

SIERRA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
P. O. BOX 98 – DOWNEVILLE, CALIFORNIA 95936

COMMISSIONERS

DARLENE RIEDE –CHAIRMAN
PAUL ROEN
PETER W. HUEBNER
JOY MARKUM

SHARON DRYDEN -VICE CHAIR
NANCY ROGERS
VACANCY – TRANSIT MEMBER
TERRY LEBLANC, COUNTY ALTERNATE

WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 24, 2021
10:00 A.M.

TELECONFERENCE MEETING

DOWNEVILLE, CALIFORNIA

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by Chairman Peter Huebner.

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Roen; Dryden; Markum; Riede; Huebner

Commissioners Absent: Rogers

A Quorum was established.

Staff Present: Miriam Dines, Executive Secretary; Bryan Davey, Transportation Planner; Tim Beals, Executive Director; Dave Prentice, Sierra County Counsel

Also Present: Thomas Pogue, Associate Director, Center for Business and Policy Research, University of the Pacific; Sukeyma Vergara, University of the Pacific; Matthew Cadrett, Transportation Planning Liaison, Caltrans District 3; Lea Simpson, California Department of Transportation Division of Mass Transit

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Commissioner Huebner

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Commission Action: Commissioner Roen moved to approve the agenda with the correction of removing Jim Beard and adding Terry LeBlanc as the alternate; seconded by Commissioner Markum. Motion was carried unanimously by roll call.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commission Action: Commissioner Roen moved to approve the minutes of September 23, 2020 as presented; seconded by Commissioner Dryden. Motion was carried unanimously by roll call.

5. ELECTION OF 2021 CHAIR: Commissioner Roen nominated Commissioner Riede to serve as Chairperson for 2021; Commissioner Dryden seconded. The motion was carried by roll call.

Commissioner Riede assumed the Chair.

6. **ELECTION OF 2021 VICE-CHAIR:** Commissioner Roen nominated Commissioner Dryden to serve as Vice-Chairperson for 2021; Commissioner Huebner seconded. The motion was carried unanimously by roll call.
7. **INTRODUCTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Introductions were made; No Announcements were given.
8. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** No public comment was given.
9. **TRANSIT ISSUES**

With regard to transit funding Bryan Davey reported that apparently a mistake two years ago netted overpayments from the State in Local Transportation Funds (LTF), which is the explanation for why SCTC has not received any disbursements since last July (2020). Mr. Davey is investigating this further to determine exactly what was due and what was received and will update the Commission as the findings are confirmed.

It is projected that there will \$103,283.14 in Local Transportation Funds (LTF) at the end of this fiscal year available for the transit programs. We can also anticipate \$55,000 in additional revenues, plus the \$48,000 that is received annually under the Federal Transit Administration 5311 Program which totals over \$203,000.00 plus there is CARES Act funding (related to the pandemic) which is available for funding for expenses over and above regular transit costs, and CARES Act 2 which will be able to be utilized for regular transit costs. The pandemic related funding is 100% and does not need to be matched. There is currently a balance of \$81,902 in State Transit Assistance (STA) which is available for capital purchases and CARES Act 2 will also release funding for capital expenditures as well.

In the last number of years SCTC has approved a total of \$108,000 to be available to fund the 2 transit contracts. The balances indicate that the available funding could be increased which would allow the transit providers to expend more funds. Unfortunately neither of the transit providers have logged into the meeting. Discussion ensued regarding transit needs and impacts of the pandemic on transit services. When asked, Mr. Davey reported that he didn't see any issue with offering a total of \$200,000 for the program for the next year. Commissioner Roen made a motion to offer \$200,000 for the next year if it is justifiable, which Commissioner Dryden seconded. Discussion continued. Director Beals would like to see demonstrated need and prefers not to balloon budgets. The process for communicating regarding needs is discussed. Mr. Davey explained that how the availability of the funding is communicated is statutorily defined in the Transportation Development Act. Deciding what amount of funding will be required to the transit providers is done by the SCTC by March 1st. By April 1st proposed budgets are needed from the operators, which are subsequently reviewed and approved by the SCTC during the May meeting.

Commissioner Roen moved to increase the available funding from \$108,000 to \$200,000 for the next fiscal year; seconded by Commissioner Dryden. Motion was carried unanimously by roll call.

Miriam Dines discussed the upcoming, required Unmet Transit Needs Public Hearing and the requirement of a 45-day public notice period. By consensus the hearing was scheduled for 10:10 a.m. on Wednesday, May 19, 2021.

Timed Item: 10:30 A.M **Discussion regarding draft Sierra County Coordinated Transit Plan.** Mr. Thomas Pogue of the University of the Pacific re-introduced himself and led the discussion by thanking the Commission for the opportunity to discuss the update which is part of a process that began mid-year with Bryan Davey and his time on the update to the 2015 plan.

The plan, and subsequent updates, is required for utilization of a federal funding stream, Federal Transit Administration 5310) which targets people with transit dependencies including low-income, seniors, veterans, disabilities and so forth. Projects that are listed in the coordinated plan are kept at a very general level, kept broad in order that a variety of projects can be included.

Mr. Pogue and Ms. Vergara presented the plan which includes the following elements 1. The purpose of the plan; 2. The elements of the plan; 3. Service Gaps and Unmet Needs; 4. What could improve coordination.

After the presentation discussion regarding transit needs and coordination ensued. It was clarified by Mr. Davey that Sierra County is not eligible for FTA 5310 funding, even though we're required to have this plan in place, because it conflicts with the FTA 5311 funding that we utilize. If we used both funding streams we would have to run two parallel programs. It was also clarified that FTA funding is competitively granted each year and generally isn't available for operations.

Mr. Pogue thanked the Commission and will put together a survey to solicit input and a final draft will be available for the May meeting for adoption.

10. **OVERALL WORK PROGRAM**

Mr. Davey reported to the Commission that due to many other work issues the draft Overall Work Program for the next year has not been prepared as of yet. The draft will be ready for the next meeting, along with the 2 quarterly reports that are still due.

11. **AUDITS**

Mr. Davey presented the *Sierra County Transportation Commission Financial Statements along with the Independent Auditor's Report for the year ending June 30, 2020* and well as the *Sierra County Transit Fund Financial Statements together with Independent Auditors Report for the year ending June 30, 2020*. He explained that there had been no audit exceptions.

Mr. Beals stated that he wanted to acknowledge the work of staff members that attain the "No Exceptions" finding on these audits and compliments the staff: Bryan Davey, Miriam Dines, Lynnea White, and Julie Potter.

The following Commission action was taken:

Commission Action: Commissioner Roen moved to approve the *Sierra County Transit Fund Financial Statements together with Independent Auditors Report for the year ending June 30, 2020* as presented; seconded by Commissioner Huebner. Motion was carried unanimously by roll call.

And

Commission Action: Commissioner Roen moved to approve the *Sierra County Transportation Commission Financial Statements along with the Independent Auditor's Report for the year*

ending June 30, 2020. as presented; seconded by Commissioner Huebner. Motion was carried unanimously by roll call.

12. REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Mr. Davey gave a brief summary of the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) which is adopted every other year and is due to Caltrans by December 15 of odd years, 2021 being such. The RTIP is the vehicle through which the SCTC programs its projects. Currently there are no projects programmed.

Commissioner Roen clarified that the Smithneck Road Project (Rehabilitation and Bike Path) were deprogrammed because the funding was in jeopardy.

Commissioner Dryden discussed the state of Smithneck Road and those roads in Sierra Brooks, stating that they were bad and are worse since the water project. At Commissioner Dryden's request Mr. Davey gave a brief recap of the Smithneck Road Project stating that the rehabilitation project was anticipated to be funded with regional funding and the bike path was anticipated to qualify for other funding. Several funding sources were sought, and applications were submitted to ATP (Active Transportation Plan), FLAP (Federal Lands Access Program) which were both competitive grants and with which there was no success. When the bike path funding wasn't forthcoming the projects were pushing against the time constraints for progressing a project, so we had to back it out of the RTIP in order not to lose the funding.

Clarification was given that the funding is still in our STIP funds.

Mr. Beals listed a number of projects that have been on the RTIP and have been prioritized and they include, not in any particular ranking order, Smithneck Rehabilitation and Bike Path, Sierra City Downtown, Streets of Sierra Brooks; Lemmon Canyon Road, and Gold Lake Road.

There is approximately \$4.1 Million in unallocated funding and additional funding will likely come in at less than \$1 Million. The new RTIP will need to be adopted by December 15, 2021 so there are a few meetings in which this can be worked on.

Commissioner Roen suggest another meeting, sooner than May, after information is gathered. Mr. Beals suggested a meeting in March as Project Study Reports would need to be generated to support the RTIP in December.

Commission Action: Commissioner Roen moved to set an in person meeting in Downieville for March 31, 2021 with the express purposes being reviewing projects and beginning the prioritization process for the RTIP; seconded by Commissioner Huebner. Motion was carried unanimously by roll call.

Mr. Beals suggested to the Commissioners that if there are particular projects that they are endorsing to give a "heads up" to help staff prepare for the March 31, 2021 meeting.

13. TRANSPORTATION ISSUES AND PROJECT STATUS REPORTS

Caltrans Report: Mr. Cadrett introduced himself again as the new Transportation Liaison for District 3 to Sierra County. He stated that Nima Kabirinassab had spoken highly of SCTC and had filled him in on action items that he left off with in September, 2020. One of the items had to do with snowmobiles on the State right of way. Mr. Beals stated that it took a while but eventually Caltrans Maintenance posted the turnouts on State Route 89 with no parking signs. Law

enforcement is another issue, and it might help if Caltrans would contact the CHP regarding the use of these turnouts as trailheads.

Mr. Cadrett reported that Caltrans will be sending the Fiscal Year 21/22 Certifications and Assurances out by the end of the week. These are required for the Overall Work Program.

As to the March 31, 2021 meeting he will review the State directive with regard to the pandemic as he is not sure if he can attend in person, but at least will expect to be there on Webex.

He also reported that the annual coordination meeting with Caltrans is scheduled for Thursday, April 29, 2021 from 10:00 a.m. to Noon. Discussion ensues about who should be in attendance at this annual meeting.

Commission Action: Commissioner Huebner moved to direct the Chair and Vice-Chair to attend the coordination meeting; seconded by Commissioner Roen. Motion was carried unanimously by roll call.

There was further discussion regarding the purpose of the coordination meeting. Mr. Beals requested a copy of the analysis that had been done a number of years ago in response to the SCTC's advocacy for working on motorcycle safety issues on State Route 49 (Yuba Pass). Chair Riede thanked Mr. Cadrette for his report.

Bridge Projects Update: Mr. Davey reported that both the Salmon Lake Road and Packer Lake Road Bridges are ready for construction once the Federal Highway Administration releases funding for programming. He is analyzing the concept of advancing the funding but that will take a lot of coordination with the FHWA about when funding would be available. The Plumbago Bridge is still pending and the construction documents are not complete.

FLAP Update: The Federal Lands Access Program comes around every two years and Mr. Beals gave a summary of the application activities of the last 2 cycles. A number of projects were submitted including Smithneck Creek Bike Path, a joint project at Stampede Dam Road with Nevada County, a joint application with Plumas County for the Gold Lake Road, which were not funded. It was disappointing and he believes that it would help if the US Forest Services would be more proactive in this process. Mr. Beals explained that the program is specific to federal lands access, for instance the bike path would connect the communities of Loyaltan and Sierra Brooks to the federal lands beyond Smithneck Creek Park, and the entire Gold Lake Road is all about accessing federal lands. Commissioner Roen would like this to be on the March 31, 2021 agenda as well as the deadline for application is May 27, 2021.

Update on County Projects: Bryan Davey reported that 5 projects for the 2017 Storm Damage are prepared to go out to bid, and then that will wrap up the projects from that disaster. We are hoping for authorization from the Board of Supervisors on March 16, 2021 to go to bid for construction by June 1, 2021.

Update on City Projects: Chair Riede reported that the City of Loyaltan had a meeting with a large presentation around internet availability and hopefully the community will have internet and whatever comes with it by August.

Other Transportation Project: Director Beals addressed the vacancy on the Commission. This position represents the Transit interest on the Commission. Discussion ensued about limitations due to potential applicants' involvement with the organizations that provide the transit services.

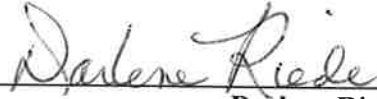
County Counsel, David Prentice, suggests that the concern would be personal benefit and suggests that once there is an applicant we can look at concerns with regard to conflict of interest and make a determination at that time. The Executive Secretary will re-advertise the position.

11 SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING

The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 31, 2021, 10:00 a.m. at the Board of Supervisors Chambers, Sierra County Courthouse.


15. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Riede adjourned the meeting at 12:08 a.m.



Darlene Riede, Chairman
Sierra County Transportation Commission

ATTEST:



Miriam B. Dines, Executive Secretary