



INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION



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Michael Errante, Executive Director

MINUTES

INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

On-line Only

March 16, 2022

9:06 a.m. Open Meeting

1. Roll Call
2. **Commissioners Present:**

Doug Thompson
Jennifer Roeser
Celeste Berg
Jose Garcia
Rick Pucci

Others Present

Doug's iPad
Justine Kokx Inyo County Public Works
Michael Errante Inyo County Public Works
Phil Moores ESTA
Deston Dishion City of Bishop
Adam Weitzmann of Caltrans logged into the meeting but experienced technical difficulties

3. Public Comment
None

ACTION ITEMS

4. Consent Agenda
 - a. Request your Commission authorize future meetings during a state of emergency to be conducted virtually, in accordance with AB 361.
 - b. Secretary of the Local Transportation Commission - Request approval of the minutes of the meeting of February 16, 2022.

*Motion to approve was made by Commissioner Roeser and seconded by Commissioner Garcia. All in favor.

5. Request Commission receive a staff report and a copy of the meeting notes of the Social Services Transit Advisory Council and **conduct a public hearing** to gather input on unmet transit needs.

*Justine provided a summary of the Unmet Transit needs process, including the definition from the ICLTC procedures manual of Unmet needs, and briefly summarized the SSTAC meeting in terms of attendance, and a summary of the services that were discussed. Phil expanded on the ESTA services that are currently being provided, as well as the gap of weekend 395 service. This is something high on his list, has a grant to expand to weekends. Hoping to start next year. Bishop Dial a Ride was expanded and funded through this year. Hoping to continue this.

*Commissioner Roeser asked Phil how it works when he expands services in terms of driver availability. He replied that he has trouble finding drivers in Mammoth, but it's not too difficult in the Owen's Valley. ESTA is fully staffed administratively. Ms. Roeser followed up about the once-a-week route between Tecopa and Pahrump that had been cancelled. Are there partnership possibilities? Phil replied that he did try this for a while, but it wasn't successful. Hard to get traction there, and people quit. Ms. Roeser mentioned Susan Sorrels as a potential contact for expanding services in that area. Phil will give her a call.

*Commissioner Roeser asked about services between Big Pine and Bishop in the morning and early afternoon. Phil mentioned the Lone Pine Express Route would meet the Big Pine needs. estransit.com has the schedule, it can be printed out.

*Commissioner Thompson mentioned that the train station in Lancaster doesn't have ESTA information, and that the ESTA website's terminology is confusing. Example, "Express" and "Night Rider" not cohesive. Phil asked to talk with him later to understand what exactly is confusing about the website. Transit agencies submit their schedules to Google, and Google includes that information in Google Transit maps. Google Transit is a great resource for public transit wherever you go.

*Commissioner Roeser also stated that her District's Seniors might not have known to check the Lone Pine Express schedule to get back and forth between Big Pine and Bishop. Phil reminded group to give ESTA a call if any questions about their schedules.

*Chair Berg added that it's great that Google transit is out there, but it's great that riders can call as well.

*Commissioner Garcia brought up the issue of bad translation and recommended that the ESTA schedule be reviewed by a professional translator and not to rely on Google translate. For example, Bishop is translated as a "Catholic priest". Lone Pine is translated into a "tree". Mammoth Lakes translates to "huge lakes".

*No Public Comment was received. Commissioner Roeser motioned to accept notes and conclude the public hearing; Commissioner Garcia seconded. Chair Berg closed public hearing.

6. Request Commission approve the Triennial Performance Audit cost quote from Moore & Associates, Inc. via Minute Order and authorize the Executive Director to sign related documents for the next two years of performance audit services.

*Justine provided a summary of the staff report requesting the Commissions' approval of Moore & Associates as provider of Triennial Performance audit services. Moore & Associates' proposal was scored the highest among three highly qualified proposals. Their offer to speed up the RTPA audit early to ensure complying with mandated deadlines was a benefit. They utilize a web-based project management tool, allowing stakeholders to check in on audit status. They have experience with rural counties, which is a benefit to the ICLTC.

*Commissioner Garcia motioned to approve the cost quote from Moore and Associates, Commissioner Roeser seconded. All in favor.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

7. Request Commission receive a staff report on Local Transportation Fund estimates for FY 2022-2023.

*Justine reported on the auditor's LTF fund estimate and funding recommendations for the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

*Chair Berg requested clarification on triennial audit fees, and if they were included in the funding recommendations for Administration and Audits. Justine reported that an estimate of \$40,000 was estimated for the triennial audits, which almost equals the Moore and Associates quote of \$39,000.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

8. ESTA Report – Executive Director's Report

*Phil Moores provided a summary of the ridership, which is 32% down. New vehicles coming in with new designs. Two hundred Bus Stop signs have been ordered. They will have the new branding as well. Every stop will have a plaque with a unique number. Riders can text that phone number and estimated arrival time will come back as a reply.

*Chair Berg complimented ESTA on their new design as well as their new branding, and enhanced ESTA contact & public information.

*Commissioner Roeser asked if these enhancements and improvements will have large impact on ESTA's budget. Phil replied that the STA tax and gas tax have been on the decline for a while and will continue to decline. ESTA's budget is higher than normal, gas taxes are so volatile, difficult to predict. The Road tax is an upcoming change in the transportation funding system, please be aware and educate yourself on these changes. The Legislature needs to now figure out how to apply the Road tax among rural and urban areas. We will be charged by the mile, and possibly via our vehicle registration. The Road tax may contain enhanced funding for public transit. We need to keep our finger on the pulse to ensure we get our fair share. Perhaps we could write a letter when it comes time from the LTC.

*Commissioner Pucci reported in the past, there has always been an intrinsic rivalry between Transit and Transportation needs and funding. The State really needs to somehow dedicate monies to both entities, there is a symbiotic relationship. What's more important, fixing the roads? Or getting people from point A to point B? Commissioner Roeser added that there is so much emphasis on ATP projects, we need to be careful not to lose sight of transit and transportation. Mr. Pucci reminded about the mandate to go green. It's a huge cost. Difficult to balance. Phil reported that the zero-emissions transition plan is kicking off. He is not diving in too deeply yet. Technology is just not there yet.

9. Tribal Report

10. DVNP Report

11. Caltrans Report

12. City of Bishop Report

*Deston began by asking Justine the status of the LRSP. Justine reported that she will follow up with LSC today. The Caltrans website still says the HSIP program will begin "around April." The Federal earmark to complete the south end of Warren St. was funded. Exciting news. Also have a small project to build sidewalks along Park Ave. along the ballpark field. East Line St. Bridge hit a small snafu. A newly required "number" needed by Caltrans is slowing things down, but it's coming along.

*Commissioner Roeser asked Deston if they have enough staff to implement these projects and obtain funding. Deston said it's tough right now, they are getting far fewer applicants for City jobs. Has a theory that with the new PEPPRA laws forcing employees to pay so much more into their retirement accounts, it has changed the perception of working in the public sector as less desirable. People are going to have to work longer. Lack of housing is another challenge. Not just low-income housing, but workforce housing.

*Commissioner Pucci noticed that Caltrans isn't here. Justine did check and noticed an email from Adam Weitzmann stating he tried to get into the meeting but couldn't. There were a few technical difficulties this meeting with Zoom.

13. Executive Director's Report

*Michael echoed Phil and Deston's reports of lack of staffing. Mentioned the gas tax may have a holiday, that will affect transit, Road dept projects. Zero emission vehicles also impacting revenues. Hope RCRC will get involved with the Road tax advocacy for rural counties. Many challenges moving forward. Will need to discuss electric charging with Phil because he has been tasked with installing EV chargers at County facilities. Commissioner Roeser asked how he was tasked with this? It was her recollection that the EV charging project was lower on the priority list. Phil asked about the possibility of installing an EV charger in Lone Pine. At this point Mike wasn't clear on where and the extent. Capp II was brought up by Justine as a possible funding source. Sharing resources & cooperation/coordination would be helpful in obtaining

grant funding. Ironic that we are dealing with a lack of resources and an abundance of funding. Phil working on a job-sharing template to position employees into full time job track. Mike reported that the BOS approved the contract for the Lone Pine Town Street project. STIP funding for construction to occur in the outer years, around 26-27. ATP sidewalk project in Lone Pine is moving along. Working with Caltrans on connections with ROW. Construction scheduled for late summer or early fall. North Round Valley Bridge is picking up the pace. Finally installed most of the 32 piles. The bridge will be completed at the end of September. Need to approach OES to extend the grant deadline.

Flights ending in March, then starting up again from San Francisco on June 4th and 5th, Saturday, and Sunday. Will increase to 6 days a week except Saturday starting June 24th through September 6th. See VisitMammoth.com.

*Commissioner Roeser asked about the subsidies issue. Mike replied that we still have to have some discussions. The Mountain was taking them this winter, then analyzing next summer. Gathering information now.

*Commissioner Roeser spoke with Tawni Thompson about ways to promote tourism and a need for a marketing plan for Inyo County and commercial flights. Mike agreed and mentioned Death Valley, Mt. Whitney, summer destinations. However, during big events even the hotels are booked.

*Commissioner Thompson added that's where the marketing comes in. Mammoth changed in the nineties to promote the summertime. User statistics are now half and half. Jen pointed out except for mid-week in the winter. Perhaps marketing to contractors and government employees. Mike brought up the upcoming contract for a parachute/skydiving vendor to operate out of Lone Pine. May be doing some jumps on their own for marketing purposes in the meantime. Perhaps some cross marketing with hiking and jumping would be useful.

*Commissioner Thompson reported we used to have a balloon festival, but they just couldn't stay. Sometimes we are our own worst enemies. Same with the hang gliders. On a different note, there has always been an issue with the drainage by McDonalds on Hwy 395.

14. Reports from all members of the Inyo County LTC

*Commissioner Thompson reported that the Olancho Cartago project is underway. If you have any questions about where the alignment is, go to Google Earth Pro. Can watch the progress of the construction. Started on the South end working north near Hall Rd. Charging stations have been installed by Caltrans at Coso Junction. Tesla stations have been installed in Lone Pine, but we are still lacking normal connection for non-Tesla cars. Are there charging stations in Bishop? Jen mentioned the Division Creek rest stop. Others brought up Vons' parking lot for regular non-Tesla.

Commissioner Roeser expressed appreciation for the minutes, likes the detail.

CORRESPONDENCE

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ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned until 9 a.m., Wednesday April 20, 2022