



Clint Quilter, Executive Director

# INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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## MINUTES

### INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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

April 20, 2016

**9:00 a.m.** Doug Thompson called the meeting to order.

**ITEM NO. 1** Roll Call

Commissioners Present:

Rick Pucci  
Doug Thompson  
Pat Gardner (absent)  
Dan Totheroh  
Bob Kimball  
Jim Ellis

Others Present:

Ryan Dermody, Caltrans  
Brent Green, Caltrans  
John Helm, ESTA  
Jill Batchelder, ESTA  
Denise Hayden, Secretary  
Courtney Smith, staff  
Clint Quilter, Executive Director

**ITEM NO. 2:** Public Comment

None

## **ACTION ITEMS**

**ITEM NO. 3:** Secretary of the Local Transportation Commission – Request approval of the minutes of the meeting of February 17, 2016 and March 16, 2016.

Motion to approve the minutes made by Bob Kimball and seconded by Rick Pucci .  
Motion carried: 5-0-1

**ITEM NO. 4:** Request Commission 1) receive a copy of the meeting notes of the Social Services Transit Advisory Council and 2) conduct a public hearing to gather input on unmet transit needs.

On February 25, 2016 the Social Services Transit Advisory Council met on to discuss the unmet transit needs. The meeting was noticed to comply with the Transportation Development Act. Staff received comments from a senior citizen in Bishop requesting ESTA to have extended Dial-A-Ride hours so that the riders could enjoy evening and weekend events in the community.

It was noted that there may not be funds available for new transit needs but it is good to be aware that these needs do exist for future possible grants that may be able to meet these needs.

The meeting was then opened to a public hearing with no members of the public wishing to speak. Doug Thompson then closed the public hearing.

Courtney Smith stated that the Commission was not required to take any action at this time.

It was noted that there will be another unmet transit hearing at the May LTC meeting in Bishop.

**ITEM NO. 5:** Request Commission approve Resolution No. 2016-04 that: 1) approves the submittal of a 2016 Federal Transit Administration Section 5311 apportionment grant with Eastern Sierra Transit Authority as the sub-recipient of \$99,066; and 2) authorized the Executive Director to sign all required certifications and assurances.

Jill Batchelder opened by welcoming everyone to “Grant” season. Jill explained that Section 5311 funds are apportioned annually to each County to be used only for public transportation projects in non-urbanized areas. Section 5311 funds may be used for capital, operating or administrative assistance to State or local agencies that are operators of public transportation services. For the Federal Fiscal year 2015, Inyo County was apportioned \$99,066.00.

Historically, these funds have been programmed to ESTA to assist in the operational costs of the overall Inyo County Transit System. We plan to incorporate these funds into the 2016/17 budget.

Jill also presented a discussion of agenda items 6, 7 and 8 to provide an overall picture. Each item will be voted on separately).

The Short Range Transit plan sets forth a goal to increase the frequency of the routes to Reno and Lancaster. It also identified the summer season as a peak season for transit and proposes to have service on 11 Saturday's during that time. There is a grouping of grants for continued funding. Three days a week to Reno and Lancaster. This is a noncompetitive and pretty much a guaranteed source of funding. This is a 55% local funding and 45% match. The local match comes from Inyo County LTC, Mono County LTC and Kern Regional Transit. The Inyo local match share is \$86,849.50 which would be incorporated into next year's budget. The expanded grant would add Wednesday's to Reno; Tuesday's and Thursday's to Lancaster; and Saturday's in both directions for the eleven Saturday's during the summer. This is competitive funding so it's unclear if the grant will be successful. This also is 55% Federal Funding and then the local match. The local match can be provided through using toll credits. This makes these added days 100% funded. The total project cost for these additional days is \$110,000.00.

The third grant is to purchase a new Class E bus. This will keep the average miles per vehicle down while adding a new vehicle for the additional routes. If we don't receive the new bus ESTA has enough vehicles to run the new routes, they will just meet their life span sooner. This will be 100% funded.

If all three grants are awarded it will allow the five day a week service and the Inyo County LTC portion of this is \$87,000.00. This plan still preserves ESTA's core service and provides an opportunity to gain the additional days.

Bob Kimball asked about the buses at the airport if they are usable. They are being used; some have reached their max age.

Doug Thompson mentioned how important the ESTA bus is now that they Greyhound bus service is no longer here.

Jill noted that summer service reservations are starting to increase. People are booking their trips into the back country and are making plans to use the transportation to get out.

Jim Ellis added that there is an increase in the hiking picture of the valley and how important it is to local business. The Saturday component is very important.

Doug Thompson also noted how important the VA transportation is as well.

Jim Ellis asked Jill about an ad that he saw looking for a driver in the local area for a shuttle bus. Jill was not aware of anything and asked Jim to let her know if he sees it again.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2016-04 made by Rick Pucci and seconded by Dan Totheroh. Motion carried: 5-0-1

**ITEM NO. 6:** Request commission approve Resolution No. 2016-05 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.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2016-05 made by Dan Totheroh and seconded by Jim Ellis. Motion carried: 5-0-1

**ITEM NO. 7:** Request Commission approve Resolution No. 2016-06 that authorizes the Executive Director to sign the Certification and Assurances for the Federal Transit Administration Section 5311(f) operating assistance for the Eastern Sierra Transit Authority **expanded** US 395 inter-regional bus route.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2016-06 made by Rick Pucci and seconded by Dan Totheroh Motion carried: 5-0-1

**ITEM NO. 8:** Request Commission approve Resolution No. 2016-07 that authorizes the Executive Director to sign the Certification and Assurances for the Federal Transit Administration Section 5311(f) **capital funding** for the Eastern Sierra Transit Authority to **purchase of a bus for the expanded** US 395 inter-regional bus route.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2016-07 made by Jim Ellis and seconded by Rick Pucci. Motion carried: 5-0-1

**ITEM NO. 9:** Request Commission approve a minute order regarding the Active Transportation Plan that 1) finds the Plan is consistent with the General Plan and Regional transportation Plan, 2) finds that the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act have been satisfied, 3) finds that the Plan is consistent with the California Transportation Commission required elements checklist, and 4) approves the Active Transportation Plan.

Courtney Smith stated that the purpose of the Active Transportation Plan, (ATP) is to put the County and City in a better position to compete for these grant. An initial study and a negative declaration were prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Comments were received from Caltrans District 9 and the Great Basin Air Pollution Control District. Great Basin offered general support for active transportation projects to reduce reliance on automobiles and Caltrans requested specific changes in the Plan. The consultant created an ATP checklist to show how the plan meets California Transportation Commission requirements. This complies with the Regional

Transportation Plan and the City and County general plans. The Commission will receive a final copy of the plan at the next meeting.

Doug Thompson liked the bicycle plans, etc. thinks it is a good package.

Motion to approve the Minute Order regarding the Active Transportation Plan made by Dan Totheroh and seconded by Jim Ellis. Motion carried: 5-0-1

**ITEM NO. 10:** Request commission approve the submittal of a TIGER grant application to fund the construction component of the Olancha-Cartago four lane project.

Courtney, this is the funding is one of the chief quandary affecting the County and City of Bishop in being able to access STIP funds. Caltrans indicates the project can be delivered as required by the grant guidelines. Staff had County Counsel review the application as this would be a new funding arrangement (if successful). Staff recommends for Commission to approve this grant application.

Ryan Dermody, Brandon Fitt from Caltrans wrote the Tiger Grant. If this doesn't go through we can reapply in a few years or search for additional funding.

Doug Thompson commented that eventually the State is going to get tired of hearing from us and they will give us something.

Jim Ellis asked if there were any changes to this project. Brent Green said no. Funding this project is a high priority for Caltrans. This project could be funded in 2022 or as soon as 2020 if the Tiger grant goes through.

Motion to approve the submittal of the TIGER grant application made by Jim Ellis and seconded by Rick Pucci Motion carried: 5-0-1

**ITEM NO. 11:** Request Commission 1) approve the submittal of a letter to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) regarding the CTC staff recommendations for Inyo County LTC projects in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

CTC staff contacted LTC staff and gave a rundown of what the CTC staff recommendations will for the Inyo portion of the STIP at the approval hearing in Stockton on May 18 and 19. The programming for the Olancha Cartago archeological pre-mitigation project is being moved from FY 2016/17 to FY 2018/19. Freeman Gulch segment one construction is being moved from FY 2016/17 to FY 2020/21 – this will allow time for the Eastern California Transportation Planning Partnership to balance the funding for this project. The South Lake Road Federal Lands Access Program match project is proposed to be deleted. CTC staff has come out with a priority list of how they came up with their proposals. The delay of the Olancha/Cartago is not a big issue. As a side note, it would not affect the Tiger Grant.

Staff is concerned that the South Lake project being deleted. Before your Commission today is a comment letter to the CTC to let them know our concerns about their proposed action on May 18<sup>th</sup>. This happens to be the same date as the next LTC meeting which cannot be changed because we have already advertised the unmet transit needs hearing. Courtney indicates staff plans to attend the CTC hearing in Stockton and asks if a Commissioner would be willing to attend. It is a long way to go but the South Lake project is an important project as it leverages almost \$12 million in federal funds.

Dan Totheroh said having someone there or a letter is worth the chance.

Doug Thompson indicated that we should do the letter and staff and/or a commissioner should attend. This is our opportunity to get the Federal grant. South Lake Road is an important access point to enter into Kings Canyon National Park.

Jim Ellis said that the letter should be done and that we should go further and show pictures of where the funds go so that we can be noticed. He can work this into his schedule if no one else can go.

Rick Pucci said that he is in Sacramento that day at scheduled meetings. He noted that Courtney should speak at the hearing. He also asked about the unmet transit needs hearing to see if the meeting could be moved. Courtney indicated that between Clint Quilter and himself there is enough staff to cover both tasks. If Courtney and one of the commissioners attended it would be very important. Rick thinks that it would be very important to have a presence at this meeting.

Bob Kimball said that the last meeting that they attended they were given five minutes to speak and behind Mayor Villaraigosa out of Los Angeles. He noted that the mayor was difficult to follow but they did end up getting the money and he feels that it is important.

Motion to approve the submittal of a letter to the CTC made by Dan Totheroh (with the shenanigans) and seconded by Rick Pucci. Motion carried: 5-0-1

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**ITEM NO. 12:** Request Commission receive a copy of the Inyo County Local Transportation Commission FY 2014-2015 Financial Audit.

The Commission is not required to act on this. This is provided for your information only.

## **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

**ITEM NO. 13:** ESTA Report

## Inyo County Operating Statistics: January – March 2016

Jill Batchelder read through ESTA's quarterly operating statistics for the period January that was included as part of the agenda packet.

Jim Ellis asked about the ridership numbers for Mammoth. John Helm said it was a 20-30% increase. Dan Totheroh asked about the increase compared to the last good year of snow. John Helm said that was an excellent question and this is compared to last year's catastrophic snow season.

### **ITEM NO. 14:** Tribal Report

Peter Bernasconi stated that the Bishop tribe has a couple of grants for the replacement of the Head start buses. He mentioned that one of the buses is 20 years old and has 200,000 miles on it. This is a competitive grants between tribes. They will be constructing the Coso trail this summer with a hard composite material. It is not asphalt but it is a sturdy material.

### **ITEM NO. 15:** Caltrans Report

#### District 9 Quarterly Project Update

Brent Green, said the Active transportation plan is appreciated. Anything that we can do to promote active transportation is important. Last week Caltrans staff went to Death Valley and met with the Park Service and it was very interesting. He was impressed how engaged Inyo County is with the Park Service. They are very appreciative. Caltrans is working on some exciting projects that they can't discuss right now but will soon. They are gearing up the fishing opener, all of the passes are open except from Sonora and Tioga and the upper portion of Highway 203. They open the passes when it is safe to do so.

Doug Thompson noticed the new "share the highway" signs to alert motorists of bicycles. He was thrilled to see that since he has asked for that for ten years. Brent noted that they will be soon painting green stripes on the road so that the bicyclist will know where they can and cannot go.

### **ITEM NO. 16:** City of Bishop Report

Dave Grah was not able to attend. Courtney Smith noted that the City is working on the Spruce, Yaney, Handby sidewalk project. They are also working to develop an ATP grant application for a new sidewalk project by the High School.

### **ITEM NO.17:** Executive Director's Report

None

**ITEM NO. 18:** Reports from all members of the Inyo County LTC

Rick Pucci asked if Line Street sidewalk project was finished. He commented how nice it is. Ryan Dermody said that they are waiting for the asphalt plant to open so they can finish a small last part to the project. Ryan asked Peter Bernasconi about landscaping the sidewalk areas. The Tribe is looking at a landscape that won't require much maintenance. Jim Ellis also commented how nice it is. Ryan Dermody noted that one of the upcoming projects that they will announce will be a North Sierra Highway sidewalk project.

Doug noted that once you see an improvement you wonder why it was not done before.

Jim stated it was an excellent meeting.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

Doug Thompson thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

The next LTC meeting is going to be held on May 18, 2016 in the City of Bishop Council Chambers.

Attest:

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Clint Quilter  
Executive Director

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By: Denise Hayden, Secretary