

Mono County Local Transportation Commission

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MINUTES

August 11, 2014
(Adopted November 3, 2014)

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS: Tim Fesko, Larry Johnston, Fred Stump
TOWN COMMISSIONERS: Jo Bacon, Sandy Hogan **ABSENT:** Shields Richardson
COUNTY STAFF: Scott Burns, Gerry Le Francois, Garrett Higerd, Megan Mahaffey, C.D. Ritter
TOWN STAFF: Peter Bernasconi, Jen Daugherty
CALTRANS: Ryan Dermody, Dennee Alcala
ESTA: John Helm

1. **CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair Jo Bacon called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and attendees recited the pledge of allegiance.
2. **INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSIONER SHIELDS RICHARDSON:** Absent
3. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** John Armstrong, Eastside Velo, announced the annual High Sierra Fall Century and Gran Fondo Saturday, Sept. 6, with expanded options of 102, 70 and 42 miles. About 1,500 cyclists will gather for a mass start at the Village, and six feed stations will be staffed by community organizations and sports teams. This event should help publicize Mono as a bike-friendly county. In September, new rule of 3' clearance between vehicles and bikes takes effect. Nearly 100 cyclists registered for a Friday prologue time trial (new event) from 203/395 junction to Mammoth Mountain Inn. Competitive magazine editors will ride through Mono en route to Las Vegas via US 95. On Lower Rock Creek Road? *Yes, only a dozen on a Sunday ride.* Riders should contact Mono County.
4. **MINUTES:**

MOTION: Approve minutes of June 9, 2014 (*no July meeting*). (*Hogan/Fesko. Ayes: 4-0. Abstain due to absence: Johnston. Absent: Richardson*)
5. **ADMINISTRATION:**
 - A. **PUBLIC HEARING: Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) adoption cycle:** Gerry Le Francois explained intent to shorten time span from five years to four to coincide with Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and extend time to adopt Housing Elements (involved process including interaction with Housing & Community Development (HCD)). Cost added to RTP, but less to Housing Elements (general fund issue)? *Yes.* Retroactive for recently completed Housing Elements? *Yes.* Town support? *Yes.* **OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT:** None. **CLOSE PUBLIC COMMENT.**

MOTION: Support the proposed change in the RTP adoption cycle from five years to four. (*Stump/Hogan. Ayes: 5-0. Absent: Richardson.*)
 - B. **Master Fund Transfer Agreement:** Scott Burns introduced and explained the agreement.

MOTION: Adopt Resolution R14-12 authorizing executive director's signature on Master Fund Transfer Agreement: (*Johnston/Hogan. Ayes: 5-0. Absent: Richardson.*)
 - C. **Local Transportation Fund (LTF):** Megan Mahaffey noted under-allocation last report. Proposing to keep increased revenue in rollover account? *Yes, already received.*

6. **COMMISSIONER REPORTS:** **Hogan:** Authority Advisory Committee met prior to YARTS meeting, which all attended. Consideration of Fresno on SR 41 route is looking good. **At a recent Collaborative Planning Team meeting, it was noted that** traffic jams in Valley tie up buses, but no transit center is planned, according to Kathleen Morse. Express bypass at entrance is needed for buses and cars with park passes, as well as adequate bus turnarounds. Transit should be the solution, not the problem. **Johnston:** None. **Fesko:** Kudos to Caltrans and Mono County for cleanup of highway spill outside Bridgeport. Nice job on pavement on Conway. Saw Tesla Model S at his RV park, expensive, nice car, wave of future if lower price. Battery factories proposed at three sites, including Nevada. Curbside charging station exists in Gardnerville. **Bacon:** Attended Summer of Stewardship Day at Sotcher Lake, with ESTA providing bus tickets. Driver thanked volunteers. **Stump:** Request from Benton for wild horses sign from Caltrans mile posts 25 to 47. A one-year reprieve for Head Start at Mammoth Elementary to relocate delayed reconfiguration of school traffic. Maybe update from MUSD in January?

7. **LOCAL TRANSPORTATION:** No items

8. **TRANSIT**

A. **Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA):** John Helm presented second-quarter operating statistics. Ridership was up 6,000, with a strong Memorial Weekend at Reds Meadow. MMSA adjusted service and was down due to low snowfall. Dial-A-Ride routes were down due to nature of service, communities served. Minor decreases on Reno route were likely due to weak winter. Fare revenues: Reds up huge, Mammoth Express down, most routes up.

Why did Gray Line not meet goal? *Goals are generalizations. Nature of area served. How arrive at goals? Consultant based goals on comparisons to comparable areas and ESTA's past statistics. Accommodation for local variables? Yes, intentionally. Relationship between goal and value of service? Value for user is extremely important. Actual service on street is valuable. Next-bus implementation? Added Purple Line to Red Line and trolleys. Some issues. Only bus equipped with transmitter was out for routine maintenance. Special events: Village Fest did not get extra service due to full buses. Did Town request more? No request, so no added service. Could existing transit service run longer? Yes, but nobody asked, fell through cracks. Add Village Fest to radar. Catalyst was July 4 weekend. Service fell far short of need.*

B. **Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS):** Scott Burns indicated Fresno is likely to join. Commissioner Hogan asked about NPS funding for SR 120 to Groveland.

9. **CALTRANS**

A. **Activities in Mono County:** Ryan Dermody is investigating electric-vehicle charging stations with public/private partnerships at rest areas. However, rest areas may not be the most appropriate location as they offer limited services. Recent news has focused on Tesla locating a plant at the Tahoe-Reno industrial park on US 80. The industrial park is the largest park of its type in the world, and Caltrans has been watching its buildout closely, as it could create traffic increases in our region, especially on the US 6 corridor. Commissioner Stump thought traffic could encounter agricultural equipment on road. He asked if Caltrans would wait for increased traffic. *There are limited available resources, but projects are placed on the planning list. Shoulder widening is occurring from Bishop to Chalfant, maybe truck climbing lanes someday at Mathieu Hill if they become warranted. Caltrans has discussed the park with the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), however Nevada is a pro-growth state, so planning is somewhat reactive.* Hazmat spill: Need to work with counties to identify potential alternate routes to US 395, maybe gravel roads or farmer-field roads. Started multi-modal plan for District 9 for all users, but will need to find funding streams to implement projects. No standard dedicated bicycle funding exists. Federal transportation funding extended to May, signed by President Obama. Traffic counts: On federal census time line, data by September. SR 108: Big rigs get stuck and block traffic on tight turns. Will ask Mono Supervisors to enact ordinance to prohibit large trucks on Sonora Pass.

10. **INFORMATIONAL:** No items

11. **QUARTERLY REPORTS**

A. **Town of Mammoth Lakes:** Peter Bernasconi outlined current and upcoming projects.

1) **School traffic:** Was summer 2014 too soon? *Staff did rough estimate with architect.* Commissioner Stump clarified that Head Start funding funnels through Office of Education, whereas school traffic has safety issues. Coordinate for win/win. Commissioner Bacon noted school starts in 10 days with same traffic pattern.

- 2) **Bridges:** Found new uses for replaced bridges.
- 3) **Meridian roundabout:** *Maybe reprogram Meridian roundabout to 2018 and use funding elsewhere.*
- 4) **Lake George connector path:** NEPA likely will indicate Categorical Exemption. Meridian “road diet” would slim it down to three lanes with sidewalk on north side.
- 5) **Airport:** The Town of Mammoth Lakes is studying a wildlife hazard assessment of the airport. Need to factor in deer-kill statistics. Ryan Dermody cited a relevant working group involving Caltrans staff and Sacramento staff. Is the Mammoth Lakes consultant looking at only one treatment? *Just hazard assessment, not treatments.* Stump wondered if talk about converting Bishop airport would funnel through Inyo LTC. Try to avoid “gas wars” equivalent, source of feud. Logistical problems in Bishop include water. Commissioner Hogan thought maybe Bishop could be backup to Mammoth-Yosemite airport. Dermody suggested it as a good topic for Eastern Sierra Council of Governments (COG).

B. Mono County: Garrett Higerd reviewed projects:

- 1) **June Lake:** Drainage improvements are needed. Working with USFS for additional funding on roads that go into forest. Goal is June Lake Triathlon 2015.
- 2) **Mountain Gate Park:** Funded separately, but Mono also is working on additional improvements such as trails, benches, landscaping, fitness circuit training, and ADA fishing platform.
- 3) **Convict Road rehab:** Moving along. May need letter of support for early funds. Lots of coordination with Inyo National Forest created momentum for USFS to improve trail. Also planned are bike climbing lane on steeper uphill, pedestrian improvements between campgrounds and trailheads, and replacing aging railroad ties. Resort owner is working with USFS on permit to include underground cable. People make plans for Convict years in advance.
- 4) **Airport Road:** Construction in 2019.
- 5) **Preventative maintenance:** Commissioner Stump supported continuous funding flow for this extremely important project.
- 6) **Rock Creek Road:** Top two miles are ground up, being graded. Under-drains due to spring activity needed beneath road. On schedule. Paving early September. Maybe another four miles this summer. Met with Edison last week, now wants three phases. Only two pull-boxes in road. Unlikely to get trench in prior to ACE’s coming in to pave road. Encroachment permit process needs to be followed. Consider moratorium on cutting into new roads. Edison is to start at bottom, ACE at top. Maybe get utility line in before new asphalt. Commissioner Bacon noted some concessions by Edison, but who has authority to deny permits? *Inyo and Mono public works departments.* How could Mono hold original contractor’s work if Edison cuts it? ACE has maximum 30-minute traffic delay, and Edison could add another half-hour. Request traffic-control plan with encroachment permit application. CEQA component is involved. Stump noted an Edison letter to Mono Supervisors (BOS) tomorrow on its Conway Ranch requests. Hypocritical conduct, so either LTC or BOS hold Edison’s feet to fire. Cutting into brand new road is “moronic.” Higerd stated Edison knows Mono wants line in prior to asphalt. Encroachment can’t be denied, but significant conditions could be imposed. Commissioner Johnston asked, “Why not shoulder instead of road?” *New paved road will cover entire bench with new climbing lane.* Johnston recalled Praxis installed Digital 395 without cutting pavement; let Edison do same. Maybe solar power?
- 7) **Safe Routes to School/Bridgeport:** Project accepted. Find additional funds beyond grant; resubmit by Wednesday noon deadline scaled-down version to meet amount available, or relinquish \$800,000 until next phase. Commissioner Fesko noted money is in hand, no guarantee in next cycle.
- 8) **Bike lanes:** Twin Lakes Road, Virginia Lakes Road, maybe Bodie Road between state entities. High visitation numbers support.

C. Caltrans: Ryan Dermody reported plenty of shoulder-widening projects. Instead of road building, District 9 now focuses on maintenance/rehab. Right-turn exit at McGee? *On the project list, but accident data dictate project choice, and Oasis curve and many others have priority due to accidents. Dermody will provide project manager names for direct contact.*

- 12. **UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS:** 1) First review of RTP. See if anything else materializes.
- 13. **ADJOURN** at 11:05 a.m. to Sept. 8, 2014, if more than one item emerges.

Prepared by C.D. Ritter, LTC secretary