



INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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Clint Quilter, Executive Director

MINUTES

INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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

September 16, 2015

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

ITEM NO. 1 Roll Call

Commissioners Present:

Rick Pucci
Bob Kimball
Doug Thompson
Mark Tillemans
Joe Peci
Laura Smith

Others Present:

Joan Stathem
Ryan Dermody, Caltrans
Brent Green, Caltrans
Jad Andari, Caltrans
Jill Batchelder, ESTA
Marilyn Mann, Inyo County & ESAAA
Dave Grah, City of Bishop
Denise Hayden, Inyo County
Courtney Smith, Inyo County
Clint Quilter, Inyo County

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 August 19, 2015.

Motion to approve the August 19, 2015 minutes was made by Rick Pucci and seconded by Joe Pecs. Motion carried 6-0

ITEM NO. 4: Request Commission approve Resolution No. 2015-15 a resolution approving 1) the FY 2014-2015 Federal Exchange Program and State Match Program Agreement, Agreement No. X15-6134(019) with the California Department of Transportation in the amount of \$212,009, 2) apportioning and allocating Regional Surface Transportation Program funds to the County of Inyo and City of Bishop based on population, and 3) authorize the Executive Director to sign the Agreement.

The Regional Surface Transportation Program provides flexible funding that may be used by States and localities for projects to preserve and improve the conditions and performance on any Federal Aid highway branch and toll project or any project on public roads, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure including recreational trails and transit capital in intercity passenger bus projects. The County has received these funds for year. In the last few years the State has changed the distribution format. There are now some additional funds that go through the LTC. So we look at how to apportion these funds to the City and the County. The City has a very limited number of Federal Aid routes and the County has 358 miles of Federal aid routes. The City is the center for the County and for the Eastern Sierra as a whole. Courtney referenced the apportionment table in the staff report that shows several ways to distribute these funds. Different agencies throughout the State distribute these funds differently. Last year we used a population based formula. These are real flexible funds that can be used by the County and City. The exchange switches the funds from Federal funds to State funds which are much easier to work with. This should have been brought to the Commission a few months ago though we are still on time to take advantage of this funding. Staff recommends apportioning the funds based on population. This gives the City more funds than the other ways.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2015-15 was made by Bob Kimball and seconded by Mark Tillemans. Motion carried 6-0

ITEM NO. 5: Request Commission make certain findings and approve the 2015 update to the Inyo County Local Transportation Commission Regional Transportation Plan.

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) looks at the 20 year transportation funding picture of the area and sets forth goals and policies to efficiently move goods and people in the region. The Inyo County LTC funded the completion of this update. The

LTC is required to update the RTP every five years. In the future this will be every four years as this will make it so the County and City will only be required to update their General Plan Housing Elements every eight years instead of every four years.

Your Commission is being requested to take the following actions: 1) to find that the project is consistent with the goal and policies set forth in the County of Inyo and City of Bishop General Plan, 2) adopt the Final Negative Declaration of Environmental Impact pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) making certain findings, 3) find the RTP update complies with the 2010 Caltrans Guidelines, and 4) to adopt the 2015 RTP update.

The RTP uses the City and County General Plan as a starting point and is consistent with these documents. The CEQA document is available for public review online and at the Public Works Department office in Independence. It was prepared in compliance with State law and released for a 30-day public comment period. Comments were received from Caltrans District 9, the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, and Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. The staff report includes a response to comments and changes where necessary were incorporated in the Final RTP. The attached RTP checklist demonstrates that the RTP was prepared in compliance with Caltrans Guidelines.

Motion to approve the 2015 update to the Inyo County Local Transportation Commission Regional Transportation Plan made by Bob Kimball and seconded by Joe Peksi. Motion carried 6-0

DISCUSSION ITEMS

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

ITEM NO. 6: ESTA Report

Ridership on Bishop Dial A Ride is up 10% over last year. The down side to the increased ridership is that the wait times have increased. We are trying to make adjustments by changing staff lunch times, etc. ESTA tracks wait times by the hour. Previously wait times were increasing from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. but now it has changed and the evening times are increasing. The fluctuations are very interesting to follow and ESTA staff is aware that there are wait time and is working on that. The US 395 North Reno run is still doing really well and ridership is up 15% over the previous year. The ESTA headquarters parking lot project out at that Bishop airport is virtually complete. We are just waiting on the finalization of some water tests on the lines and hydrants. We should get the results back soon and then we will get a Notice of Completion.

Mark Tillemans asked if ESTA stops at Fort Independence. Jill said that ESTA does stop there though ridership is inconsistent.

ITEM NO. 7: Tribal Report

Courtney Smith said that he spoke to Sonja Velarde from the Bishop Tribe and she stated that their Public Works Director position is currently vacant. Their staff is currently quite busy and that they would not be able to send someone to the meeting today. They hope to have staff present a project update at a future meeting.

ITEM NO. 8: Caltrans Report; Quarterly Progress Report

Ryan Dermody introduced Jad Andari, a new Transportation Planner, and stated that he was a graduate from UCLA. He also has a Master's degree from NYU and has also served in the Military.

Ryan provided an overview of the 2016 Caltrans State Highway and Operation Program (SHOPP). The SHOPP is done every two years with a four year cycle. This is an initial consultation with the LTC, there will be further opportunities for comments and input and the District 9 project list may change. The SHOPP is basically Caltrans fund source to maintain and rehabilitate the existing facilities. It is not a program to add four lanes, etc.; it is basically maintaining what we have. In some instances it is possible to do minor upgrades such as pedestrian facilities. This particular SHOPP program will cover 2016/2017 through 2019/2020. It is subject to change. Caltrans staff will bring this back at the next LTC meeting and you will have until January to comment. Our headquarters branch will send this to the LTC officially through Clint as the Executive Director.

As your Commission is aware, the Inyo County LTC is part of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Kern, Mono and sometimes San Bernardino County transportation planning agencies. A significant portion of the funding for the MOU projects, 40%, comes from the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program. That is a very important component of the MOU program; it is 40% of the funding. In order to access that funding, MOU projects have to be in the Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan. The Commission sent a comment letter to the State a few months ago asking that the US 395/SR 14 corridor still be included in the Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP). Headquarter added an appendix to the back of the document that gives highest priority to freight movement. The basis for this this in the ITSP is the Governor's executive order to focus on the freight movement. The freight numbers on US 395 and SR 14 don't compare with those elsewhere in the state. So this could affect the funding for the Freeman Gulch and Olancha 4-Lane projects. On November 4th there is going to be an ITIP program hearing in Southern California. Caltrans did talk to the Mono LTC and they are proposing to send someone down to the meeting so it would be strongly recommended to send someone from the Inyo LTC to attend the hearing as well. There will also be the RTIP hearing in January so Caltrans recommends sending someone down to that as well.

The Highway 168 sidewalk program will be going to construction soon. It has been recommended for award so you might be seeing road construction soon. Spiess Construction was awarded the contract.

September 23, 2015 will be the public outreach meeting for the Olancha 4 Lane project. Everyone is invited to attend. The design team will be there to answer questions and to show the proposed location will be. This meeting will be located at the Olancha Fire Department from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Lone Pine Library also has a full copy of the draft environmental documents.

The Active Transportation Program staff recommendations for funding have just been released and the City of Bishop Spruce Yaney Handby sidewalk project is recommended for funding. It is not a done deal until the California Transportation Commission approves the project list at their October meeting. This is great news!

Caltrans is working on installing two new signals, one on See Vee Lane at US 395 and one at Line Street (SR 168). The See Vee Lane and US 395 light will go first and is scheduled for construction in 2017/2018. District 9 also submitted a huge application for a \$12 million project for North Sierra Highway that includes this signal, bike lanes, as well as a pedestrian facility. This project would be constructed in 2020/2022.

ITEM NO. 9: City of Bishop Report

Dave Grah: The City of Bishop has finally made an offer to DWP to buy the right away for the Seibu to School Bike Path.

City staff is also working on a project to improve the parking in downtown within one block on either side of Main Street. There will be an open house on August 27th to get ideas from the public. Staff will take these ideas and discuss them with the City Council and try to make the parking more uniform and focus on improved customer parking and also better parking signage.

He was happy to get the e-mail from Forest Beckett stating that the Spruce Yaney Hanby sidewalk project is on the recommended list for the CTC. We are hoping to get that plan and start working on this project.

The City purchased a new radar speed control device. The radar speed trailer that the City had was old and not repairable any longer. The new trailer is very effective and people are hitting their brakes as soon as they see their speed shown on the screen. It will also record speeds to be used for analysis purposes. They are thinking about getting a box that will be mounted on a street sign post that will capture this data. They can be very helpful in looking at the traffic in the City. This information can be downloaded on a USB port or laptop.

ITEM NO. 10: Executive Director's Report

Courtney Smith started that at the August 26-27th California Transportation Meeting the STIP fund estimate was adopted which sets a 90 day timeline. There will be a zero STIP with no new programming and some projects needing to be pushed out into future

years. The California legislature has been in special session and recognized the need for transportation funding, however there is disagreement about where the funds for these improvements would come from. It does not appear that additional funding will be incorporated in the 2016 STIP. If the Legislature comes up with additional funding what will probably happen is that the STIP could be updated via amendments or there is some possibility of a mid-cycle action similar to the 2006 STIP Augmentation which implemented Proposition 1B in 2007.

The County is working on entering into a contract to complete a Project Study Report or initiation document for the Lone Pine Town Rehabilitation project. Even though there does not appear to be funding in the STIP program, it is good to move forward to prepare preliminary documents so the project is ready when the funding becomes available.

The County received some bids on the pedestrian transition plan for City and County sidewalks. Staff is in negotiations with a consultant to complete that project.

Also, August 24th and 25, the California Department of State Parks Off Highway Vehicle Division will be holding one of their quarterly meetings in Mammoth and on the Thursday they will hold a field trip where they will stop at several Forest Service locations in Mono County and several BLM locations in Inyo County including Tungsten Hill, Casa Diablo Road, and Poleta OHV open area. The tour will include an introduction to the County's combined use Adventure Trails routes. They will go from Britt's Diesel in Laws to the Poleta OHV open area.

Clint Quilter reiterated that transportation funding shortfalls did not get resolved in the latest round of Legislative sessions. The Special Legislative sessions did not end and Conference Committees are working on this during the break. The Legislature is recognizing the need for the Transportation funding and now it is at the fine point to find out where the money actually comes from. The Governor put together a plan and it is half of what the Legislature and CSAC was proposing.

Brent Green elaborated on the transportation funding issue. When you look at the Governor's proposal it is about \$3.6 million dollars which is half State and half local controlled funds. It appears most of the new funding will be focused on Fix it First, road repairs, safety, railroad grade separations, similar projects that we Caltrans has in the SHOPP program. We are in the wait and see mode but are optimistic that something will happen.

ITEM NO. 11: Reports from members of the Inyo County LTC

Bob Kimball: Nothing

Laura Smith: The road has been busy going through Bishop! There is a new frozen yogurt shop that has opened on Warren Street. They just had a quiet opening the other day. It is across the street from Mr. K's Automotive.

Joe Peci: Nothing

Mark Tillemans: It is vital to be working with Caltrans. He puts them up there with BLM on working to get solutions to get things done. It is important to collaborate to try and leverage as much funding as possible. He hopes that we can get the Tribe involved and work with BIA and leverage funding on mutually beneficial projects.

Doug Thompson: Not sure if everyone is aware or not but Sunset Magazine and Backpack Magazine did an article about the Eastern Sierra and the Alabama Hills. They also talked about Death Valley. Doug was out on Sunland Drive the other day and commented on how nice that project is coming along and it will really help our area. We have a lot of great projects that we just keep plugging along with.

Rick Pucci: Nothing

CORRESPONDENCE

None

ADJOURNMENT

Doug Thompson adjourned the meeting at 9:40 a.m.

The next LTC meeting is going to be held on October 21, 2015 in Board of Supervisors room in Independence.

Attest:

Clint Quilter
Executive Director

By Denise Hayden, Secretary