



# INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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Clint Quilter, Executive Director

## MINUTES

### INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**Lone Pine Lions Club Hall  
481 S. Main Street  
Lone Pine, CA 93545**

April 19, 2017

**9:03 a.m.** Doug Thompson called the meeting to order.

**ITEM NO. 1** Roll Call

Commissioners Present:

Bob Kimball  
Doug Thompson  
Jim Ellis  
Dan Totheroh

Commissioners Absent:

Pat Gardner  
Rick Pucci

Others present:

Mark Heckman, Caltrans  
Rick Franz, Caltrans  
Jill Batchelder, Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA)  
Dave Grah, City of Bishop  
Denise Hayden, Secretary  
Courtney Smith, Staff  
Clint Quilter, Executive Director

**ITEM NO. 2** Public Comment

None

**ITEM NO. 3** Secretary of the Local Transportation Commission – Requests approval of the minutes of the meeting of March 15, 2017

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Jim Ellis and seconded by Commissioner Bob Kimball. Motion carried 3-1 with Commissioner Dan Totheroh abstaining.

**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 March 9, 2017 staff held the annual Social Services Transit Advisory Council (SSTAC) meeting kickoff for the annual Transportation Development allocation process. The meeting notes from this meeting that was held at the Caltrans Mt. Tom conference room are included in the packet. There was a relatively low turnout at this meeting so staff will do some additional outreach and also review the SSTAC member list before next year's meeting.

At the SSTAC meeting, there was stated a need for additional weekend transportation throughout the valley. Eastern Sierra Transit and Inyo-Mono Agency for the Handicapped discussed some of their plans and projects that they are working on.

The unmet transit needs hearing was opened by Commissioner Doug Thompson. Courtney Smith explained what an unmet transit need is. He further explained the LTC has not allocated funds for local streets and roads for at least a dozen years. All of the TDA funds are being allocated for transit-related activities. If a new unmet transit need were identified, ESTA may have to reduce another one of their services. This is an opportunity to find out about the health of the transit system. ESTA has done a good job at providing new services by tweaking their existing services.

Doug Thompson made a comment that ESTA has listened carefully to the comments that were made previously and had made changes to meet these needs. Doug noted ESTA has helped address some of the needs raised recently by the Northern Inyo Hospital and the veteran's service.

Jill Batchelder said that the Non-Emergency Medical Transportation program has been funded again and the new grant funds should be able to fund the program for another two years. There are approximately 80 people in this program now. This has been a very positive program for those in the outlying areas where regular transportation is not available. Jill also spoke to the representatives at Northern Inyo Hospital about the van that ESTA had donated to the hospital and they have made many local trips for those just having had surgery and various procedures at the hospital when the ESTA bus is not available or after hours. Their van is mainly for local needs but is has gone to Chalfant, Benton, Tonopah and other outlying areas. Bob Kimball asked if there were any problems with insurance issues on the ESTA Non-Emergency Medical Transportation program. Jill explained that the way ESTA has set up this

program is that the patient provides their own driver and then the patient is reimbursed and not the driver so the driver does not become an employee of ESTA.

Doug Thompson closed the unmet transit needs hearing.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **ITEM NO. 5** Overview of new transportation funding legislation (SB 1 Beall).

Courtney Smith presented an overview of the legislation recently passed by the State Legislature that is expected to be enacted by the Governor soon. The transportation funding in California has been erratic and negatively affected the programming of the Inyo County LTC. The new taxes part of this legislation will take effect gradually over the next several years. Over the 10 year life of the bill this should raise over \$52.4 billion dollars.

Included in this bill is the following:

- A 12-cent increase in the gasoline excise tax ;
- A 20-cent increase in the diesel excise tax;
- A 5.75 percent increase in the diesel sales tax;
- A new vehicle fee, which will annually charge drivers between \$25 and \$175, depending on the value of the vehicle; and
- A \$100 annual fee on zero-emission vehicles.

California gas excise tax will increase to \$.30 per gallon. As a part of the approval of SB 1, legislators also voted on a constitutional amendment that protects transportation funding from being used for other purposes, this will be placed on the June 2018 ballot for consideration by the voters.

The emphasis on the new bill is to provide funds for deferred maintenance. This will provide additional funds to the State, County, and City. The County Road Department has been working in a negative budget for the past couple of years. This will level things out and provide funds for a local projects. So the County Road revenues will jump from \$2.338 million in 2016/2017 to an average of \$6 million over the 10 year period. The City of Bishop Road revenues will go from an estimated \$95,000 to \$193,000.

Clint Quilter qualified Courtney's statement by noting that these figures won't "jump", they will ramp up. We are estimating that we will get somewhere over a million dollars in the 17/18 fiscal year. This will provide a solid funding framework.

Courtney continued by stating that the eligible projects include:

- Road maintenance and rehabilitation
- Safety projects
- Railroad grade separations

- Complete street components, including active transportation purposes, pedestrian and bicycle safety projects, transit facilities, and drainage and storm water capture projects in conjunction with any other allowable project
- Traffic control devices
- Funds may also be used to satisfy a match requirement in order to obtain state or federal funds for allowable projects.

The County and City will need to submit a list of projects to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and report back to CTC for the amount of funds used on the projects and to report the useful life of the project. Caltrans has some additional reporting requirements on the State Highway Operations & Protection Program (SHOPP) funds which the CTC has the ability to restrict the release of SHOPP funds.

The bill will help the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) which was seriously underfunded in the 2016 STIP. At what level the 2018 STIP will be funded is not clear and we will know more about this when the 2018 STIP fund estimate is released.

Dan Totheroh asked if the State was going to look at our list of projects and tell us how to spend the funds. Courtney answered that the STIP funds are a negotiation. The County will control over the funds for local streets and roads. Doug Thompson asked if part of these funds could be used for South Lake Road. Courtney said that yes the County could use the local streets and roads for this if they choose. The County may also attempt to use STIP funds. It depends on the level of STIP funding, Caltrans plans for bringing forward the construction component of Olancho-Cartago, and the needs of the MOU funding partners.

**ITEM NO. 6** Report by Caltrans District 9 staff on the Average Annual Daily Traffic trends on US 395, US 6, SR 14, and SR 58.

Mark Heckman presented the Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) Count Data for US 395, US 6, SR 14 & SR 58 from 1992 through 2016. This is an annual report and is the same report that was presented to Mono County last month. In general, traffic is going up. There are traffic counters installed at various locations throughout District 9. He presented colored graphs to show travel and traffic trends.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

**ITEM NO. 7** ESTA Report

Quarterly Operating Report from January 1 to March 31, 2017

Jill Batchelder stated that the ridership, January – March, is up over 9% from last year. She stated that Mammoth Express is just going crazy with day workers (snow shoveling) and because of the discounted passes promotion. Bishop Dial-A-Ride has gone up also. Last year we saw a constant decline but we have seen an increase this past quarter, especially in March. Dan Totheroh asked what has caused the increase. Jill stated that ESTA staff is not

sure. There are a few new riders and their regular riders are taking more trips, it's hard to pinpoint. ESTA's services far exceed the requires overall minimum farebox requirement of 10%

The new route to Bishop Creek will be starting soon. The new route will begin on Memorial weekend on Friday and Saturday and will have a run up to South Lake and Sabrina in the morning and in the evening. The service will then stop and then resume operation on June 17<sup>th</sup> through August 20<sup>th</sup> with a morning run and an afternoon run seven days a week. After that the service will go weekends only through October. So far the advertising on this has been limited as they wait for their permitting from the Forest Service. It should all be finalized this week so there will be more advertising going out.

ESTA has also been contacted by the various hiking groups regarding the snow pack and the river crossings. It is going to be an interesting year for both the north and south US 395 route. Dan Tothoroh asked if there were going to be additional stops on the Bishop Creek Route besides the trailheads. Jill explained that riders can flag down a bus for a ride and the bus will stop if it is safe for the bus to stop at that location.

Doug Thompson asked if there was a schedule showing where all of the bus routes are from here to Yosemite and Kennedy Meadows. Doug said that he will have one of his staff members look into gathering this information. It would be very informative for the hikers this summer. Jill offered to include this information on their website and asked Doug to pass on any information that he may generate.

**ITEM NO. 8** Tribal Report

None

**ITEM NO. 9** Caltrans Report

Quarterly Project Status Report

Mark Heckman presented his construction schedule for District 9. There are a total of 27 projects listed. They are also doing rumble strips mostly on Hwy 190. The Canopy project in Independence will be at the Maintenance shop so it won't be seen much by the public.

Doug asked Mark about the High Wind warning sign on the south end of the valley. Doug mentioned that it was not on when he was traveling and it should have been due to the weather. Mark was not sure how those were triggered and thought that perhaps it wasn't windy enough to trigger it to come on. He offered to find out how they work or who is in charge of them.

**ITEM NO. 10** City of Bishop Report

David Grah stated that work is progressing on the Seibu to School path project. On the Spruce, Yaney, Hanby sidewalk project, the Environmental Report is out for public review

right now and they are waiting for public comment. The public hearing has been rescheduled from the 24<sup>th</sup> of April to the 8<sup>th</sup> of May at a City Council meeting. Dave also stated that he was pleased to hear about the additional gas tax funding noting that they could certainly use the additional funds.

**ITEM NO. 11** Executive Director’s Report

Clint Quilter reported that Road Department staff are preparing for the heavy spring runoff and getting together with the other agencies every two weeks for emergency planning. The Road Department is now working hard to get the mountain roads open before the water starts coming down. Whitney Portal will be fully open around the first of May. On Horseshoe Meadows Road, County staff will be meeting with the Forest Service on the first of May to hopefully reach a final strategy. Horseshoe Meadows road may not open until the first of July. We have equipment ready to go. On upper Trona-Wildrose Road, we received bids and will go to the Board for approval and this will be the last of the repairs on the Gully Washer emergency project. We received a grant from the Caltrans Division of Aeronautics to crack seal and overlay the Shoshone Airport. It is not eligible for any other projects.

Doug Thompson asked if there were any updates on the Bishop Airport projects. Clint stated that we have put about \$6 million dollars in the last three years into that airport. The next project will be opening bids in June to re-do about half of the apron on the runway.

Jim Ellis thanked Clint for his presentation at the town hall meeting about the Bishop Airport. Jim stated that it was an excellent presentation given by Clint.

**ITEM NO. 12** Reports from all members of the Inyo County LTC

None

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at: 9:37 a.m.

Attest:

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Clint Quilter  
Executive Director

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By: Denise Hayden, Secretary