



INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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Michael Errante, Executive Director

INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION Bishop City Council Chambers 301 W. Line St., Bishop, CA 93514 **Minutes**

November 29, 2023

8:11 a.m. Open Meeting

1. Roll Call

Commissioners Present

Chair: Celeste Berg
Vice Chair: Jeffery Ray
Commissioner: Jennifer Roeser
Commissioner: Stephen Muchovej
Commissioner: Scott Marcellin
Commissioner: Jose Garcia

Others Present

Justine Kokx: LTC Transportation Planner
Phil Moores: ESTA
John Pinckney: Inyo County Public Works
Michale Errante: Inyo County Public Works
Robert Strub; Lone Pine Resident
Sabine Elia: Lone Pine Resident
Maggie Ritter: Caltrans
Neil Peacock: Caltrans
Annelise Quintanar: Caltrans
Mark Heckman: Caltrans

2. Public Comment

None

ACTION ITEMS

1. Consent Agenda

- a. Approve via Minute Order to revise page 4 of the ICLTC Organizational & Procedures Manual to change the usual meeting time from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.
- b. Approve the minutes of the meeting of October 18, 2023.

****Approval of the consent agenda motioned by Commissioner Muchovej and seconded by Commissioner Roeser. All in favor.**

2. Hold a Public Hearing and Adopt the 2023 [Inyo County Regional Transportation Plan](#) via Minute Order.

*Public comment received by Phil Moores – requested the Final RTP include language to strengthen or bolster Hydrogen as an alternate fuel in the Plan. Incorporate the additions on pages 89 and 101 of the RTP.

*Public comment received by Robert Strub - to acknowledge the increase in Inyo County in electrical vehicle charging infrastructure from four years ago, and to also consider the County's lower grades (along Hwy 395) as conducive in terms of energy usage to alternate fuels.

****Approval of the 2023 RTP with proposed changes motioned by Commissioner Muchovej and seconded by Vice Chair Ray. All in favor.**

3. Hold a Public Hearing and Adopt the 2024 Inyo County Regional Transportation Improvement Program via Minute Order.

Justine summarized the final version of the RTIP, which includes \$1.7 million in match for the State Line Rd FLAP grant and continues the programming of the East Line Street Bridge project. Kern Cog adopted their final RTIP on the 16th, which included the Lone Pine Town Streets Rehab project. The CTC may request adjustments in January.

*No Public Comment

****Approval of the 2024 RTIP motioned by Commissioner Muchovej and seconded by Commissioner Garcia. All in favor.**

4. Approve Resolution No. 2023-09, Amendment No. 1 to the [2023-2024 Inyo County Overall Work Program \(OWP\)](#)

The amendment is to incorporate the approximately \$25,000 rollover of prior year RPA funding. Amend work elements to accommodate the monitoring of some grants and to apply for an ATP

grant. The other work element is to incorporate the Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant of \$207,000 for the development of the EV charging and network infrastructure plan.

****Approval of Resolution No. 2023-09 motioned by Commissioner Marcellin and seconded by Commissioner Muchovej. All in favor.**

DISCUSSION ITEMS

None

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

5. City of Bishop Report

Commissioner Muchovej provided the update. Public Works has mainly been focused on street cleaning and also preparations for the East Line Bridge project and as well as phase one of the Whitney Alley project at this point in time.

6. ESTA Executive Director's Report

Phil Moores reported - We have kicked off our All Aboard children's program. We're touring all the preschools, kindergartens, daycare centers in both counties with my diabolical plan to get kids hooked on transits early. Stuff a Bus event on November 18th was a great outlet. We got probably four six-foot pallets filled with food that we took to the Salvation Army Pantry.

Ridership is still down a little bit, leveling off from 2020, there were only 13,000 riders in September that year. Then we started to improve. Improvement is slowing down a little bit. It's only about another 4,000 year over year here where it was 15,000.

We're discussing a partnership with YARTS on hydrogen in the Mammoth area. They have a bus that comes over the grade in the summer over the 120, they're looking at hydrogen and there's quite a bit of funding out there right now specifically for infrastructure and vehicles. You can put chains on hydrogen bus, not on electric.

Initially we're looking at getting some land to put just a tank on so that they would truck it in. Tuolumne County is building a new hydrogen production facility. So that would reduce the cost of trucking it in. If we could bring in some tanks and fueling stations that they would truck it in and we could do it both at Bishop and in Mammoth actually to start. If we can get a piece of land that would eventually develop into some sort of production facility on the east side of California, that would be ideal. And having said that, this is a big boy game. This is a Caltrans LADWP, the County, all the fleets.

Mark Heckman Asked how the new automated reservations system is going.

Phil replied give us a month or two to collect some data and some ridership information and we'll know how it's working. We knew ridership was down and that's why we pushed the marketing of it because we felt it should be more people. It's really inexpensive and it's very convenient. Mike Errante asked Phil if he had done a comparison on the cost between electric and hydrogen.

Phil replied that the zero emissions plan has been developed, by 2026 we must start purchasing exclusively zero emission vehicles to about 25% of our purchases in '26. But by '29, a hundred percent of our purchases must be zero emission. So, I'm trying to set us up for success on that. Hydrogen is a little more complicated in that you can't just tie into SCE or your local power company. You can't just tie into it. You have to produce it and the facility that produces it is not cheap and it requires staffing and maintenance. It's going to be a bit of a lift, but I think it's a good lift. I think it's worth the effort.

Chair Berg asked Phil about the timeline for the grants he mentioned.

The LTC must approve projects for the Transit & Inner-City Rail Capital Program (TRCIP). There's also a Zero Emission Transit Capital Program (ZETCP). They're together and the Inyo LTC will receive \$300,000 towards transit equipment and operations that do two things, decrease greenhouse gases and increase ridership. I have another one that I'm just reading about that's pure hydrogen, that's millions of dollars. There's just so much money right now. I don't think I'll ever see this kind of funding opportunity to get in my career to be honest with you. This kind of money comes around once every 10 plus years, so I want to make sure we're on the ball with it. And I don't know the deadline of that other one yet, but I'll find out. But I know the TRCIP project list is due by the 31st of December.

7. Caltrans Report

Caltrans Monthly Report provided by Annelise Quintanar. Neil Peacock introduced Annelise Quintanar, she was highly sought after for her experience on the capital project side.

The northbound 395 lane closure is still closed as of today. Just one out of the four lanes are closed. It was supposed to reopen November 21st and I'll have a new update about that area by the end of this week. North 395 lane closure is also continued, expected to reopen April of 2024. We also have Hwy 6, 120 and 168 flood damage projects. The construction will be complete 5-31-2023. The Olancho flood damage project is still ongoing. One lane is still open. The Independence lighting project is nearly complete. The Dusty Lane turn pocket permit work started on October 9th and we're working to coordinate permits on construction and placement of lighting. Bishop Pavement is anticipated to start in Fall 2024. The Fish Springs Pavement expected to start January '25 through October '25. So those are some cool projects on the way. The golf course two-way left turn lane project begins in May 2024, so it is right around the corner and is expected to end next October 2024. SR 168 bike and ped improvements construction tentative start date will be May '24. So, we have a really busy year in 2024.

Neil added that he is familiar with the North Coast Transit Consortium that's taking place between regional transit operators all the way from Lake County up to Del Norte County and they're specifically looking at hydrogen, both production and transport throughout the entire North coast region. He also expressed appreciation for Kern Cog for their work with the Inyo LTC on the Lone Pine Town streets. That's reflective of one of the things that we really want to work toward is strengthening, continuing maintaining those kinds of partnerships over the long range.

Maggie echoed the importance of hydrogen as a topic of interest, it's on the forefront in other locations, such as Mono LTC.

8. Tribal Report – Report provided by Cindy Duriscoe of the Big Pine Paiute Tribe. Bishop and Big Pine Tribes are in the process of coordinating and getting all the documents and paperwork in place, & insurance requirements for the Clean Mobility Options Project. Need to have a voucher agreement signed with all these documents in place, limited waiver of sovereign immunity, the insurance certificates, and of course tribal resolution approving the funds by March. We are trying to get those all done and in place by the end of January. Working on our active transportation grant proposal and are still in the information gathering stages of that. We are receiving technical assistance through the California Transportation Commission. Our consultants are assisting to refine the scope of work in coordination with the Caltrans Fish Springs Project.

9. DVNP Report

None

10. USFS Report

None

11. Executive Director's Report – Mike Errante reported - Thank you all for providing the input for the RTP, it's very helpful for our staff and it's meaningful, so thank you very much for spending the time to help guide us. We've all been experiencing unprecedented shortages in human resources and we're finding new ways to do hybrid meetings and there's been such a turnover in every agency I work with. It's hard to engage. Obviously, doing this remotely has been working somewhat, and I appreciate you Neil, for coming out, taking the time. It does help to have that personal touch. So, thank you. And Phil, thank you for volunteering for leading Hydrogen.

The Lone Pine Sidewalk project has been awarded, we're just waiting for their schedule and the availability of asphalt and materials. They're trying to time it accordingly. But hopefully we'll be starting construction I figure in the spring or right after. The Lone Pine Town Street Rehab has been designed. We're hoping to have PSEs, plan specs and estimates by 24-25. And from there, moving forward to possibly going to construction in '26. I do appreciate working with Kern to help fund that. Everyone's been cooperative, it's been really nice. The Onion Valley Guard Rail project is under construction now. We're about 50% complete. We are fortunate to have a very good contractor who has started now. We're trying to beat the winter season before they shut down. Quick update on Whitney Portal that got the most severe damage from Hilary.

Fortunately, FHWA Central Lands program is going to take over the project and fund it 100%. We're looking at about a \$6.6 million project right now. We said, great, you fund it, you run it. We were very supportive of that. We met with them on the 15th of November. They came out, kicked off. We worked with them when they did the 2017 rebuild of Whitney Portal. So, it's the same core group. They're going to start the design work through the winter and hopefully start working in spring with potential project delivery by June. I know it's inconvenient for a lot of the folks down in Lone Pine, but this is the best deal that we're going to get.

Several Commissioners expressed appreciation for the decision to pursue FHWA Federal Lands for the funding & delivery of the project.

Neil expressed thanks to our district local assistance engineer Forest Beckett. Basically, Forest works with Mike and John here on helping sort out these kinds of solutions and processes these local assistance projects, the emergency relief program is particularly nuanced. He has been with us for a really long time. We're exceptionally lucky to have somebody of his tenure and experience, and yet none of us are going to be in our positions forever. So, we've begun a

proactive succession planning process with Forest, to make sure we capture all of his knowledge, and prepare for whatever move he may make in the future at whatever point he might choose to make it. We want to pass on that institutional knowledge, So, I just want to make sure that he gets kudos for his work with Michael and his team.

Commissioner Muchovej asked Justine how things were going with the Bishop Paiute Tribe and prospect for collaborating on an ATP project. Justine replied that unfortunately, the Tribe was a no show for the meeting. We can't proceed without the Tribe's collaboration; it would be on their lands. Muchovej reiterated that he is willing to help with coordination.

Commissioner Roeser asked Phil if he had been in touch with Elaine Kabala of ESCOG re: CERF to build up skill sets in anticipation of hydrogen fuel development. Phil will reach out.

12. Reports from all members of the Inyo County LTC

Commissioner Roeser - Recently, a number of us were at the California State Association of County's annual meeting, and I got the opportunity to join some fellow supervisors and tour the Port of Oakland in Alameda County. And one of the big topics there was hydrogen. The Port's Executive Director put it on the leading edge of "making mistakes". For instance, they bought some of the first generation, basically semi-trucks. She asked, what's the payload of a semi-truck like that? He said, they're built to haul the same payload weight wise, but because of over 10,000 pounds of batteries, the payload is reduced by that. The other thing about those first-generation trucks is they can't leave the port, they move things around the port, but they can't actually go out into the distribution system. The second generation was out, but it's an interesting experiment. They also have developed the largest hydrogen fuel facility in the nation, the Port of Oakland, and really some interesting things they've encountered in that process. There has been no standardization in hooking up to the charger. So, all these trucks came, and the components didn't match. And so just what they had to go through to convert and get to that. So that's something that the industry's still working on. They've learned a lot. And I think it's information that's available to local governments.

Another thing, I'm on the government advisory panel for Southern California Edison, along with supervisors from each one of the counties served by Southern California Edison, and we're having our government advisory panel meeting on Friday. If anyone has items of interest with regards to transportation, we'll bring it. As you know, Edison is on the forefront as well with meeting mandates for clean energy, greenhouse gas emissions and converting infrastructure and all kinds of things.

So, there's been a lot of requests from Edison, from local governments looking for coordination. Where can we work together to meet these goals infrastructure wise, what can we do with regards to workforce development? They offer STEM scholarships, but what about workforce development in the area of mechanics for these new fleets that will not be diesel? So, anything you want me to carry to that group? I really feel like more of a conduit than an expert. So that was just a thought to mention.

One more item, I know we've talked a lot about the Buttermilk infrastructure here in this forum, and there have been a couple of public comment sessions, one in October and one in November for the BIRPI, the Buttermilk Infrastructure Recreation Partnership Initiative. These have been community meetings to solicit input. By the end of the year, part of the initial funding is to put together a plan of community input. And so in the vein of many of these things, this document can then be used to seek future funding for improving the infrastructure in that area. The final one is sometime in December. They need to have it wrapped up by the end of the year, They're at

Cerro Coso. It's been interesting to hear, I have to say, if the consultants are able to pull consensus out of any of them, I will be very impressed. A lot of user groups are represented. But we keep telling 'em, Phil, that a shuttle to the Buttermilks would be a great idea.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 9:34 a.m. until 8:00 a.m. Wednesday January 17, 2024, Inyo County Board Chambers, Independence.

UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS

- Appoint 2024 Chairperson/Vice-Chairperson
- Adopt Final ATP
- SSTAC Unmet Transit Needs meetings (Feb/March)