

# Mono County Local Transportation Commission

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## MINUTES

December 10, 2018  
(Adopted January 14, 2019)

**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:** Stacy Corless, John Peters, Fred Stump

**TOWN COMMISSIONERS:** Sandy Hogan, Lynda Salcido, Dan Holler for John Wentworth

**COUNTY STAFF:** Wendy Sugimura, Gerry Le Francois, Hailey Lang, Jeff Simpson, Garrett Higerd, Tony Dublino (teleconference), CD Ritter

**TOWN STAFF:** Grady Dutton

**CALTRANS:** Brent Green, Ryan Dermody, Trisha Moyer, Bradley Bowers

**ESTA:** Phil Moores

**GUESTS:** Don Condon, Electric Auto Association; Lynn Boulton, Sierra Club Range of Light; Janet Carle, 350 Mono Climate Action; Sheena Waters, BLM; Dan Andersen, Cambridge Systematics; Gaye Mueller, Mono Fish & Wildlife; Tim Taylor, California Department of Fish & Wildlife; Susanna Danner, Eastern Sierra Land Trust

1. **CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Vice-Chair Fred Stump called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Town/County Conference Room, Minaret Village Mall, Mammoth Lakes. Attendees recited pledge of allegiance.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

--- Salcido & Holler arrived at 9:05 a.m. ---

3. **MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Approve minutes of October 15, 2018, as submitted. (Corless/Hogan. Ayes: 6-0.)

4. **COMMISSIONER REPORTS:** **Hogan:** Thanked Caltrans for north projects. **Holler:** Sidewalk work in town used very much, along Minaret to Village. **Corless:** None. **Peters:** Happy Prop. 6 defeated, Mono and California can continue projects. **Salcido:** None. **Stump:** Nice to have snow, good job by Caltrans.

5. **LOCAL TRANSPORTATION**

A. **Highway 395 wildlife crossing project:** Wendy Sugimura introduced multi-agency, collaborative effort started at CPT (Collaborative Planning Team), with Caltrans and CDFW taking lead. USFS, BLM, USFWS interested as well. CPT group on board but taking action and funding deal with roads, under Caltrans jurisdiction.

Bradley Bowers, Caltrans environmental planner, cited nationwide issue. About 300,000 reported but many not reported. No report if under \$1,000 damage. Animals struck, pass away off road, not recorded. Average cost over \$6,000, swerving into other cars. \$8,000 +/-deer impact. Influencing drivers and animals. Wildlife crossings include fencing to funnel animals to cross safely. Do they work? 80% reduction in deer-vehicle collisions in Virginia. Pre- vs post-fencing showed effective. Fencing's economic value prevents one deer crash per mile. Eastern Sierra options: District 9 mortality 135 in Mono, fewer in Inyo. Vast majority on US 395. Average 130 killed/year. Hotspots: Benton Crossing/Mt. Morrison, SR 108 junction, Bodie Road. Data from Caltrans maintenance workers on carcasses. He described six concepts ranging from new crossings and fencing with maximum coverage (\$53.3 million) to lesser coverage (\$20,000/year). Concepts considered: infrared-activated signage (effectiveness debatable), electric fencing (costly), and reflectors/mirrors (mixed effectiveness).

Taylor noted good overcrossings in Nevada. Updates: CDFW, Mono, Caltrans, BLM expressed support. Looking for funding, possible grant money. Partner for environmental studies.

Taylor indicated 10-mi stretch between hatchery to SR 203 impacts Round Valley herd. Spring holding period, cross multiple times, traffic volumes increasing. Casa Diablo herd by Benton impacted. Mono Lake herd mortality at Buckeye, Conway Summit, Conway Ranch, and Walker.

## COMMISSIONERS

Stacy Corless Sandy Hogan John Peters Lynda Salcido Fred Stump John Wentworth

Corless recalled successful projects like Santa Cruz for funds outside government agencies; i.e., nonprofits. Dermody was looking at other projects funded by non-government entities. Steps toward PID (Project Initiation Document), etc. One step at a time.

Close to funding? *Dermody: Taylor found funding. Caltrans might have internal funding for PID.*

Hogan reminded fencing only on airport side. FAA fund other side? *Holler: No, only airport side to keep out of air space.* Taylor indicated it would increase deer mortality, unsafe for motorists. Bad situation.

Hogan suggested convincing FAA to contribute to fence on other side.

Peters mentioned scaling back current projects, especially north county. What about marine base, federal money?

Dermody wanted to do something somewhere. Hotspot at Benton Crossing. Focus there with shoulder widening, maybe fencing.

Undercrossing between hotspots? Cattle crossing at Convict Creek? *Taylor cited overflow from creek, too small for deer. Retrofit or replace might work. Deer use Mammoth Creek, but willows grow along creek. Other species to consider: bear, bobcat, badger cut off connectivity to habitats.*

Insurers part of solution? *Green: State Farm agent claims \$5,000 to \$8,000. Not heard of funding.*

Stump thought phasing important. Did NEPA include fencing on other side to prevent boomerang? Hogan noted FAA's NEPA does not focus on deer. Taylor received comment letters from various agencies about FAA.

Dermody thought PID would start in January, done June 30. Start environmental studies.

Taylor cited CDFW grant from USFWS: \$200,000 environmental studies related to wildlife on stretch of highway. Need good data. Look where deer use stretches of highway. Get pre-construction data, later post-construction data. Start this spring. *Dermody: PID on whole stretch. Steve Nelson at BLM: archeological studies. Hogan: USFS also, runway on national forest land. Maybe replace chain link fencing. (Holler: Also airport security.) Hog wire less costly. Finish NEPA before airport fence.*

Stump noted coordination with Town, LTC request interactions with FAA. Discussed in 2013.

Boulton has reduced speed to 30 mph from SNARL (Sierra Nevada Research Lab) due to deer.

Actual timeline for PID? *Dermody: Done in July depending on CDFW input on site.*

Corless mentioned report in July about fundraising options. Would work on it.

Green wanted to invite BLM back, Steve Nelson passionate, federal funding more readily available. Maybe pay for environmental.

Hogan reminded both environmental documents are federal.

Agency representatives need more formal action, or is discussion OK? *Taylor: Letter helpful to CDFW, continue to look for funding CalDeer. Go long way for more environmental work. Dermody concurred. Generic letter identifying high priority.*

Le Francois cited Taylor, Dermody, BLM for January, directing staff. Salcido and Corless.

Taylor favored 395 or Eastern Sierra stewardship team like SR 89. Radio telemetry gives good data.

Holler mentioned nonprofits in area, leverage what we have.

Stump suggested letter for January agenda, to BOS, Town Council, USFWS.

Gaye Mueller, chair Mono County Fish & Wildlife, presentation on project. Jan. 2 meeting, got volunteer.

--- Break ---

**B. Electric-vehicle-charging station in Lee Vining:** Gerry Le Francois noted LTC funds highway projects, also has resource efficiency plan, GHG (Green House Gas) effort. Alternate fuels policy section exists. LTC does not own any facilities. New piece of infrastructure that Mono would maintain. Will go to Mono Supervisors ultimately.

Janet Carle, retired State Park ranger, introduced Don Condon and Lynn Boulton. Solar pavilion in Lee Vining generates 5 kwh power. Pavilion has Wi-Fi tile wall, gatherings there already. Conduit connects to EV charging station. Car chargers are complex. Demo project in Lee Vining, EV infrastructure on cusp. Mono residents drive a lot, biggest carbon footprint. Resource Efficiency Plan encourages EV. Lee Vining wants to move to renewable energy. Solar power, car charger. EV is way to go. Panels generate power to charge the station. Put monitor in for car charging. Yearly bill with reckoning. Opportunity for data, EV community excited to offer free charging. In the public good to use charging: cleaner air, reduced GHG. Make as easy as possible. Two-year demonstration. Universal type-2, the people's charger. Basic car charger, not fast, 30 miles in one hour. Money was donated: \$2,000 in new tiles, money for wire, installation, monitor, maintenance. \$1,500 donated toward expenses. What to do while your car is charging. Plenty of parking.

Boulton calculated maximum power by solar panels. Played out scenarios. Most drivers just top off, fill up elsewhere.

Stump noted solar panel is hooked into grid.

Condon noted Caltrans quick-charge stations as far as Bishop. Close gap from Mammoth to Gardnerville. State wants 5 million electric vehicles by 2020. Support charging stations as wave of future. Demo project to learn a lot.

Carle cited precedent for California State Parks free chargers. Bodie on list.

Dublino saw few policy issues. Land use at county parks, free energy if beyond solar generation. Mono Supervisors will decide. Hope to implement in summer 2019. Get Board direction at January meeting.

Boulton wanted to track with spreadsheet that matches net metering. See if making or losing money. \$1,500 from donor to cover trial period.

Dublino had questions but had not devoted time to research. 12-mo generation? How metering work?

Phil Moores noted big push toward full electrification of public transit. Big car companies expect a lot.

Auto backup? *System itself. Visited pavilion, spectacular interpretive panels on area residents.*

Prevention of overstays? Carle indicated four-hour limit, mostly a top-off. Car A charge cuts in half when car B shows up.

Holler indicated lower snow removal priority, on scale of park-and-ride site.

Condon commended phenomenal volunteerism in Lee Vining.

Hogan saw great location at town center.

Carle reported fifth- and sixth-grade class took on pavilion stewardship.

Peters mentioned charging etiquette, data collection from beginning, and Mono's capacity to take on something new.

**MOTION:** LTC supports installation of electric-vehicle charging station at Hess Park in Lee Vining. (Hogan/Salcido. Ayes: 6-0.)

## 6. ADMINISTRATION

A. **Resolution of appreciation:** Gerry Le Francois presented resolution of appreciation for retiring Inyo County planner Courtney Smith, citing contributions such as 2016 projects deprogrammed, Inyo stepping up for Freeman Gulch-1.

B. **Introduce Hailey Lang:** Lang is a new community development analyst based in Bridgeport.

C. **Introduce Phil Moores:** The new ESTA executive director moved his family outside Bishop to Aspendell, highest-elevation full-time community in **California Inyo County**.

## 7. TRANSIT

A. **Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA):** Phil Moores noted Unified Command safety meetings in Inyo and Mono discussed nuclear meltdown, similar to volcanic threat. Inyo SAR helped with Camp Fire, crews from as far away as Kentucky. MUSD, Wild Iris, and IMACA benefit from "stuff the bus" donations for less fortunate.

Large steel structure to service vehicles. New bus this summer. Video cameras in vehicles can pay off in collision documentation, customer service. Down to last trainer. Driver shortage a problem. Instructors to be certified this year. How coordinate testing/training. Exams far away in Bakersfield, so get DMV examiner or have own examiner. Short-Range Transit Plan is due 2020.

B. **Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS):** Gerry Le Francois sent letter of support for daily service June through September. Fare increase on schedule. Selena McKinney complimented Hogan, Corless, and Jeff Simpson for input on YARTS Short-Range Transit Plan. Draft of working paper 3 soon.

Hogan reported she, Corless and Bob Gardner met in Valley. Plan to hold annual fall meeting.

Corless indicated that after workshop, YARTS JPA met on fare increase. Eliminate JL Loop, maybe stop at kiosk. Moving toward fiscal sustainability. Le Francois noted June Mountain is shown as possible stop.

Hogan mentioned reducing travel time. Possibly eliminate one Lee Vining stop as well.

--- Break ---

## 8. CALTRANS

A. **Draft Eastern Sierra Corridor Freight Study:** Ryan Dermody obtained grant for all things freight. Lots in Reno, Southern California. Dan Anderson of Cambridge Systematics indicated draft recommendations for US 395 & 6, SR 14 & 58. Outside corridor impacts inside corridor. Impacts on highway as Main Street. Tremendous growth in Reno/Tahoe industrial center. Built out, sold out. Tremendous growth in Southern California high desert Inland Empire, impact on 395. Vast majority moving east-west from ports in San Francisco and Long Beach. Normal growth of corridor in all types of vehicles, same rate for trucks. Seven hundred trucks/day projected to 1,000. Survey to employers in tri-center on freight flows, traffic patterns, direction going (back to Reno mainly).

Stump indicated winter traffic impacts to US 6 when diverted from US 395.

Solid waste programs factored in? *No*.

Nevada side daily truck traffic north of CA is 240-250 trucks/day. US 6 350 trucks/day. More actually using US 95 to US 6 than straight down (shortest route).

Dermody recalled 10 years ago US 395 had most trucks.

Widen shoulders all way up?

Grades not that steep on US 6, volumes not that significant. Truck parking analysis nearly done. From all indications, about 100 trucks/day need parking in Bishop area. Truckers have electronic logs on hours of service, need place to park. Public agencies strapped, so private sector could make money on truck stops. Support for that in Bridgeport or Bishop?

Peters cited aesthetic issue on 395 corridor. Not enough private land available. Opportunity with local Indian Colony, but where to put it? Problems with CHP and USFS offices.

Hogan mentioned large conservation easements in Bridgeport Valley.

Financial incentive for Buster's site? *Andersen: Increased revenue when truckers stop. If charge for parking, go elsewhere. Look for opportunities with private sector.* Peters noted Indian Colony does not have space.

Andersen asked how residents feel about truck parking. Peters cited cattle trucks, military buses. Recognize it occurs, no alternative. North of town value of viewshed, widening shoulders can be tough. Truck stop casino into Nevada. Not go over very well unless incorporated with multi-agency facility.

Stump indicated scenic components in Mono very important. Benton tribe wanted land into tribal trust, didn't happen. No fiscal capacity, close to Nevada where cheaper alternatives exist. Viewsheds, environmental impact, preservation important.

Andersen mentioned tribal truck stop in Gardnerville.

Peters cited BLM land leased for County yard, space, but coldest place on 395.

Andersen noted Crestview rest area's excessive demand, so expand. Need 45 more spaces right now. Economic benefit of truck parking. Trucks in left lane through town an option. Bypass comes with extreme environmental and financial costs. Other vehicles use bypass, affects economy of community. Perception of safety issue for trucks on Main Street. Climbing lanes over Tehachapi Pass and Conway Summit.

Peters indicated Complete Streets helped Bridgeport, no commercial vehicles parked along Main Street.

Stump noted Bishop was offered bypass 50 years ago, businesses said no. Town restricted Main Street parking, suffered consequences, as shown by vacancies. Short-term view.

Andersen thanked LTC for valuable input.

**B. Activities in Mono County & pertinent statewide information:** Green deferred to next meeting.

Dermody wanted to memorialize stewardship committee with signatories on wildlife.

Salcido: Hwy 89 group?

## 9. INFORMATIONAL

### A. Caltrans Scoping Letter regarding projects in northern Mono County

10. **UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS:** 1) Digital-395 5G implementation verbal update; no local approvals if towers exist; 2) Electric vehicle charging needs assessment 3) wildlife crossing report; 4) stewardship team (Corless & Salcido); 5) quarterly reports; 6) ESTA ridership; 7) SB 1 update.

Four chargers at Bridgeport Shell. Ground rules with Edison.

11. **ADJOURN** at 12:05 p.m. to January 14, 2019

*Prepared by CD Ritter, LTC secretary*