

# Mono County Local Transportation Commission

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## MEETING MINUTES

December 14, 2020 – 9:00 A.M.

(Adopted January 11, 2021)

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**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:** John Peters, Fred Stump, Jennifer Kreitz

**TOWN COMMISSIONERS:** Sandy Hogan, John Wentworth, Dan Holler (as alternate for absent Lynda Salcido)

**COUNTY STAFF:** Gerry LeFrancois, Wendy Sugimura, Megan Mahaffey, Melissa Bell, Bentley Regehr, Becky Peratt, Chad Senior, Tony Dublino

**TOWN STAFF:** Hayes Haislip

**CALTRANS:** Dennee Alcala, Austin West, Mark Heckman, Ryan Dermody, Brandon Fitt

**ESTA:** Phil Moores

**YARTS:** Christine Chavez

**RSG:** Steven Trevino, Maren Outwater, Margaret Campbell

**MSWD:** Garrett Higerd

**Public:** Megan Kelly, David Rosky

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1. **CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Vice-chair Kreitz called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Commissioner Stump led the pledge of allegiance.
2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** No public comments.
3. **MINUTES**
  - A. Approval of minutes from October 19, 2020  
**Motion:** Approve amended minutes with provided corrections.  
*Peters/Hogan. Ayes: Peters, Hogan, Wentworth, Stump, Kreitz, Holler*
4. **LOCAL TRANSPORTATION**
  - A. Resolution of Appreciation for Commissioner Stump's service on the LTC (*Gerry LeFrancois, Staff & Commission*)  
**Motion:** Approve Resolution of Appreciation for Commissioner Stump's service on the LTC.  
*Peters/Wentworth. Ayes: Hogan, Peters, Holler, Wentworth, Kreitz. Abstain: Stump*

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### COMMISSIONERS

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

- B. Update on development of a region wide GIS tool that could integrate recreation use data from trail counters, vehicles counts and other data sources (*Commissioner Wentworth*)

- Commissioner Wentworth presented update on meeting with Caltrans and USFS Region 5 on Caltrans GIS data collection efforts that could lead to increased ATP funding. Gerry LeFrancois suggested postponing next steps until IT staff can become involved. Commissioners asked further questions about the project and Commissioner Wentworth and Gerry LeFrancois responded. There is a need to create a common data set so that when Caltrans analyzes ATP opportunities they can see things not in their current data set, and this provides better quantitative material to make arguments for future funding decisions. The commission will need to discuss whether this gets amended into the Overall Work Program.

## 5. CALTRANS

- A. Presentation on draft District 9 Origin and Destination (O & D) Study by Caltrans consultant RSG

- Steven Trevino, Margaret Campbell, and Maren Outwater of RSG presented. The O&D study is a 10-year report going back to 1979, and this is the 2020 version. Presenters discussed the background of the study; Location-based Service (LBS) results including network expansion of LBS data, visitor travel, air travel and points of interest; Origin-Destination survey results including visitor travel and respondent profiles; and study highlights.
- Commissioners commented on the presentation and asked questions of the RSG consultants. Commissioner Hogan noted some corrections to the presentation. Commissioner Wentworth inquired about the degree to which this data is public data. Response was that the data that is provided to Caltrans will be accessible, but the underlying big data will not be made available. He also inquired further about the granularity of the origins and destinations data that will be made public. Response was that this is aggregated public-level data but the data can be looked at in many different ways and that more detail can be provided. Commissioner Wentworth asked if only big data was used for 2020 and if allowances were made for COVID. Big data was available for 2019 as well, it was the survey that was only available for 2020; COVID was not taken into account. This was an O&D study not a COVID O&D study. Commissioner Peters asked for clarification on the Bridgeport MWTC being called out versus Antelope Valley. Response was that in developing O&D points they realized there was a large residential facility for the BP MWTC. They identified that and the residential area in AV as one area and the actual MWTC as a separate area so they could identify trips between the two nodes. Commissioner Peters also noted that this sort of information is important for multiple reasons. Commissioner Kreitz asked for clarification on the average length of trip. Response that the discrepancy is accounted for in the difference between the survey results versus the big data results. Commissioner Kreitz would also like to know how O&D studies have been used in the past by the LTC.

### Break - 10:32 a.m. to 10:40 a.m.

- B. District 9 State Highway Operation and Project Program (SHOPP) presentation for review and comment

- Brandon Fitt from Caltrans presented on how asset management impacts the SHOPP, which funds the repair, preservation, emergency repair, safety improvements and some highway operational improvements on the State Highway System. The focus is on four core assets which are pavement, drainage, bridges, and ITS/TMS elements (i.e. signals and count stations). The 10-year plan for projects in Mono County includes 10 projects totaling \$167.7M.

- Questions followed. Commissioner Stump asked if an announcement like Pedestrian Safety Month plays into this kind of planning. Brandon Fitt responded that they are looking for any way to increase safety within these projects. Commissioner Hogan asked whether something like wildlife crossings may someday appear in SHOPP. Brandon Fitt responded that it would require that that become one of the assets they are directed to address. Ryan Dermody added that they have 37% of what they need to maintain existing system so anything added on top would be difficult. Commissioner Hogan suggested that if Fish & Wildlife could get involved in a wildlife crossing, having two state agencies could help get funding for additional projects. Commissioner Peters asked how likely it would be that projects in post-planning would happen. Brandon Fitt responded that all of the money has been allocated to all of those projects and that money has been set aside so he doesn't see why it wouldn't happen, it just might take longer due to environmental issues. Commissioner Peters followed up to ask about the impact of having an SB1 priority, and if that would accelerate a project. Brandon Fitt responded that is just a way for the state to track all SB1 projects and Ryan Dermody that without that list, those projects would likely not happen. Commissioner Wentworth did not see anything on the list for Mammoth Lakes other than Hwy 203 and wanted to confirm that was the only one on the list, Brandon Fitt confirmed it is. Commissioner Wentworth also asked for clarification on the calendar year and Brandon Fitt confirmed it is the state fiscal year, July 1 to June 30.
- Gerry LeFrancois added that the Wildlife Steering Committee met last week and asked if that is tied to the Sonora Junction Project. Brandon Fitt confirmed that it is and that they are looking at at least one crossing within that project. Commissioner Peters followed up to ask if the hardware for the wildlife crossing is sitting in the yard at the Sonora Junction, and Ryan Dermody confirmed. Ryan further added that SHOPP projects, which are the big projects, are separate from the Highway Maintenance program, and that this is not an all encompassing list of projects in Mono County over the next 10 years. Commissioner Kreitz asked for whether the projects on the list are for sure going to move forward or whether things could change. Brandon Fitt confirmed that anything on top in the lighter shade is set in stone, anything from 203 down is possibly in flux depending on money allocated in next couple of months. Commissioner Kreitz followed up to confirm that an updated State Highway System Management Plan and Brandon confirmed that will be reviewed in another three months and that it could come to the LTC within a month or two.

**At 11:02 a.m. Commissioner Holler had to leave the meeting to join the EOC COVID meeting.**

C. Activities in Mono County and pertinent statewide information

- Ryan Dermody: Provided update on the District 9 teleworking situation and the closure status of various passes and roads due to winter snow. Informed the commission that they are changing their GPS system on their fleet and this won't show up for a month or two so if people can't see snow plows on QuickMap that is why.
- Austin West: Attended the Planning Economic Development Commission last week and is working with the Town on the Parcel, and is working on updates for Antelope Valley and Bridgeport RPACs.
- Mark Heckman: Reminded the commission that Mammoth Mobility Hub is due on February 28, 2021. Planning on attending Antelope Valley and Bridgeport RPACs in January to provide updates.
- Denee Alcalá: Reported on work happening right now in Mono County.
- Commissioner Wentworth followed up on the Mobility Hub Study due on February 28 and Mark clarified that the study is not due on that date, but that work cannot proceed past that date. Commissioner Kreitz asked if that would come before the LTC, and Haislip Hayes confirmed the report will come before the LTC and then be rolled up into the Regional Transportation Plan. Timeframe for this is late spring.

## 6. TRANSIT

### A. Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA) monthly update (*Phil Moores*)

- Phil Moores reported that all COVID mitigation has been successful. Also reported on ridership percentages, bus driver recruitment, and administrative positions that need to be filled. Discussed an upcoming kick-off meeting for a Short Range Transit Plan and a meeting with a non-profit to apply for a grant to develop a zero emissions plan. Reported on a program to potentially help fulfill funding for a new ESTA building in Bishop, which would protect ESTA's reserves. ESTA's reserves are healthy and in a good place. Discussed the new route from Walker to Mammoth Lakes, and minimal cutbacks to service in Mammoth Lakes due to the Stay-At-Home order.
- Commissioner Peters brought up an issue for Walker and Coleville residents in the aftermath of the MVF having to go to Bridgeport for medical services. Phil noted that there is a bus line to Bridgeport that has service on Tuesday and confirmed it would be a long wait in Bridgeport for the service. Will further discuss this situation offline in the event of demand for higher service.

### B. Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) monthly update (*Christine Chavez*)

- Christine Chavez provided updates for YARTS. Tuolumne County has been invited to join the JPA, which would result in increased revenue. YARTS is undertaking strategic planning to determine the direction of the system for the next couple of years. Discussed adjustments given the new state restrictions. Mentioned the challenges of dealing with an aging fleet and planning for capital in the context of the strategic plan. Provided stats on 5-year historical data for ridership.

## 7. ADMINISTRATION

### A. Tioga Pass Opening Procedures – verbal update (*Gerry LeFrancois & Tony Dublino*)

- Gerry LeFrancois discussed kick-off call with NPS. The number one goal for NPS is of course safety. NPS has implied that the road was not designed as an all-weather road and there are severe drainage issues. They have a huge backlog of maintenance projects, updating sewage treatment is a financial lift, and the Tuolumne Meadows sewage facility is over 30 years old, therefore one rationale for not opening the park is not weather related but facilities related. Discussed keeping the road open later in the fall. NPS will consider it, but when there are icy spots and they have to put in money to Tioga Pass, that takes from winter maintenance dollars for the Valley, Hwy 41, and 120.
- Tony Dublino further emphasized the flooding and mudslides due to drainage issues after the 2018/19 winter, and that if resources are going to be diverted to accelerate opening we need to try to make sure we are not in a situation where resources have been diverted only for the road opening to be delayed due to other considerations. To the extent that commissioners have with relationships with park leadership, encourage mentioning this to them.
- Commissioner Hogan will follow up with contacts to find out more information and will get back to Gerry and Tony. She also suggested speaking with Mammoth Mountain on the safety issues, and brought up allowing for a pass-through rather than a full opening. Tony responded that the Park Service feels that because Tioga Pass is itself a destination with massive tourism, that even a pass-through would present challenges.
- Commissioner Wentworth suggested getting this item on the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership agenda.

## 8. CORRESPONDENCE

### A. District 9 letter regarding multi-use path in Lee Vining

- Gerry LeFrancois reported that this is an ongoing Caltrans effort to find resolution to a YARTS stop and a project site, back and forth to the town of Lee Vining.
- Commissioner Stump thanked Caltrans and emphasized that this puts in writing what has

been talked about, and that is a big step. Commissioners Kreitz and Stump agreed this would be useful in upcoming board discussion.

- Ryan Dermody responded that Caltrans is committed to this path, just need to find the route and funding.

## 9. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

- Commissioner Hogan: No report
- Commissioner Peters: Update on Conway cameras (they are working), radar signs, light poles, Bodie Road, and Hwy 182 passing opportunity. Discussed Caltrans response and support after Mountain View Fire. Discussed how important transportation and broadband is for connectivity.
- Commissioner Wentworth: Provided an update on the Parcel in Mammoth Lakes and noted that parking challenges have not been solved. The Mobility project is a key to connectivity in Mammoth Lakes which will be a challenge for the Town in the years moving forward. Caltrans and BLM are now part of the ESSRP and are speaking with the Park Service.
- Commissioner Stump: Update on conversations with Madera County Supervisor about Red's Meadow.
- Commissioner Kreitz: No report

## 10. INFORMATIONAL

- A. California Road Charge Demonstration Project (moved to future meeting)

## 11. UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS

- A. Region wide GIS tools to integrate recreational use data from trail counts, vehicle counts, etc
- B. MOU update, project(s) status
- C. Election of Chair (County) and Vice Chair (Town of Mammoth Lakes)
- D. Continued Tioga Pass discussion with National Park Service
  - Commissioner Kreitz noted additional items for future agendas: O&D report will be shared and may want to agendize that item, need for discussion on wildlife crossing, and Mobility Hub a few months out. Gerry LeFrancois also noted that the 20/21 Overall Work Program is coming up and the draft is due to Caltrans in March. In February we will have a more in-depth review.

## 12. ADJOURN to January 11, 2020 meeting

**\*NOTE:** Although the LTC generally strives to follow the agenda sequence, it reserves the right to take any agenda item – other than a noticed public hearing – in any order, and at any time after its meeting starts. The Local Transportation Commission encourages public attendance and participation.

*In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, anyone who needs special assistance to attend this meeting can contact the commission secretary at 760-924-1804 within 48 hours prior to the meeting in order to ensure accessibility (see 42 USCS 12132, 28CFR 35.130).*