

# Mono County Local Transportation Commission

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## MINUTES

February 11, 2013  
(Adopted March 11, 2013)

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**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:** Tim Fesko, Larry Johnston, Fred Stump  
**TOWN COMMISSIONERS:** Matthew Lehman. **ABSENT:** Jo Bacon, Sandy Hogan  
**COUNTY STAFF:** Scott Burns, Gerry Le Francois, Garrett Higerd, Mary Booher, C.D. Ritter  
**TOWN STAFF:** Peter Bernasconi, Ray Jarvis, Jessica Morriss  
**CALTRANS:** Forest Becket, Ryan Dermody, Brad Mettam  
**ESTA:** John Helm, Jill Batchelder  
**GUESTS:** Kelly Garcia, Beth Himelhoch,

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1. **CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair Matthew Lehman called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. at the Town/County Conference Room, Minaret Village Mall, Mammoth Lakes, and Commissioner Fesko led the pledge of allegiance.
2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Garrett Higerd reported Rock Creek Road project has an LTC-related match. MAP-21 has changed funding mechanisms from Forest Highways to Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) that requires 11.5% of \$9 million.
3. **INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONERS & ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE-CHAIR:** New commissioners Tim Fesko and Fred Stump of Mono County were introduced. In keeping with LTC Handbook policies, the chair position rotated from Town to County: Commissioner Johnston was elected chair (Ayes: 4-0.), and vice-chair nomination was continued to next meeting due to Town absences.
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Minutes from Dec. 10, 2012, were continued to March 14, due to two absentees.
5. **COMMISSIONER REPORTS:** Lehman: Locator devices on buses and trolleys to track timing, larger bike racks (50%>) for summer. Nighttime service back on track per MMSA and Town. Working with MMSA on Mammoth bike races 09.04.13, start in town down Main Street.
6. **ADMINISTRATION**
  - A. **Proposed 2013-14 Overall Work Program (OWP):** Mary Booher described OWP as a guiding document for Rural Planning Assistance (RPA) funds. Due to Caltrans by March 1. Town's Circulation Element ties in with Mobility Element, whereas Mono's Circulation Element is the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Town policies are embedded into RTP, but lack strategy to incorporate into RTP. Keep trails as separate work element for development projects.

Corridor Management Plan: Scott Burns described scenic application at federal level. Money is blended with Tourism's marketing component. Programming enhancements are within communities themselves. Ultimate product is a plan that sets the stage for application and integration into RTP. It's broad now, ready for integration with tourism and marketing, economic development plan.

Back-in parking: Wendy Sugimura indicated Caltrans has been very supportive and will evaluate. Notebooks at local businesses are set up for comments. Caltrans' Terry Erlwain will return in summer, and CHP has been monitoring (no accidents). Commissioner Lehman found back-in parking odd, and Commissioner Stump didn't like it. Commissioner Fesko thought maybe it seemed odd because it's new/different, and people don't like change. Put back message boards in springtime. Booher noted local complaining lasted a couple weeks, and traffic has been slowed (removed passing lane, more constrained, visual cues, parking layout).

Sugimura noted the grant with Caltrans will be complete once the project final report and grant closeout report are filed. ESTA and the Town have proposed new work elements. Total amount of funding is unknown till rollover is identified. Projects can be removed later. Present draft to Caltrans for review by March 1.

Commissioner Johnston noted that if \$100,000 represents a staff person/year, then \$700,000 means seven persons working a full year. So, would it involve using consultants or part-time help? Ray Jarvis expressed concern for the Town, describing it as ambitious for current staff. The Town uses consultants all the time. Johnston suggested augmenting staff resources to get work done.

**B. Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP):** Peter Bernasconi cited another grant for Waterford Gap. No NEPA required, CEQA already done. Design will include flood control.

**MOTION:** Adopt Resolution R13-01 (originally R12-09) amending the 2012 RTIP to reallocate funding from the Waterford Gap project to the Mammoth Creek project (*Lehman/Fesko. Ayes: 4. Absent: Bacon, Hogan.*)

**C. MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century):** Gerry Le Francois noted most money will come through State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP), and local projects through State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Rural counties don't have much accident data for performance-based information. Transportation Alternatives Programs (TAP) replaces Transportation Enhancement (TE). Greenhouse gas reduction is optional for rural counties. Commissioner Lehman suggested asking for consideration, as rural representatives sided with western counties on population-based formula. Rurals vs. Urbans. Maybe send letter to representatives.

Is MAP-21 a two-year authorization schedule? Brad Mettam clarified the difference between authorizing (what you can do) and programming (here's the money). Some deadlines occur after expiration of MAP-21. Legislation will be by statewide formula, either population-based (which would mean 95% less funding for Mono) or STIP. No federal guidance exists, and some programs were eliminated. State is trying to replicate existing programs. As federal regulations evolve, Caltrans evolves.

Commissioner Johnston suggested drafting an LTC letter to keep funding along lines of Regional Council of Rural Counties (RCRC) letter with focus on Mono. Mono Supervisors and Town could write letters as well.

**MOTION:** Direct staff to prepare letter similar to letter from RCRC. (*Lehman/Stump. Ayes: 4. Absent: Bacon, Hogan.*)

**D. 2014 RTIP considerations, including interregional MOU status:** Gerry Le Francois noted \$6 million to \$7 million new funding capacity for five years. He reviewed MOU projects involving two to three LTCs and the State. Brad Mettam stated that the Olancha-Cartago environmental draft is out. The preferred alignment involves median separation as a safety feature, swing to west of communities. Last piece needs funding.

Commissioner Fesko questioned why Mono funds outside the county. Le Francois replied that former commissions supported projects with economic benefit. Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) are common now. Mettam recalled the original MOU added opportunity for Mono (High Point started in MOU, but was funded as a SHOPP project). Le Francois added that Southern Mono got a project that didn't cost 40% of construction, and Mono has prior commitments to keep things moving forward. Commissioner Johnston perceived a stroke of brilliance to leverage funds Mono wouldn't have gotten, improve safety, and create great transportation for Southern California visitors – all for relatively little money, Mono got a lot of bang for the buck. MOUs set up projects here, such as Conway Summit, with other counties contributing to Mono. Mono has gone to California Transportation Commission (CTC) to support regional projects. Mettam cited key reason: no single county had enough money, so leveraged state funding. Inyo and Mono picked up Kern's investment when it couldn't fund.

Le Francois compared county shares to a bank account – shares are there, need State's permission to spend. Mono contributes to state highway system with MOUs. Johnston added that Bridgeport and Lee Vining streets were not questioned because of Mono's regional orientation. MOUs offer multiple leveraging.

Mettam indicated that the State is very cognizant of that. Le Francois noted Mono funded environmental portion on US 395 by Adelanto. Project was split in half, with locals funding four-lane expressway, and Mono funding northern section. Is Transportation Enhancement (TE) money gone? Ask about that in aforementioned LTC letters.

**E. LTC priorities for 2013:** Commissioner Johnston presented a 20-item list, conceptually based on tourism and environmentally friendly suggestions. Commissioner Lehman wanted to add to list: Minaret Road

across from Nevados is missing sidewalk along retaining wall. Could Caltrans work with Town on safe-sidewalk 100-yd stretch? Prioritize that along with sidewalks in town. Fix before fatality occurs. Remove debris around new monument signs. Very little signage for Mammoth from north or south. Airport Road top priority. Commissioner Stump mentioned Paradise trail connection behind guard rail at Rock Creek Canyon project and Chalfant bus stops. Concurrence by commission? Revisit next meeting.

7. **LOCAL TRANSPORTATION ISSUE: Signage on I-5 at Hesperia:** Gerry

8. **TRANSIT**

A. **Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA):**

1. **Fiscal Year 2012-13 Program of Projects (POP):** Jill Batchelder noted funds remaining from last year. POP is for rural areas only, so Inyo receives apportionment as well.

**MOTION:** Adopt Resolution R13-02 programming \$93,323 in federal funds, adopting a POP with ESTA as subrecipient, and authorizing executive director to sign associated certifications and assurances for public transit services in Mono County. (Stump/Lehman. Ayes: 4. Absent: Bacon, Hogan.)

2. **FY 2012-13 California Transit Security Grant Program (CTSGP) - California Transit Assistance Fund (CTAF):** Wendy Sugimura noted eligible project was security fencing at storage facility. Vandalism? Helm cited a suspicious incident this winter.

**MOTION:** Adopt Resolution R13-03 allocating \$14,188 for transit vehicle storage security fencing and authorizing executive director to sign necessary grant documents (Fesko/Stump. Ayes: 4. Absent: Bacon, Hogan.)

B. **Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS):** Scott Burns reported Byng Hunt and Tim Alpers are new YARTS members. Tuolumne River Draft Plan has been released. Tuolumne run will start at Mammoth twice daily instead of Lee Vining, supplementing regular YARTS service to Yosemite Valley.

C. **Replacement vehicle for specialized transit:** Wendy Sugimura clarified grant application is for service expansion, not replacement vehicle, and distributed a letter. No cost to Mono. Increase in intellectually disabled clients? Yes. *Young adults moving into area are utilizing services in Mammoth.*

**MOTION:** Adopt Resolution R13-03 authorizing letter for service extension. (*Lehman/Fesko. Ayes: 4. Absent: Bacon, Hogan.*)

9. **CALTRANS**

A. **Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP):** Forest Becket noted ITSP was last updated in 1998. Mono is building backbone of California transportation system even though it lacks population. Is US 6 in corridor? Mettam indicated new areas were not added. He's been in touch with Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), which has not yet identified US 6 as an issue.

B. **Proposed changes to the Caltrans Urban Boundary:** Forest Becket clarified that "urban boundary" is not to be confused with LAFCO Sphere of Influence boundaries. A minor collector within the urban boundary that becomes a major collector is eligible for federal funding, including Lake Mary Road and Airport Road extension. Resolutions by Mono Supervisors and Town are required, but no LTC action.

Why are forest roads in urban draft when Town has tight urban boundary? *Peter Bernasconi explained that road past Shady Rest is maintained, geothermal wells exist there. Road was constructed as a summer road. Sherwin Creek Road is included.* Commissioner Johnston saw a major departure from existing urban area of town. Is this where it's going to grow into the future? Is map appropriate? He saw environmental implications.

Forest Becket described an effort addressing Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), not land use/development, LAFCO considerations. Garrett Higerd recalled Bishop went through the process. FHWA rule is >5,000 people, hence Mammoth Lakes and Bishop. The boundary goes around neighborhoods, not transportation route, hence irregular shape. Airport and Hot Creek Hatchery roads are affected. Johnston thought it made sense around airport, but roads north of Main Street are USFS. Inconsistencies exist.

Higerd stated Mono has no interest in improving Sherwin Creek Road. Johnston perceived an unnecessary departure from urban growth boundaries. Bernasconi explained the boundary follows town limits. Johnston suggested superimposing town limits on map. Higerd described the airport as an island, consistent with guidelines. Changes sent to BOS and Town? *BOS next Tuesday.* Becket suggested expanding to areas of future development, schools, etc.

C. **Activities in Mono County and pertinent statewide information:** Forest Becket cited High Point Curve update 14 in packet. Commissioner Fesko noted recent weather has created lots of rockfall, screen bulging, with one rock snaking beneath screen to take out an oil pan. Becket described the roadway as temporary, maybe cut screen/remove debris. Eventually it will not be as much an issue.

Caltrans is setting up briefing for new commissioners.

10. **INFORMATIONAL:** High Point Curve Updates 13 & 14

11. **UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS:** 1) approval of minutes; 2) OWP status review; 3) in-depth review of MOUs; 4) scenic byway update; 5) LTC priority list; 6) LTC letter; 7) BOS letter

12. **ADJOURN** to March 11, 2013

*Prepared by C.D. Ritter, LTC secretary*