



# INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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Clint Quilter, Executive Director

## MINUTES

### INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**Inyo County Board of Supervisors Chambers  
224 N. Edwards Street  
Independence, CA 93526**

October 18, 2017

**9:00 a.m.** Pat Gardner called the meeting to order.

#### **ITEM NO. 1** Roll Call

Commissioners Present:

Doug Thompson  
Rick Pucci  
Dan Totheroh  
Pat Gardner

Commissioners absent:

Jim Ellis  
Bob Kimball

Others present:

Mark Heckman, Caltrans  
Jill Batchelder, ESTA  
Dave Grah, City of Bishop  
Denise Hayden, Secretary  
Courtney Smith, Staff

#### **ITEM NO. 2** Public Comment

None

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

**ITEM NO. 3** Secretary of the Local Transportation Commission – Requests approval of the minutes of the meeting of August 16, 2017.

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Dan Tothoroh and seconded by Commissioner Rick Pucci. Motion passed 4-0.

**ITEM NO. 4** Request Commission consider approval of 1) a letter of Support and 2) financial support for an Olancha-Cartago Corridor Plan grant application.

The Inyo County Board of Supervisors yesterday chose to submit a Caltrans SB 1 Sustainable Transportation Planning grant. The Planning Department is asking the LTC to submit 1) a letter of support and 2) to state its intent to cover a portion of the required match. The Planning Department is working to complete the grant application and anticipates the grant to be in the range of \$300,000. The intent of the grant is to work on a concept or corridor plan on the portion of the existing US 395 that is slated to be bypassed by the Olancha-Cartago four lane project.

The County can provide either a hard match (\$) or an in kind match (staff time) to fund the 11.47% match. Rural Planning Assistance (RPA) grant funds are eligible to use to fund the grant match. Given the support for this project from the County, staff recommends stating an intention to cover \$10,000 of the match. County staff time will serve as the remainder of the matching funds. In the event the County is successful in obtaining this grant, LTC staff will bring an Overall Work Program amendment request to your Commission to add this task and the expense. By approving the letter of approval as presented, your Commission would be stating its intention to provide the matching funds.

There is an opportunity for the citizens of Olancha & Cartago to vision how their community is going to look in the future when most of the vehicles move off of the current alignment on to the bypass. It's a possibility that some of the recommendations from the grant in terms of bike lanes and possibly horse trails along the side could be incorporated and even become one of the conditions of the relinquishment to the County.

Motion to approve a letter in support of the Olancha Cartago Corridor Plan grant application was made by Commissioner Rick Pucci and seconded by Commissioner Doug Thompson. Motion passed 4-0

**ITEM NO. 5** Request Commission consider submittal of a letter to the FHWA designating US 395 & US 6 as Critical Rural Freight Corridors.

CRFCs are required to meet one or more of seven criteria. Staff believes the elements that are most valid to US 395 are B, D, & G.

(A) Is a rural principal arterial roadway and has a minimum of 25 percent of the annual average daily traffic of the road measured in passenger vehicle equivalent units from trucks. US 395 is a principal arterial, however it does not have average

- annual daily traffic that includes more than 25% of truck traffic. US 395 near Olancha and Cartago currently has an AADT that included 10 to 20% truck traffic.
- (B) Provides access to energy exploration, development, or production areas. US 395 provides first and last mile connectivity to: one of the State's largest water bottling plants (Crystal Geysler bottling plant is located between Olancha and Cartago), a solar development near Olancha, a bridge manufacturing plant, numerous cattle and alfalfa ranches, China Lake Naval Weapons Station, and multiple mining operations.
  - (C) Connects the primary highway freight system to a roadway that handles more than 50,000 20-foot equivalent units per year; or 500,000 tons per year of bulk commodities. There are no trucking terminals on US395 that have this type of volume. US 395 is tied in the network that connects to the proposed World Logistics Center in Moreno Valley and also the Reno-Tahoe Industrial Complex in Storey County, Nevada. This does not appear to qualify US 395 through as it is these facilities are not directly on US 395 or in the area proposed to be designated.
  - (D) The proposed route could provide access to a grain elevator; or an agricultural, mining, forestry, or an intermodal facility. US 395 provides first and last mile connectivity to: one of the State's largest water bottling plants (Crystal Geysler), a solar development near Olancha, numerous cattle and alfalfa ranches, China Lake Naval Weapons Station, a bridge manufacturing plant near Olancha, and multiple mining operations (pumice and aggregate).
  - (E) US 395 does not connect directly to an international port of entry.
  - (F) Provides access to significant air, rail, water, or other freight facilities in the State. US 395 provides access to the Inyokern, Lone Pine, Independence, Bishop, Mammoth Lakes, and Reno International airports. It is doubtful if any of these could be considered a "significant" airport or that the tie in with the Reno airport is direct enough.
  - (G) Is determined by the State to be vital to improving the efficient movement of freight of importance to the economy of the State. The US 395 corridor is an important north south corridor that is becoming increasingly more popular for freight. The development of the Tahoe Reno Industrial Center east of Reno, Nevada and the World Logistics Center in Moreno Valley are factors that will likely have an impact on the US 395 corridor. US 395 is the most direct route between these two locations. These facilities have the potential to substantially increase truck traffic in the US 395 corridor all the way from I-15 to the Nevada State Line on both US 395 and US 6.

Caltrans is establishing prioritization criteria in the event that the CRFC nominations exceed the number of total highway miles that are allocated to the State by the FHWA.

There is also a statement in support of this designation for other two lane sections of US 395 and SR 14 in neighboring counties. A draft letter of nominations is attached.

Doug Thompson mentioned that the Hawthorne ammunition naval base in Hawthorne and Pickel Meadows mountain warfare training center base up by Sonora Pass could be added to the letter.

Courtney added that he can add these items to the letter to beef it up a little bit.

Dan Totheroh added that it doesn't appear that we meet all of the criteria and Courtney reminded him that we only need to meet one of the criteria to qualify.

Motion to approve the submittal of a letter to the FHWA made by Commissioner Dan Totheroh and seconded by Doug Thompson. Motion passed 4-0

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

#### **ITEM NO. 6 Eastern Sierra Transit Authority Report Quarterly Operating Report for July through September 2017**

Jill Batchelder provided the Quarterly Operating Report for July through September 2017. Ridership was flat compared to last year though there were reasons. They anticipated ridership to be down this year because last year was such a good year with all of the hikers coming through. Despite the late snowpack ESTA did well with 19,658 passengers during the quarter. Passenger per service hour looked very good. Mammoth Express and Nite Rider and the US 395 North route to Reno exceeded efficiency goals. The only routes that are falling short are the most rural routes, Lone Pine Dial-A-Ride and Tecopa.

Overall routes are flat with drops in both Mammoth Express and Lone Pine Express. The change to the Lone Pine Express route was largely because the way that the calculations were calculated was changed.

Fares collected were over \$444,000.00. It was down just a fraction from last year. Average passenger fare was \$7.37 and ESTA's systemwide un-audited farebox ratio was 27.8% which far exceeds the 10% minimum State standard. Every route with the exception of the most rural routes are meeting or exceeding the farebox standard.

Rick Pucci asked about the Bishop Creek route. There were 304 passengers and the route did not quite meet the goals and expectations. It probably was not the best year to start this service because of the large snow pack. Passengers couldn't go anywhere so it wasn't the best year to try this route. This ran the middle of June to August 20<sup>th</sup>.

Dan Totheroh asked about the 304 count, he wanted to know if that same person was counted twice getting on and off the bus. Jill said that each passenger is counted each time they board the bus. Many do not return on the bus, they may be hiking or going elsewhere.

Jill said that in a different year that the numbers would be different. They will try again next year. Pat Gardner stated that at the beginning of this trial run that there were no passengers riding the bus because none of the trails were open and the lakes were still frozen.

Doug Thompson said that in mid-July the snow cleared on the southern end of the valley and Kennedy Meadows was open. Many of the hikers went to Oregon and Washington instead of staying in the Eastern Sierra Mountains because of the snow pack and hazardous water crossings. It was mid-July before many of the hikers could get through the back country. Then the swollen creeks became the hiking hazard and there were a few fatalities. He said that they are starting to see a few of the hikers come back to our area. Jill agreed that they did see an increase in late summer in the Bishop Creek run but next year will be better. Jill also mentioned that they received a lot of phone calls and the public has learned a lot about this route so it will be better next year.

Rick Pucci asked if most of these people are hikers on foot or are they looking for long term parking in our area for their vehicles while they hike. Jill stated that she didn't have a good percentage to answer Rick's question but that she did take a lot of phone calls from hikers asking where they could park. She referred them to the Bishop PD for assistance. The long term parking is very limited in Bishop.

Rick added that it might be something that we need to coordinate with the Chamber for long term parking for vehicles with a bus that can transport riders from the parking area to the bus going up the hill. Jill noted that there are a lot of places that have potential for long term parking and they could make it a bus stop. Dave Grah added that there has been updates to the Sierra Street lot (which is a lease from DWP), the back third is going to be perm only parking. It will be a 6 month minimum parking permit. It will be longer than the 72 hours that are permitted everywhere else. The City is just now starting to work on this. The Police Department will work with the hikers to issue the permits and will leave the hikers alone because they will know who the cars belong to and when the hiker will return. This is being done in a lot of the parking lots in town, not just Sierra Street.

Doug Thompson noted that there was a parking study done a few years ago by the Forest Service about town parking and trail head parking and this is a problem with all of the small towns. A lot of the PCT and John Muir trail hikers use Bishop as a supply hub so the problem isn't at the trail head but throughout the valley. Some cars will park at Whitney Portal all season long. For daily use, there is no place to park, this is also a problem. Another area is Horseshoe Meadow. This trail was not used 10-15 years ago but now it is an alternative entry point for the John Muir Trail. The people are coming but there are headaches that come along with all of the people.

**ITEM NO. 7** Tribal Report

None

**ITEM NO. 8** Caltrans Report

Mark Heckman stated that they do not have a report today.

Denise Hayden asked about the new asphalt on the south of Big Pine. Mark said that he will check into it and report back. Denise stated that the road was extremely bumpy and she hoped that Caltrans did not accept the job from the contractor that did the work.

**ITEM NO. 9** City of Bishop Report

Dave Grah said that work is progressing on the Seebu to School path project and the Spruce/Yaney/Hanby sidewalk project, and the Bishop Stormwater drainage plan. All of these projects were funded in part by LTC. The City is also in construction on two small City pavement projects.

Courtney asked about the City of Bishop's SB1 project list submittal to the state. Dave noted that it is in; it was due by Monday of this week. They submitted the two small City pavement projects that were mentioned earlier. The South Street project that is complete and the "dig outs 2017" at South Fowler at Line Street and May Street at Main Street which is still under construction.

**ITEM NO. 10** Executive Director's Report

SB 1: The County also met the FY 2017/2018 SB1 project submittal deadline. The four projects are:

1. Countywide crack seal
2. Countywide road striping/pavement markings
3. Overlay on 3.03 mils of Laws Poleta Road
4. Overlay on 2.0 miles of Dolomite Loop Road

The draft Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) was released for public review & comment. The ITIP shows the construction component of Olancha-Cartago being programmed as well as the design component for Freeman Gulch Segment 2. The ITIP is finalized on December 15<sup>th</sup> – the same date as the Inyo RTIP is due. Staff will bring the RTIP forward for consideration by your Commission at the November 15<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**ITEM NO. 11** Reports from members of the Inyo County Local Transportation Commission

Pat Gardner – Thanked Courtney Smith and Clint Quilter for the work that they did at the CTC town hall meeting in Mammoth Lakes. Courtney added that Doug Thompson and Matt Kingsley gave a very nice presentation. Mono County's presentation synchronized with ours so it gave the CTC a good idea of the transportation issue in the Eastern Sierra.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at: 9:29 a.m.

Attest:

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Clint Quilter  
Executive Director

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By: Denise Hayden, Secretary