

# Mono County Local Transportation Commission

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## DRAFT MINUTES

July 8, 2019

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**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:** Jennifer Halferty, John Peters, Fred Stump  
**TOWN COMMISSIONERS:** Sandy Hogan, Dan Holler for Lynda Salcido, John Wentworth  
**COUNTY STAFF:** Gerry Le Francois, Garrett Higerd, Hailey Lang, CD Ritter  
**TOWN STAFF:** Grady Dutton  
**CALTRANS:** Ryan Dermody, Austin West  
**ESTA:** Phil Moores

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1. **CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair Fred Stump called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. at the Town/County Conference Room, Minaret Village Mall, Mammoth Lakes. Attendees recited pledge of allegiance.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

### 3. MINUTES

**MOTION:** Approve minutes of June 20, 2019, as amended: 1) Item 5A: 1) Item 4rA: Hogan: Mobility Commission ~~collapsed hearings are now handled by PEDC (Planning & Economic Development Commission). Town needs should come forward.~~; 2) Item 5: Caltrans doing ~~bid~~ PID (Planning Initiation Document).; 3) Item 8B: Sandy Hogan ~~noted YARTS will operate four months, till Oct. 31.~~ (Halferty/Peters. Ayes: 6-0.)

4. **COMMISSIONER REPORTS:** **Holler:** None. **Halferty:** None. **Peters:** Thanks to Public Works for coordination effort to keep Fourth festivities five-day event safe. Caltrans listened to community on contractor for \$19 million Walker/Fales project. Traveled 120W during restricted hours, bring back to LTC what happened this year. Coordinated effort by MMSA, NPS, Mono resources misdirected, could have opened weeks earlier. Clifford Mann and Tony Dublino, who met with NPS, not necessarily concur with Park. **Hogan:** Roundabout handout from Tahoe. Third roundabout in Kings Beach. Mono lagging behind. Truckee has several, so snow not an issue. Incline volunteers care for theirs. One on books for Forest Trail many years but former Caltrans director opposed. One on Meridian also. Accidents at roundabouts less serious than at intersections. **Wentworth:** In Sacramento on CA Resources Board shared excerpts to keep agencies aware that Eastern Sierra may have role to play. **Stump:** Charging station at Hess Park in Lee Vining has issue, on hold. BOS and LTC support. Le Francois will check.

### 5. LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

#### A. Local transit services in Town of Mammoth Lakes

1. **Town transit services:** Dan Holler noted three areas: Old Mammoth Road upper, more Purple Line, longer service hours. Enhanced vs unmet needs. Expanded hours, more drivers? Requests for more stops, different routes, timing, more buses. Ongoing challenge to analyze viability. Shifting Gray Line off Old Mammoth Road expanded ridership. Staffing challenges. Many requests throughout year.

Halferty: Hearing not just on unmet needs but on general transit concerns. Appropriate to address, define more clearly next time. Two simultaneous public hearings.

Hogan: Separate processes: Town transit and required unmet needs. She described background when ESTA was developed. She cautioned, "Don't offer and then take away services, especially to residents." Hasty decision to disband Old Mammoth Road to Meridian, no data collected. Still get complaints. Provide free transit to all parts of town if reasonable.

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### COMMISSIONERS

Jennifer Halferty Sandy Hogan John Peters Lynda Salcido Fred Stump John Wentworth

Various commissioners recommended that residents meet with decision-making entities.

Moore: Balance between unmet needs and general transit. Tracking public requests for service has been done at Town Council, LTC, ESTA, RPACs, other public forums. Comments documented at public meetings. Encourage public meeting attendance. Entity will note how often comes up. LTC misunderstood government body, esoteric, money comes through here *Wentworth: Community unaware of what LTC does, role it can play in community.*

Halferty: Driver shortage at ESTA. Board working to attract and retain drivers.

Hogan: ESTA could be conduit to bodies that make decisions. Try to make things work. Old Mammoth Road came up as unmet need. *Holler: ESTA separate, independent. Input through elected officials.*

Moore: ESTA board gives him as much information as possible. ESTA partners with both counties but board hears consensus of public input and makes decisions about ESTA services.

**2. Old Mammoth service options:** Phil Moore cited years of history, read everything could find. Watched videos from 2016, Helm had general data, knew people were left out, SRTP (Short-Range Transit Plan) looked at Meridian after-6 pm service. Town Council and Helm discussed. Talked to residents above Aspen Village, encouraged involvement. Didn't want big buses on Red Fir. Town plan on books with CEQA needs prioritization.

Moore: Old Mammoth Road service ebbs and flows. Knolls has same issue. Pockets of population in town. Think about big picture of town. Ways to address individuals who have no car, shut in, need help. Mechanism of para-transit service within ¾ mile of fixed transit. Expand borders. DAR (Dial-A-Ride) runs in Mammoth but not many mobility-challenged types in town. Encourage going extra mile with individuals.

Hogan: Define DAR, maybe require disabled proof. *Moore: DAR is public asset. No weekend or after-hours. Staff will send off-hours.* Hogan: People used DAR as taxi.

Moore: Five options. Option 1, status quo (students on school days). School bus to Red Fir resumes in fall. Cannot compete with school bus. Option 2: Discontinue service. Option 3: Non-school days. Operational simplicity for ESTA. Adds 30 days within year. Option 4: Red Line/Town Trolley need turnaround. Group ready to object to something it does not like. Town spend money on Woodman turnaround. Option 5: New route. Realign existing system. Even cutaway costs \$200,000. Younger residents do not want a car.

Stump: Consensus on preferred option? Another 15 here or defer as action item to next meeting after MUSD information emerges? *Peters: MUSD major piece. Leave status quo till know. Holler: School starts Aug. 17 so not much time.* Stump: Bring back in August with new options.

**B. STIP (State Transportation Improvement Program) estimates:** Gerry Le Francois noted Beall getting rural feedback on changing the process. *Wentworth: Add Sandy Hogan to Beall letter.*

Le Francois included CTC funding chart from end of June. First SB 1 RTIP/STIP cycle. Workshop in September. Caltrans District 9 staff noted FG-2 (Freeman Gulch 2) project moving forward. Zeroes on list got advance funding. Shares determined by CTC. Safe Routes to Schools tied up in ATP (Active Transportation Program). At beginning of new cycle money over-committed. Projects fall out, money advanced.

Dermody: Continue MOU projects, as money falls out of sky. Cycles up and down. *Dutton: Always be ready with projects.*

Update on Sacramento? *Dermody: Acting director of Caltrans. Focus on mass transit, capacity increasing is bad word. Sell projects.*

Wentworth: State has renewed interest in natural resources.

--- Break: 10:30 – 10:40 a.m. ---

**C. ATP (Active Transportation Program):** Hailey Lang reviewed ATP no-match funding.

Stump: Applied for ATP before. Why denied? *Lang: Safe Routes for School is more-competitive pool, usually multi-year. Le Francois; Highly competitive. Before SB 1 got set amount of TE (Transportation Enhancement) dollars, saved for projects. Rurals struggle, maybe get little bit, save up. Don't score very high. Oversubscribed, many applications do not get funding.*

Dutton: Went to community in past. Changing all the time. Gap closure occurred.

Wentworth: GIS district within Mammoth Lakes. Discussion around disadvantaged community designations. Legislative vs regulatory.

Bridgeport streets next year ATP? *Higerd: Crossing and sidewalks but bigger Caltrans project proposed. Paperwork burden significant; plan projects with economy of scale.*

Town and Mono merge projects for gross figure that justifies all work? *Higerd: Metrics localized.*

Wentworth: USFS does not go near State projects. State is putting aside billions for projects. Scenic Byway in Congress? *Le Francois: Wait and see. Welcome centers and recreation services within certain radius of project.*

Dutton: Small gap project has enormous administrative cost. Appreciate program.

Halferty: Long-term liability of maintaining projects.

Wentworth: No right of way along Old Mammoth Road. Look into it. *Halferty: Use eminent domain.*

Dutton: Easier through open space.

Thinking about applying for something? *Le Francois: Connect smaller to larger project. Lake Mary was USFS, Town, County.*

Peters: Sonora Pass to Walker heavily traveled, unsafe for hikers, cyclists.

Le Francois: McKenzie River corridor in Oregon like part of West Walker. Paruolo may take trails to new level.

Wentworth: Ebike policy changes, maybe ride that route. USFS has given up ghost. Make sure of ebike regulations.

**D. OWP (Overall Work Program):** District 9 comments thorough. Meet Thursday with Caltrans on OWP items. Staff wants to turn page, better next year.

Stump: Dermody wrote response letter. *Dermody: Nitpicky due to pressure by headquarters.*

Hogan thanked Austin West for thorough comments.

## 6. ADMINISTRATION

**A. Support letter for Inyo County LTC's BUILD Grant submittal for Olancha/Cartago 4-Lane:**

Hailey Lang: Better leverage for widening 12.6 miles from two to four lanes. Ryan *Dermody: O/C currently funded. Would supplant RTIP funds if successful. Federal government favorable to rural areas right now. Apply through headquarters and Inyo County.*

***MOTION:*** Approve support letter for Inyo County LTC's BUILD Grant submittal for Olancha/Cartago 4-Lane (*Peters/Hogan. Ayes: 6-0.*)

## 7. TRANSIT

**A. Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA):** Phil Moores reported new 33-seat vehicle on 395 for backpacking season. Grants for new vehicles to update aging fleet. Reds Meadow Road opened July 4. Starkweather Lake stop for photos. Coordinating travelers on road. Drivers/dispatches start this week. Attract/retain drivers. Town increased \$45/hr to \$47/hr. Additional funds to negotiate with. Antelope Valley RPAC requested better marketing materials. Started new Mono brochure on all services at senior centers, CofC offices. Working with Pat Espinosa on better senior services. Want extension to Carson City from Bridgeport. Seniors get hot meal, bingo in Walker. Bring brochure when done.

Tracking recreational data on routes? *Moores: Some categories but not hikers.*

Who coordinates Reds Road opening? *Stump: Dovetail with 120 discussion? Congrats to ESTA for responsiveness.*

Holler: People surprised at free bus service in town.

Peters: Help with defining how Dial-A-Ride outreach is marketed. Bonus for two communities, more connectivity under way. Tie into monthly Behavioral Health socials with free meal in Bridgeport, a Mono event.

**B. Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS):** YARTS extends service till Oct. 31 or Tioga Pass closure, whichever occurs first.

At Hogan's request CD Ritter relayed her recent YARTS experience. Her brother from New Zealand, on a writing trip in Carmel Valley, drove to Merced to catch YARTS, and she took YARTS from Eastern Sierra to meet in Yosemite Valley for a day together during his third/final week in California.

**8. CALTRANS:** Ryan Dermody noted rockfall on SR 127 from Ridgecrest earthquake. Biggest issue is SR 178 Ridgecrest to Trona. District 8 office allotted \$3.1 million project for multiple cracks; contractor started work yesterday. Caltrans structures (36) examined, OK so far. EV chargers at rest areas in October but power lacking at Crestview.

Wentworth: Tesla's delivering cars. Recreational audience along 395. Pilot project around 395 corridor, US 6, trucking industry moving faster than auto industry.

Stump: Hwy 6 is vacuum. No cell service. Two active complaints over Frontier service with PUC. Maybe get trucking industry on Hwy 6. Teslas seem to catch fire every three weeks due to lithium battery.

Dermody: Caltrans website not ADA compliant, go through mediation.

## 9. QUARTERLY REPORTS

A. **Town of Mammoth Lakes:** Grady Dutton noted replacement bus shelter by Sierra Blvd. New shelters on south side of Main.

Pothole repair? *Dutton: Catching up. Update next month.*

Wentworth: Crack filling update also.

B. **Mono County:** Garrett Higerd noted several projects out to bid tomorrow, including Benton Crossing chip seal out as far as Brown's Town.

Airport Road? *Higerd: Funding for construction out a way. Moving on environmental.*

Peters: Meeting July 16 in Walker with contractor, subsequent RPAC meeting. Let people know.

Higerd: Outreach to all RPACs. When bids come in, moment of truth.

Chip seal? *Higerd: Project has chip seal to fog line, not shoulder where bike lane exists. Flush coat all over road. Accommodation to preemptively mitigate on shoulder, rubberized strip between fog line and traffic loading. Larry Johnston always supported that approach.*

Hogan will relay to former LTC commissioner/cyclist John Armstrong.

C. **Caltrans:** Dermody written report with new format was submitted late. Not all projects in there. New project from 203 to South Landing. Conway guardrail natina staining. Aspen/Walker shoulder widening. Public meeting 6-7 pm July 16 on two-season construction project. *Peters cited environmentally sensitive issues.*

Dermody: Chalfant two-way left turn lane starts July 22. Include Freeman Gulch and Olancha/Cartago (OC) projects in future reports. O/C new alignment to west, not involve Ranch House Café. Crystal Geyser new connection.

Applied for wildlife crossing project. Asked for \$5 million for environmental and design phases.

Bridgeport rehab curb extensions? *Dermody: 2025.*

Peters: Reevaluate back-in parking after vehicle backed into a storefront.

--- Commissioner Wentworth exited at 11:27 a.m. ---

## 10. INFORMATIONAL

A. **Scenic Byways**

B. **Safer Streets:** Halferty's 12-year-old daughter had suggested diagonal pedestrian crossing at school intersection. CD Ritter noted that New Zealand has diagonal crossings, with a loud staccato sound alerting pedestrians to cross intersection diagonally followed by sound alert for vehicles only.

C. **Freeman Gulch-2 letter**

D. **California highways & bridges**

11. **UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS:** 1) NPS, MMSA, Mono on Tioga Pass opening; 2) Reds Meadow opening; and 3) ESTA for Old Mammoth Road. NOTE: Hogan absent Aug. 12, Holler to substitute.

12. **ADJOURN** at 11:49 a.m. to August 12, 2019

*Prepared by CD Ritter, LTC secretary*