

Mono County Local Transportation Commission

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MINUTES

April 14, 2014
(Adopted May 12, 2014)

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS: Tim Fesko (by videoconference), Larry Johnston, Fred Stump

TOWN COMMISSIONERS: Jo Bacon, Sandy Hogan **ABSENT:** Matthew Lehman

COUNTY STAFF: Scott Burns, Stacey Simon, Gerry Le Francois, Wendy Sugimura, Garrett Higerd, Megan Mahaffey, C.D. Ritter

TOWN STAFF: Peter Bernasconi

CALTRANS: Ryan Dermody, Tom Hallenbeck

ESTA: John Helm

SSTAC: Beth Himelhoch, Megan Foster, Rick Franz, Debbie Diaz, John Helm, Laurel Martin

GUESTS: Chris Lizza, Kelly Garcia

1. **CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair Jo Bacon called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m., and attendees recited the pledge of allegiance.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

3. **MINUTES:**

MOTION: Approve minutes of March 10, 2014, as submitted. (*Stump/Hogan. Ayes: 5. Absent: Lehman.*)

4. **ACTION ITEMS:**

A. **PUBLIC HEARING: Unmet Transit Needs.** The SSTAC members introduced themselves. Wendy Sugimura stressed importance of this annual hearing that complies with two state laws. Unmet transit needs: elderly, disabled, low-income, youth and other transit-dependent persons. Reasonable to meet: operationally feasible, community accepted, available to public, economical and meet fare box revenue within two years. Public forums for community input were held at RPACs, with ESTA doing most of the outreach. **OPEN PUBLIC HEARING:** 1) Developmentally disabled/disabled Bishop/Mammoth on weekends. 2) Locating special-needs population in a disaster (where to find them by address, longitude/latitude or landmark, pets, gate locks, O₂-dependent transport, etc.) in event of evacuation. During a fire, Inyo went door-to-door with sheriff's department. Office of Emergency Services (OES) would be in charge (sheriffs). Paramedics likely know locations from callouts. Maybe have agreement with ESTA so it's prepared. 3) Bishop/Mammoth and points in between major centers of region, especially in summer. 4) Transitional services for young adults 18-22 to live independently. 5) Getting Crowley students to ride public transit to Mammoth, not school bus. 6) Wrong timing Bishop-Mammoth bus – people can't get to work on time. Didn't want to join vanpool, just occasional need. 7) Traffic jam at school in mornings. Maybe not "unmet need," but needs fixing. (Commissioner Bacon noted plans under way next month.) 8) Website link to transportation service providers. (Helm: Ultimately, contact ESTA to see if it meets need. ESTA continues to inform policy makers that it's the resource to contact. Sugimura noted County is more visible, but defers to ESTA.)

Unmet transit needs will come back to LTC for analysis/adoption next month. Procedure for special circumstances on who to contact, where to go, how to access info? Sugimura stated ESTA is always available by website or phone. CDD is first line of contact, providing RPAC forums. Annual process elevates visibility, but info is always available at County.

Sugimura will take input for her and Helm to integrate into table. Resolution will be adopted prior to budget process. **CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING.**

B. Mono County OWP (Overall Work Program) 2014-15: Megan Mahaffey incorporated suggested changes. Dates on p. 48-50 are off by a year. Title on p. 48 should be "Deliverables." Triple-check dates.

MOTION: Adopt Mono County OWP 2014-15 for submission to Caltrans with date corrections. (Stump/Hogan. Ayes: 5-0. Absent: Lehman.)

DISCUSSION: \$500,000 for five people working full time on projects? *Full-time equivalents.* Developing work programs to develop work programs? *Required by grants; need in place to apply. Developing costly plans has to be done right. Everyone checks carefully.* Chair: This complaint is not supported by commission.

C. TIGER 2014 grant program: Bernasconi: Parking garage for YARTS, ESTA, and overnight buses to park in secure setting. Grant for actual construction, Caltrans is partner. Part of development agreement with Intrawest is for roundabout (< \$10 million). Plan and map later. Page 59: Doable, not lovable.

MOTION: Adopt Resolution R14-04 approving application for "TIGER 2014 grant program" with typo correction. (Johnston/Fesko. Ayes: 5-0. Absent: Lehman.)

DISCUSSION: Stump: Not a roundabout fan, especially in snow country. Johnston: It's safer.

D. Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP): Megan Mahaffey and Gerry Le Francois compiled. Why can't Chair sign it? *Looked at past contracts, now wanted a resolution.*

MOTION: Approve Resolution R14-05 authorizing executive director or designee to execute Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). (Hogan/Stump. Ayes: 5-0. Absent: Lehman.)

5. COMMISSIONER REPORTS: **Hogan:** YARTS Authority Authorizing Committee held workshop last week. Fresno is considering YARTS, Tuolumne County has pilot program, and move onto JPA agenda soon. Hire consultant to update one chapter of short-range transit plan. Business plan also. Complex arrangement among counties. Fresno on hold, looking at logical bus stops. Madera opposes, but residents want bus to stop in Oakhurst. Sequoia/Kings wants two-year pilot program **of its own.** Whittington is setting up MOU as educational tool, doing footwork that Fresno would fund. YARTS would be connector to Sequoia/Kings. **Stump:** Accident reporting system has very few vehicle-animal collision reports. CHP gets entered, but not sheriffs. Need data for State Highway Operation & Protection Program (SHOPP) projects. CHP/Bishop in Mono County and MLPD data not captured. Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS)? Important to have accurate data. Counter reports at CHP not usually entered into SWITRS system. (Hallenbeck: SWITRS has backlog. Caltrans needs closer to real-time entries. Dermody: Many hit deer go unreported. Caltrans maps database when deer are retrieved.) **Fesko:** Thanks to Caltrans for road matters. **Johnston:** Property-assessed clean energy (PACE) realm may be ready by fall. **Bacon:** Council considering funding Lakes Basin trolley earlier and later.

In another report, Caltrans District 9 Director Tom Hallenbeck mentioned the adopted 2014 STIP, including Olancho-Cartago after 15 years due to MOU partnerships. Philosophy change at Caltrans means another four-lane project **utilizing Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) funds** is unlikely. More flexibility for locals, especially bikes and cars coexisting.

6. ADMINISTRATION

A. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Yosemite policies: Scott Burns noted AAC input was incorporated. Focus was on communities as multiple gateways. Increased parking spots from 340 to 562. New trail connecting visitor center to activity centers. Bike trail impacts wetlands, but foot trails OK. Maybe insert Heritage Highway into Objective B, Policy 1. Two daily routes from Mammoth to Tuolumne. Day trips by horse discontinued at Tuolumne. Objective A, Policy 3 mentions only the pass – should say "and the park." Caltrans, Mono and Yellowstone incorporated cyclists into systems, but not Yosemite.

B. Four-year RTP update cycle: Scott Burns noted if LTC chooses, could align RTP update cycle with Town and Mono housing elements, for which funding is not reimbursed. Old housing element was overly aggressive. LTC could choose to consider switching cycle to integrate transportation and land use housing plan.

Housing Element updates are out of sync with Census. If update RTP every four years, would get funding, but not for housing elements. Commission concurred with four-year, as did Town.

C. Caltrans ex-officio role on the LTC: Tom Hallenbeck requested a seat at table and nameplate. Burns: Law doesn't allow Caltrans to sit on commission unless officially appointed by Town or County as a member. Handbook item is vaguely worded.

Simon: Law sets membership – three by Mono Supervisors, three by town council, three transit district (nonexistent). Either Mono or Town could appoint Caltrans representative. Issues perhaps regard dual role, sitting on RTPA. Hallenbeck: More than half RTPAs in state have ex officio. Dueling opinions to resolve in court. Simon: Will follow up with other RTPAs. Ex officio = full-fledged board member. Means position, not person. Voting or non-voting. Cannot have someone that statute doesn't call out by name or office. By virtue of office, automatically on commission. Could set title.

Johnston: Why does statute exclude Caltrans? Simon: Issues under other laws (funding flow, appointment authority, supervision). Could do analysis.

Bacon: Partner in discussion, sitting at table. Change of Town rep in July when Lehman is replaced.

Fesko: Meetings let anyone in on discussion. Why special spot? Hallenbeck: Not just able to speak in public comment. Simon: LTC hears from anyone at any time, whether sitting or standing. Problem is putting member as title. How about "agency representative?"

Suggestions: Clean up handbook, consider seventh member, and get legal opinion. Stump: Treat major partner as partner sitting at table. No reason for partner to sit in audience. Important to resolve, would like Caltrans at table regularly. Simon: "Agency partner" is OK. Bacon: Consensus is for Hallenbeck to sit at table while resolving.

7. LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

A. Tioga Road spring opening: Walters: Snowpack 27%-30% of normal along road, looking for authorization from Mono Supervisors for Mono to participate. Johnston: No snow now, so could open sooner than Memorial Day. Park Service fatality at Olmsted Point makes park cautious. Hallenbeck: SR 120W will open by fishing opener. Bikes-only event possible.

8. TRANSIT

A. Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA): Helm: Ridership decreased 11% due to decline in MMSA contracted routes, down 24,000 riders due to reduced visitation. Mammoth Express declined. Gains: June Lake route daily. Benton: New family using route. Gray Line: Covered Green Line. Total productivity was flat. Farebox ratio increased 31% to 37% for routes that charge. Stump: Why tally quarter over quarter? Helm: Operating practice. Only requirement is annual. Hogan: Use quarter to quarter to see causes. Johnston: React to differences, change routes.

B. Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS): Burns: Budget approved, governing body meets this afternoon, Tuolumne shuttle approved at same funding level.

9. CALTRANS

A. Safety data & potential MOU project(s) in Mono County: Dermody: Caltrans needs choice among three projects. Bacon: Calling them "passing lanes" even though four lanes. Hallenbeck: Improvements to 395 designated from Lee Vining south. Support more four-laning in Mono for safety reasons. Not have same traffic and collisions in Inyo.

Dermody: Breaking ground 2023-24, so time for selection. Caltrans recommends Conway Ranch passing lane. Stump: Wind is major factor, uncontrollable. Can control N. Conway passing lane. Johnston: Looking at tourism and trucks, biggest problem is two-lane up out of BP. Potential closures due to narrowness, snow removal. Fesko: Talked N. Conway before, still short bottleneck. Bridgeport Valley needs passing lanes in 18-mi section, needed year-round. Hogan: Bridgeport is long, long stretch. Impressed by snow removal on N. Conway, but held up only briefly. More bang for buck for Bridgeport passing lanes. Fesko: N. Conway at 2002 dollars will rise more than BP at 2009 dollars. Takes away anxiety of passing, maybe stop in Bridgeport. Bacon: No decision today. Mono's share 40%? Yes. Stump: Could do Conway Ranch *and* Bridgeport for cost of N. Conway. Hallenbeck: Would eat into overall pie available for local projects. Lots of money, big impact.

B. Activities in Mono County & pertinent statewide information: Hallenbeck: Efforts to keep pavement in good condition – sealing cracks, pulling up shoulders on SR 120E. Caltrans learned of chip seal problems. Crestview maintenance? Demolish, construct new maintenance station, new truck shed. Tear down oldest part first (red-tagged for asbestos, Hantavirus). Crestview rest area was open all winter due to no snow.

Stump: One bus stop in Chalfant serves two school districts. Half of community lives across US 6, yet no warning about kids crossing road, speed drops from 65 mph to 60 mph. Safe Routes to Schools includes access to bus stops. Overlooked many years, needs to be addressed, more than just discussion – identify as a need. No high school in Tri-Valley, so BUHS also uses bus stop. Hallenbeck: Discussed with school district. Higerd: Chalfant streets rehab project is working with Caltrans for encroachment permits, maybe look into it as part of that process.

Feedback on brine sprayed on roadway? Instead of rock salt and cinders, lets snow melt and uses much less salt. Last, colder storm did test, saw noticeable difference. Brine on quicker, stayed on longer.

C. Expanded mission and vision statements: Hallenbeck: Good to review every five years, not modernized last 10 years. Improve mobility in California. Stump: Innate suspicion that state has one size fits all. Fine to talk about modes of transportation if accommodate areas that don't have modes. Hallenbeck: Tailor to Eastern Sierra, different from cities.

10. **QUARTERLY REPORTS** (*Continue to next meeting as Q/A, not read reports*)

A. Town of Mammoth Lakes: Waterford Gap? Bernasconi: Two segments of bridge, short of funding to connect new project to existing bike path. Four bridges in environmentally sensitive area. Portion not funded. 14' bike path, also emergency access. Lakes Basin road to open by fishing opener.

B. Mono County: Higerd: Surveyors laying out realignment of Rock Creek Road. Complete drainage improvements this year, pave four to five miles from top this year and remainder next year. Supporting USFS to get project going. Stump: Blowback on confusion from verbal communication. Get things in writing from other agencies.

C. Caltrans: (*Next meeting.*)

11. **INFORMATIONAL**

- A. Convict Road comment letter**
- B. Caltrans promotes Becket**
- C. Tuolumne Wild & Scenic River**

12. **UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS:** 1) Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS); 2) unmet transit needs; 3) OWP adoption; 4) commission composition, legal memo; 5) MOU project choice; 6) quarterly Q/A

13. **ADJOURN** at 12:06 p.m. to May 12, 2014.