



**Santa Cruz County Regional  
Transportation Commission**

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**MINUTES**

**Thursday, February 4, 2016  
9:00 a.m.**

1. Roll call

The meeting was called to order at: 9:02 a.m.

Members present:

Don Lane	Zach Friend
John Leopold	Greg Caput
Ryan Coonerty	Bruce McPherson
Cynthia Chase	Jimmy Dutra
Randy Johnson	Karina Cervantez
Ed Bottorff	Dennis Norton
Aileen Loe	

Staff present:

George Dondero	Luis Mendez
Jennifer Rodriguez	Yesenia Parra
Kim Shultz	Cory Caletti
Karena Pushnik	Rachel Moriconi
Raquel Trinidad	

2. Oral communications

**Jack Nelson**, Campaign for Sensible Transportation and Sierra Club member, shared a letter addressing concerns about what was reported in the Highway 1 Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Mr. Nelson passed out a flyer to the Commission, inviting all to a sustainable solutions presentation at Live Oak Grange.

**Bob Morgan**, Live Oak resident, said widening Highway 1 will upset the CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere and urged the Commission to be considerate with the plans of widening the highway.

**Paul Elerick**, Aptos resident, said the RTC should do an opinion survey as soon as possible to get the facts for the tax measure, and share the results of the survey with the public. Mr. Elerick noted that he is concerned about groups shooting down the measure.

Commissioner Coonerty arrived to the meeting.

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas

Additional pages to Items 18 and 20 and a replacement page for agenda Item 21 were distributed.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Commissioner Norton moved and Commissioner Coonerty seconded the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Lane, Friend, Leopold, Caput, Coonerty, McPherson, Chase, Dutra, Johnson, Cervantez, Bottorff, and Norton voting "aye".

### **MINUTES**

4. Approved draft minutes of the December 3, 2015 Regional Transportation Commission meeting
5. Accepted draft minutes of the December 8, 2015 Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee meeting
6. Accepted draft minutes of the December 14, 2015 Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting
7. Accepted draft minutes of the January 14, 2016 Interagency Technical Advisory Committee meeting

### **POLICY ITEMS**

*None*

### **PROJECTS and PLANNING ITEMS**

8. Approved request for FY 15/16 Cap and Trade-Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP)

### **BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS**

9. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues

### **ADMINISTRATION ITEMS**

10. Contract for the Transportation Investment Plan Public Information Consultant  
Item moved to the regular agenda at the request of Commissioner Johnson. Chair Lane made it Item 19.5
11. Approved reappointments and appointment of members to the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee

## **INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS**

12. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
13. Accepted correspondence log
14. Accepted letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies
  - a. Letter to the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District regarding the RTC November 2016 Transportation Ballot Measure from the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee
  - b. Letter to Caltrans District 5 regarding the Highway 1 Corridor Tier I and Tier II Document Comments from the Bicycle Advisory Committee
15. Accepted miscellaneous written comments from the public on RTC projects and transportation issues
16. Accepted information items
  - a. Letter to the California Transportation Commission regarding Cycle 3 of the Active Transportation Program from the Central Coast Coalition

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

17. Commissioner reports – oral reports

*None*

18. Director's Report – oral report

George Dondero, Executive Director, reported on: the RTC satellite office moving to another space in Watsonville sometime in March and that the current office would be vacated by the end of February; California Transportation Commission (CTC) Executive Director, Will Kempton, resigning at the end of March; and the hiring of Raquel Trinidad as a Transportation Planning Technician, to assist with projects and community outreach. He reminded the Commission about the upcoming Transportation Policy Workshop (TPW) meeting on February 18<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. at the RTC office and announced that the Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee meeting on February 11<sup>th</sup> would need to be rescheduled to accommodate pending information from the state that needs to be added to the budget. Mr. Dondero also recognized Karena Pushnik for completing 25 years of service with the RTC.

Commissioners thanked Karena for her service and commitment.

## 19. Caltrans report and consider action items

Aileen Loe announced that the newest *Mile Marker* is available, and includes a transparent performance report that identifies the progress of Caltrans projects. She reported on the projected reduction in STIP funding, and the on-going request for 5,000 volunteers to participate in the Road User Pilot Program to track their mileage for 9 months at no cost.

Commissioners discussed: the timeframe for the sidewalk project in Watsonville from Wagner to Holohan road; a concern with the lack of scheduled projects in South County; the fishhook project underway and the significant safety improvement it will provide; how the reduction in STIP funding will affect the Santa Cruz Metro; the importance of improving road systems and contacting the state legislatures to do something to address transportation issues; and the senator holding an open house that evening.

### 19.5 *Previously Item 10.* Approve Contract for the Transportation Investment Plan Public Information Consultant

In responses to Commissioner Johnsons concern, George Dondero, Executive Director, said that the consultant would assist the RTC in delivering information about projects that will be funded through the ballot measure. Mr. Dondero noted that TBWB, would assist with the outreach efforts, and Miller Maxfield, a local firm, would assist RTC staff with social media outreach specifically.

Luis Mendez, Deputy Director, said that the RTC approved the hiring of a Temporary Planning Technician to assist with responding to the increased requests from the public for information on RTC projects.

Commissioners discussed: the relevancy of last year's polling data and if it is sufficient to move forward with the proposed ballot measure; the importance of strategic sequencing and public outreach plans; staff capacity to educate the entire county; the Ad-hoc Committee's pending discussion on the details and funding of an impending poll; recognizing the needs of transportation and making sure the public is well informed; input and validation from similar counties; and the expectations of public opinion toward the proposed tax measure with both positive and negative arguments to consider.

**Jack Nelson**, said there needs to be an analysis of the Highway 1 EIR by the Commission. He noted that in the polling done last May there was a red flag that indicated only 47% supported the widening of Highway 1. Mr. Nelson urged the Commission to be transparent with information given to the public.

**Paul Elerick**, stated that the next poll should be done by the RTC, and the details and results should be made available to the public.

**Bob Morgan**, said that his participation in the last poll had changed his opinion on transportation needs. He stated that there are others who may have also changed their mind and that a new poll should be conducted.

Commissioner Leopold moved and Commissioner McPherson seconded the staff recommendation to authorize the Executive Director to negotiate and execute consultant agreements:

- 1) To perform public outreach activities associated with the Transportation Investment Plan with TBWB Strategies, and
- 2) To perform other specific outreach activities associated with the Investment Plan with Miller Maxfield, Inc.

The motion passed with Commissioners Lane, Friend, Leopold, Coonerty, McPherson, Chase, Dutra, Cervantez, Bottorff, and Norton voting "aye" and Commissioners Johnson and Caput voting "nay".

## 20. City of Santa Cruz Rail Trail Project update and contract authorizations

Cory Caletti, Senior Transportation Planner, presented her staff report. She provided information on the City of Santa Cruz 2.1-mile rail trail proposed project from Natural Bridges Avenue to Pacific Avenue; and on three additional rail trail projects being developed in the north coast, Watsonville, and Capitola. Ms. Caletti introduced Chris Schneider, City of Santa Cruz, to demonstrate the preliminary design plans for segment 7 of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail.

Commissioners discussed the challenges of cyclists versus pedestrians on the trail and if there is enough room to accommodate both; directional striping and signage along the trail; safety barriers and buffer areas for the trail from the train; adjacent property owners good neighbor fences; drainage issues along the corridor; the project being a tremendous example as a cooperative effort between many entities; accommodations and funding to incorporate fiber optic conduits; appreciation to Congressman Sam Farr and community groups that have contributed funding, and the creativity from staff for their work done to show that a rail and trail can coexist.

**Jack Nelson**, stated that the Campaign for Sustainable Transportation (CFST) would love to campaign for more funding for projects like the Rail Trail project. Mr. Nelson noted that this project is in line with the worldwide trend for sustainable transportation.

**Bob Morgan**, said that his family is excited about the project and believes the Rail Trail is an incredible step toward community cohesion.

**Joe Martinez**, Trail Now, shared the Trail Now Newsletter. Mr. Martinez said keeping the rail is an ineffective solution for transportation needs and the rail corridor should be used for a trail only. He urged the Commission to seek further consultation about the safety and design of the trains to be used.

Commissioner Chase moved and Commissioner Leopold seconded to adopt **(Resolution 09-16)** authorizing the Executive Director to enter into necessary agreements and amendments to fund and implement the City of Santa Cruz project as well as other funded rail trail projects. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Lane, Friend, Leopold, Caput, Coonerty, McPherson, Chase, Dutra, Johnson, Cervantez, Bottorff, and Norton voting "aye".

21. Distribution Formulas to Local Jurisdictions – Neighborhood Projects in the Investment Plan for a 2016 Transportation Ballot Measure

George Dondero, Executive Director, presented his staff report. Mr. Dondero said that the proposed allocation formulas were discussed and approved unanimously by the Ad-hoc Committee. The formula is based on 50% population and 50% centerline miles, which would provide a reasonable and equitable distribution.

Commissioners discussed the difference between lane and centerline road miles; distribution of funds based on population needs versus population size; having many and maybe too many buckets; earmarking allocated funds for wildlife crossing on Highway 17 and the Highway 9 corridor; the importance of a well maintained transportation infrastructure; looking at the generation of the sales tax source by site when considering the formula; the Ad-hoc committee researching alternative methods for formulating the allocation in collaboration with City Managers; and acknowledging the previously agreed allocations to the County of Santa Cruz.

**Joe Martinez**, submitted a letter from Trail Now for the commission to review.

Commissioner McPherson moved and Commissioner Friend seconded to direct staff to refer back to the Ad-hoc Committee for further discussions on alternative methods of formulating the allocations for "Neighborhood Projects" in the proposed transportation ballot measure going to the voters in November 2016. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Lane, Friend, Leopold, Caput, Coonerty, McPherson, Chase, Dutra, Johnson, Cervantez, Bottorff, and Norton voting "aye".

22. 2016 Legislative Program and Funding Updates

Rachel Moriconi, Senior Transportation Planner, presented her staff report. Ms. Moriconi reported that traditional revenue sources for the transportation system are unpredictable and not generating enough funds needed for projects. The California Transportation Commission (CTC) adopted a new Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which will rescind \$750 million in projects, requiring regions to revise priorities and proposals by February 26, 2016. A formal recommendation for project priorities will be presented at the Transportation Policy Workshop on February 18, 2016.

Commissioners discussed: lack of actions taken by the state in providing alternatives for transportation funding to local jurisdictions; the continuing decline of gas taxes and looking at other options for transportation project funding; coordinating with neighboring counties for a proposal of unified needs; the importance of Santa Cruz County being a self-help county; investing in critical infrastructure; and the uncertainties in state and federal funding.

**Jack Nelson**, stated that charging for vehicle miles traveled will not address the issue of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Mr. Nelson said that putting a price on all fossil fuels to reduce fuel consumption will benefit the future of the community.

Commissioner Leopold moved and Commissioner Dutra seconded staff recommendation to approve State and Federal Legislative Priorities for 2016 to assist in analyzing the transportation impacts of legislative activities. The motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Lane, Friend, Leopold, Caput, Coonerty, McPherson, Chase, Dutra, Johnson, Cervantez, Bottorff, and Norton voting "aye".

23. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

Commissioners adjourned to closed session at: 11:22 a.m.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

24. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL-EXISTING LITIGATION. (Paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9 of the Government Code) Santa Cruz Superior Court Case No. CV182123
25. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL-ANTICIPATED LITIGATION. Significant exposure to litigation pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9 of the Government code: two case

### **OPEN SESSION**

26. Report on closed session – *No report*

27. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 3, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at the County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 701 Ocean Street, 5<sup>th</sup> floor, Santa Cruz, CA.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 18, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at the RTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA.

The meeting adjourned at: 11:54 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Rodriguez, Staff

Attendees:

Alex Clifford

Raymond Cancino

Kirk Ance

Jack Nelson

Paul Elerick

Robert Morgan

Murray Fontes

Heather Adamson

Maria Ester Rodriguez

Joe Martinez

Santa Cruz Metro

Community Bridges

Community Bridges/Liftline

Campaign for Sensible Transportation

Campaign for Sensible Transportation

Live Oak resident

City of Watsonville

Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments

City of Watsonville

Trail Now