Hailey Lang incorporated Hogan's comments, awaiting data from other agencies, working through technical changes, correct dates, etc.

Commissioners-only comments? *Lang: Insert into final document, post on website when finalized.*

## 7. ADMINISTRATION

A. **2019-20 Overall Work Program revisions:** Gerry Le Francois got conditional approval letter from District 9. Ties into general transit and unmet needs. Town working on The Parcel, has multiple encroachment permits. No budget adjustment, just improved document. *Hogan: Found highlighting helpful.*

Austin West: On statewide level, Sacramento more stringent. Mono needs more flexibility. Check on eligibility.

Stump: P. 81. Bike? Be specific to maximize what need to do. Creating capacity for buses to take bikes, what about ebikes? Need correct language. *Le Francois: Bike means non-motorized.*

Wentworth: Distinctions need to be made. Town has ongoing discussion on such. No data for decisions.

West: District 9 understands small county's staff needs.

Le Francois: Paruolo installed new trail counters on non-Town trails; e.g., Rock Creek.

Wentworth: Talking with USFS on snow storage pit. *West: Contact West or Gayle Rosander.*

Kreitz: Capitalize [formal] documents like Walk/Bike/Ride.

8. **COMMISSIONER REPORTS:** **Kreitz:** Shared photo of intense Labor Day traffic. People driving powerline dirt road created danger. **Peters:** Attended RCRC annual at Tahoe. Merced talked of turning economic blight into useful resource (Castle AFB). Autonomous vehicles. Bodie tour to train station renovated to museum. Back to DC, met with Rep. Paul Cook's chief of staff on many issues; Cook resigning to run for county supervisor. Construction on Hackney Drive, Eastside Lane delayed till 2020 due to weather. **Hogan:** None. **Wentworth:** Climate Change conference. Route 50 on Columbia River Gorge. Sustainable Recreation Tourism meeting in Bishop next week, elsewhere later. Ran into 11 different parties on PCT (Pacific Crest Trail) who asked how to get to Bishop. Seasons getting extended. **Salcido:** None. **Stump:** Left-turn pocket at Chalfant, drainage. Hess Park EV type 2 completed in Lee Vining. Lynn Boulton: Added second circuit so both are full power, not split; i.e., two cars at once.

9. **INFORMATIONAL:** Garrett Higerd reported rubberized chip seal on Benton Crossing Road (coarse, not extended all across shoulders). Awaiting comments from cyclists. Will help with truck traffic to landfill. Mono City: Slurry seal project done. Crowley Lake: Start soon on South Landing Road past trailer park, general store, up to Crowley Lake Drive. Grinding on edges will tie asphalt to other surfaces like concrete. Drainage structures. Striping at end. Hackney Drive: Core service area. Eastside Lane: Contracts signed, but into winter suspension. Same contractor.

Sweeping debris off bike lanes on Benton Crossing Road? *Higerd: To be expected.*

Peters: Restrooms open at Hackney. Higerd: Working with senior center on specific needs. No full road closure at any one time. Noise, dust, inconvenience but no hard closures.

10. **UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS:** 1) 2020 STIP; 2) Yosemite letter with specific request; 3) Kathleen Morse presentation; 4) support letter for US bike route along US 395; and 5) national scenic byway designation.

11. **ADJOURN** at 11:45 a.m. to November 11 (a holiday) so reschedule to November 18 at 9:30 a.m.

*Prepared by CD Ritter, LTC clerk*