



Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

Minutes

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

**Scotts Valley City Council Chambers
1 Civic Center Dr.
Scotts Valley, CA**

1. Roll call

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m.

Members present:

Don Lane	Randy Johnson
Zach Friend	Ryan Coonerty
John Leopold	Bruce McPherson
Jimmy Dutra	Cynthia Chase
Ed Bottorff	Karina Cervantez
Dennis Norton	Greg Caput
Brandy Rider (ex-officio)	

Staff members:

George Dondero	Luis Mendez
Yesenia Parra	Jenn Rodriguez
Cory Caletti	Ginger Dykaar
Karena Pushnik	Amy Naranjo
Kim Shultz	

2. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

Commissioners adjourned to close session at 9:04 a.m.

CLOSED SESSION

3. 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
4. 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. CV178849
5. 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. 16CV00335

OPEN SESSION

6. Report on closed session

Commissioners reconvened to open session at 9:40 a.m. and there was no closed session report.

7. Oral communications - None

8. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas

Additional pages for Item 29, handouts for Items 17, 24, 28, and 29, and a replacement page for the SAFE Agenda were distributed.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

MINUTES

9. Accepted draft minutes of the April 11, 2016 Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting

10. Approved draft minutes of the June 2, 2016 Regional Transportation Commission meeting

11. Accepted draft minutes of the June 6, 2016 Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting

12. Accepted draft minutes of the June 14, 2016 Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee

13. Approved draft minutes of the June 16, 2016 Transportation Policy Workshop meeting

POLICY ITEMS

No consent items

PROJECTS and PLANNING ITEMS

14. Approved designation of 2016 Proposition 1B Transit Security funds to Santa Cruz METRO (**Resolution 27-16**)

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS

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

16. Amendments for public outreach consultant contracts

Item moved to the regular agenda at the request of Commissioner Johnson. Chair Lane moved the item to the end of the regular agenda after Item 29.

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

17. Approved Railroad Crossing Agreement for Trout Gulch Road in Aptos

INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS

18. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
19. Accepted correspondence log
20. Accepted letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies
 - a. Letter to Secretaries Brian P. Kelly, John Laird, and Matthew Rodriguez regarding Comments on the Draft California Sustainable Freight Action Plan from the Central Coast Coalition
21. Accepted miscellaneous written comments from the public on RTC projects and transportation issues
22. Accepted information items
 - a. Graffiti Removal Project June Newsletter: *Westlake Charter Students Clean Up Aptos Rail Corridor*
 - b. Article from the Washington Post "Is the car culture dying?" by Robert J. Samuelson

REGULAR AGENDA

23. Commissioner reports – oral reports

Commissioner McPherson reported that Santa Cruz Metro has received the biggest grant in California in the amount of \$3.8 million to fund new electric buses and charging stations.

Commissioner Johnson welcomed everyone to Scotts Valley.

24. Director's Report – oral report

George Dondero, Executive Director, reported on: the progress of the Mar Vista bike/pedestrian crossing project, with a target date of construction to begin in summer 2019; a partnership with the City of Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz County, and the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County to fund the feasibility analysis to widen the walkway on the San Lorenzo river bridge; City Arts Santa Cruz and Santa Cruz Arts Commission initiating a plan to have public arts be displayed along the City of Santa Cruz's rail trail segments; and a roadmap for future steps in assessing options for the rail corridor being presented at the September 1st RTC meeting.

25. Caltrans report and consider action items

Kelly McClendon, Caltrans District 5 Transportation Planner, reported on: an update to the release of the California Transportation Plan (CTP 2040), a long-range policy framework to meet future mobility needs and reduce emissions; Caltrans' new Bike and Pedestrian Safety Chief, Rachel Carpenter; and the Performance Measurement System (PeMS) detectors on Highway 17 installed recently.

26. City of Scotts Valley Public Works presentation – oral report

Scott Hamby, City of Scotts Valley Public Works Director, gave a presentation on transportation projects in Scotts Valley. Mr. Hamby reported on: the crosswalk improvements near schools and the post office with Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds; the Mount Hermon/Scotts Valley Drive and Whispering Pines intersection project to relieve congestion and improve traffic flow; and the Eastern Corridor Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) application to repave, restripe, and add bicycle lanes and sidewalks on Green Hills Road and Glen Canyon Road.

Commissioners discussed: the success of the Safe Routes to School project, and how funding allocations to Scotts Valley from the Transportation Improvement Plan will assist with the overlay budget to fund the city's transportation projects.

27. Transportation Development Act (TDA) Article 8 allocation request from the County of Santa Cruz

Cory Caletti, Senior Transportation Planner, presented the staff report. Ms. Caletti reported that the County of Santa Cruz has requested \$386,000 in funding for three bicycle and pedestrian projects: bike lane maintenance, the Boulder Creek Elementary School Pedestrian Safety Project, and the Twin Lakes State Beach Beachfront project within the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST). She clarified that that MBSST project costs are funded by a range of grants and local funds, along with TDA funding, and also noted that a formalized parking configuration will restrict current unchecked use and will enhance pedestrian access and bicycle safety.

Commissioners discussed: appreciation for the Boulder Creek Elementary School Pedestrian Safety Project; whether it is appropriate for TDA funds to be utilized to provide vehicular access to the coast; the longevity of the project's design development and balances required due to various stakeholders and resources agencies; satisfying the demand for parking near Twin Lakes Beach while still preserving the integrity of the scenic area; the needs of pedestrians and the harbor and being people friendly versus automobile friendly; and bike and pedestrian paths located on the coastal side while balancing parking areas so cars do not park haphazardly.

Commissioner McPherson moved and Commissioner Coonerty seconded staff recommendations to approve **(Resolution 28-16)** to allocate Transportation Development Act (TDA) Article 8 funds to the County of Santa Cruz for bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects that include:

1. Bike Lane Maintenance – \$150,000
2. Boulder Creek Elementary School Pedestrian Safety Project - \$150,000
3. Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail /Twin Lakes State Beach spur - \$86,069

The motion passed with Commissioners Lane, Johnson, Friend, Leopold, Coonerty, Dutra, Chase, Bottorff, Cervantez, and McPherson voting "aye" and Commissioners Norton and Caput voting "no".

28. Project list for 2040 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan

Ginger Dykaar, Transportation Planner, presented the staff report. Ms. Dykaar reported that the complete list of transportation needs for the 2040 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) are currently being developed and includes: goals, targets, and policies that are used to prioritize funding, identify the area's transportation needs, and estimate the amount of funds that may be available for transportation projects. The approved priority project lists for Santa Cruz County will be submitted for inclusion in the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan - Sustainable Communities Strategy (2040 MTP-SCS). She noted that the 2040 RTP and 2040 MTP-SCS are scheduled for approval in June 2018.

Commissioners discussed: prioritizing the compiled list of transportation projects; financial feasibility to fund over \$6 billion needed for transportation projects; incoming revenue and available funding for the constrained and unconstrained project lists; and the outreach efforts for comments from the public for their input on the transportation needs in Santa Cruz County.

Dana Bagshaw, stated that she is inspired by the 2040 RTP's vision to improve public transit and that funding should be redirected from the highway to other projects that support sustainable transportation.

Commissioner Coonerty moved and Commissioner Leopold seconded staff recommendations to:

1. Identify any additional projects or gaps in the transportation system that should be considered for the 2040 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP);
2. Approve the preliminary draft project list for the 2040 Santa Cruz County RTP; and
3. Direct staff to submit the approved project list to the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) for inclusion in the project list for the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy.

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

29. Polar Express Operating Plan and License

Luis Mendez, Deputy Director, presented the staff report. Mr. Mendez reported that Iowa Pacific Holdings (IPH)/Santa Cruz and Monterey Bay Railway (SC&MB) have proposed an operating plan to run a Polar Express from the Santa Cruz Boardwalk to the Capitola area on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line for the 2016 holiday season.

Kevin Busath, Iowa Pacific Holding (IPH), introduced Matt Abbey and Mike Edwards with IPH/Santa Cruz & Monterey Bay Railway (SC&MB), and gave a presentation on the operating plan for the proposed Polar Express excursion. Mr. Busath stated that Polar Express is an hour long train ride that has been declared by Warner Brothers as the biggest and best Polar Express franchise train in the United States. He noted that the excursion would: replace the Train to Christmas Town in Watsonville; have a North Pole set built somewhere in Capitola; not impact the Big Trees holiday train; and is projected to attract up to thirty thousand passengers, with employment opportunities for over 100 Santa Cruz County locals.

Commissioners discussed: replacing the Watsonville train to Christmas Town; outreach to the Capitola City Council and stakeholders; minimizing the noise impact of the train horn at grade crossings; optimistic calculations of revenue numbers and estimated ridership projections; outreach to the neighbors within range of the excursion; balancing mindfulness of the community and the RTC's obligation for use of the rail line and the license agreement with IPH; maintenance costs on the rail line; troubleshooting any parking and safety issues from the train going through Capitola; the affordability of the Polar Express; how the excursion is a business decisions on how to use the rail line; past communication challenges and history of working with IPH; the importance of utilizing the rail line with a feature that will be well liked by the community; the past ridership numbers of the Christmas train; and support for public process and community outreach.

Dana Bagshaw, said that she is concerned about parking issues and traffic congestion near the wharf and inquired about the Polar Express' hours of operation, frequency, and coordination with the Big Trees operation.

Grace Voss, stated that neighbors near the rail line of the proposed excursion are sensitive to loud noises. Ms. Voss inquired if electric engines are being considered and if reducing the decibel of the train horn is possible.

Commissioner Bottorff made a motion to postpone the decision on approving an operating plan and license agreement for the Polar Express until the August 18th Transportation Policy Workshop, pending further coordination with the City of Capitola and other key stakeholders. Commissioner Norton seconded and the motion passed with Commissioners Lane, Johnson, Friend, Leopold, Coonerty, Dutra, Chase, Bottorff, Cervantez, Norton, and McPherson voting "aye" and Commissioner Caput voting "no".

Commissioner Caput left the meeting.

Previously Item 16 - Approve amendments for public outreach consultant contracts

In response to Commissioner Johnson's concerns to the contracts being over the initially approved budget, George Dondero, Executive Director, clarified that the funds were in the budget and there was an oversight in the procedural inclusion of the resolution that was not in the original contract authorization.

Commissioner Friend moved and Commissioner Leopold seconded staff recommendations to authorize amendments to the contracts with TBWB Strategies and Miller Maxfield, Inc. to pay for the work done by these consultants and

adequately close out the contracts for public outreach and deliverables associated with the RTC's development of an expenditure plans and transportation sales tax measure. The motion passed with Commissioners Lane, Friend, Leopold, Coonerty, Dutra, Chase, Bottorff, Cervantez, Norton, and McPherson voting "aye" and Commissioner Johnson voting "no".

Commissioner Leopold and Commissioner Norton left the meeting.

30. Adjourn to special meeting of the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies

The Regional Transportation Commission meeting adjourned at 11:29 a.m.

31. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 1, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at the County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 701 Ocean St., 5th floor, Santa Cruz, CA.

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

The meeting adjourned at 11:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenn Rodriguez, Staff

Attendees:

Dana Bagshaw	
Kelly McClendon	Caltrans
Kevin Busath	Iowa Pacific
Matt Abbey	Iowa Pacific
Mike Edwards	Santa Cruz & Monterey Bay Railway
Sharon Miles	
Jack Sohriakoff	Santa Cruz County Public Works
Pamela Cox	
Howard Cohen	
Ed Silveira	B40
Erich Friedrich	Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
Scott Hamby	City of Scotts Valley Public Works
Kate Giberson	Harris Association