



**Santa Cruz County  
Regional Transportation Commission**

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**MINUTES**

**Thursday, September 02, 2021  
9:00 a.m.**

**NOTE: Teleconference  
Community TV Zoom  
Web: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87944666793>  
Dial-in: +1 669 900 6833  
Webinar ID: 879 4466 6793**

1. Roll call.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

Members present:

Sandy Brown	Larry Pageler (Alt)
Kristen Petersen	Andy Schiffrin (Alt)
Randy Johnson	Robert Quinn (Alt)
Greg Caput	Mike Rotkin
Manu Koenig	Eduardo Montesino
Gine Johnson (Alt)	Scott Eades (Caltrans Ex-Officio)
Jacques Bertrand	Felipe Hernandez (Alt)
Bruce McPherson	

Staff present:

Guy Preston	Tracy New
Luis Mendez	Sarah Christensen
Yesenia Parra	Steven Mattas (RTC Counsel)
Shannon Munz	Amy Naranjo
Krista Corwin	Fernanda Dias Pini
Ginger Dykaar	

2. Oral communications.

Received public comment from:

Barry Scott

Michael Saint, Campaign for Sustainable Transportation

Bud Colligan

Brian Peoples

Ryan Sarnataro

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas.

A replacement page for item 12 and handouts for items 17, 19, and 20 were posted to the website.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Commissioner Rotkin made a motion and Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda and the motion passed unanimously with Commissioners Bertrand, Brown, R. Johnson, Montesino, Caput, Koenig, Petersen, Rotkin and Commissioner Alternates Schiffrin, Quinn, V. Johnson, and Pageler voting "aye."

### **MINUTES**

4. Approved draft minutes of the August 05, 2021 Regional Transportation Commission meeting
5. Accepted draft minutes of the August 09, 2021 Bicycle Advisory Committee meeting
6. Accepted draft minutes of the August 10, 2021 Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee meeting

### **POLICY ITEMS**

*No consent items.*

### **PROJECTS and PLANNING ITEMS**

7. Approved authorizing the Executive Director to award a contract for On-Call Civil & Structural Engineering for Projects on the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line (**Resolution 12-22**)

## **BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS**

8. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues
9. Accepted status report on Measure D revenues
10. Approved authorizing the Executive Director to procure the labor compliance program LCP Tracker (**Resolution 13-22**)
11. Approved authorizing the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with Granicus for a subscription to Peak Agenda Management and eComment software (**Resolution 14-22**)

## **ADMINISTRATION ITEMS**

*No consent items.*

## **INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS**

12. Accepted monthly meeting schedule.
13. Accepted correspondence log.
14. Accepted letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies.
  - a. August 13, 2021 Letter from Guy Preston, Executive Director, to Lon Van Gemert, CEO, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad (SPPR)/Progressive Rail (PGR) RE: Phase I Repairs per Section 5.1 of the Administration Coordination and License (ACL) Agreement Completed
15. Accepted information items. - *none*

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

16. Commissioner reports

Commissioner Bertrand delivered comments on the effects of climate change on the health of trees in California and the associated risk of wildfires.

Commissioner McPherson communicated that he will depart the meeting at 10am and Commissioner Alternate Virginia (Gine) Johnson will take his place.

17. Director's Report

Executive Director Guy Preston announced that the executive orders which authorized urgent changes to the Brown Act due to COVID-19 will soon expire and public meetings will return to an in-person format unless formal action is taken. Director Preston also provided an update on Measure D and presented the Measure D Summer 2021 update.

In response to Commissioners' questions, Director Preston commented on the community input process for the Highway 9/San Lorenzo Valley projects and the safety procedures planned for the upcoming RTC meetings pending a staff analysis of the technology available at the Board of Supervisors chambers.

Commissioner Rotkin raised a safety concern around schoolchildren using Ashley Street instead of Cooper Street by Highway 9. Commissioner Eades and Commissioner McPherson responded to those concerns.

#### 18. Caltrans report

Deputy District 5 Director Scott Eades communicated that the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Federal Rail Administration (FRA) recently announced ~\$362 million in grant funds available through the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) program.

Deputy Director Eades responded to Commissioners' questions regarding the federal grant program and provided an update on the Clean California program.

Commissioner McPherson expressed appreciation for the staff report in item 20 before departing the meeting at 9:44 a.m. Commissioner Alternate Virginia (Gine) Johnson stepped in to replace him.

#### 19. Capitola Trestle Update – Conceptual Study to Repurpose the Bridges to a Multiuse Trail

Sr. Transportation Engineer Sarah Christiansen delivered a presentation.

Ms. Christiansen and RTC General Counsel Steve Mattas responded to a Commissioner's questions regarding the staff recommendations.

Commissioners discussed: terms of existing freight easement; desire for a side-by-side comparison of cost estimates for preconstruction activities for passenger rail, freight rail, and trail-only alternatives; the budget for the first recommendation; impacts on staff time with respect to the second recommendation; impacts on the County's general plan; complete & comprehensive information provided in the staff report; safety plan for Capitola residents and businesses during construction; structural constraints of the bridge; compliance with our legal obligations; potential future re-

activation of the rail line for freight and/or passenger rail; bridge segment safety ratings; timber trestle repair costs and considerations; need for detailed understanding of RTC's freight obligations and anticipated costs to taxpayers; cost estimate of repairing bridge to freight standards; benefits to South County voters not apparent.

Received public comment from:

Brian Peoples, Trail Now

Ryan Sarnataro

David Dean

L. Faulkner

Michael Saint

Graciela Vega

Jack Brown

Gina Cole, Bike Santa Cruz County

Faina Segal

Sally Arnold

Bud Colligan

Matt Machado, Santa Cruz County Dept. of Public Works

Commissioner Alternate Schiffrin made a motion and Commissioner Rotkin seconded the motion to approve the staff recommendations with slight modifications to read as follows:

The Regional Transportation Commission received an update on the Capitola Trestle Conceptual Repurposing Study, and authorize staff to:

1. Proceed with the prioritization of the preconstruction activities needed to rehabilitate the existing timber and wrought iron bridges (15.89b, 15.89c, and 15.89d) for the trail only, light rail and freight rial options by updating the Measure D Five-Year Plans; and,
2. Work with County Public Works staff to consider including the deck conversion work for the trail option in the environmental analysis for the Coastal Rail Trail Segment 10-11 project.

In response to Commissioner questions, Director Preston, Ms. Christensen, and County Public Works staff provided details on the scoping of their respective projects.

Commissioners discussed: freight obligation complicates the rail issue without apparent utility; motion redundant because it already aligns with staff intent; cost-benefit analysis of freight service needed but never performed; tax measure needed to fund rail projects; freight obligation is a legal one; defying obligation would come with risk; clarification that the motion on the floor does not intend for the County to consider preconstruction work for replacing the wrought iron bridge entirely.

The motion passed with Commissioners Bertrand, Brown, Montesino, Koenig, Petersen, Rotkin, and Commissioner Alternates Hernandez, Schiffrin, Quinn, V. Johnson, and Pageler voting "aye," and Commissioner R. Johnson voting "no."

## 20. Preservation of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line

Executive Director Guy Preston clarified that the item is for information only and delivered the staff report.

In response to Commissioner questions, Director Preston discussed the ministerial role of the Surface Transportation Board; meeting Roaring Camp's needs if railbanking the SCBRL leaves the Felton line stranded; desire for the public to understand that legal and financial constraints prevent the RTC from implementing either a passenger rail or trail-only project at this time; appreciation for clear staff report; consequences of removing the rails; future of SCBRL uncertain if railbanked; Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit SMART lawsuits; potential future closed session item: report regarding analysis of fees vs. easement ownership issues along the Right-of-Way.

### Received public comment from:

Jack Brown  
Corinna McFarlane  
Barry Scott  
Brian Peoples  
Jacob Wysocki  
Mark Johannessen  
Lani Faulkner  
Sally Arnold  
Bill  
David Dean  
Jeanette Guire  
Ryan Sarnataro  
Sean  
Faina for Rail

## 21. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 02, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. by teleconference.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 19, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. by teleconference.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yesenia Parra  
Administrative Services Officer

Attendees:

831-\*\*\*-1884

831-\*\*\*-6978

408-\*\*\*-2509

Public Transit David Van Brink

Alex Clifford

Amy Naranjo

Barry Scott

Ben Vernazza

Bill

Bill Philipps

BobFi

Brian

Brian (Trail Now)

Bud Colligan

Carla Carstens

Carmen Bernal

Carolrosenoff

CJSchneiter

Corinna McFarlane

David Date

David Dean

Donna

Edward Estrada

Ellen

Faina for Rail

Gina Cole

Graciela Vega

Gustavo Alfaro

Heather Adamson, AMBAG

Heidy Kellison

Henry Hooker

Housing Santa Cruz County

Howard Cohen

Jack Brown – YES Greenway!

Jack Carroll

Jacob Wysocki

Jeanette Guire RC RR

Johanna Lighthill

Kieran Kelly

LFaulkner Rail&Trail

Lawrence Kaplan

Lowell Hurst

Mark Johannessen

Martha Dadala

Matt Machado

Melissa Hartman

Michael Conneran

Michael Pisano

Michael Saint

Murray Fontes (he/him/his)

Nadene Thorne

Nancy Yellin

Peter Newton

Piet Canin

Rebecca Rockom (she/her)

Rod Tidmore

Rosemary Sarka

Ryan Sarnataro

Sally wants Trail + Rail

Sam Storey

Sean

stephen@santacruzlocal.org

Steve Jesberg

Steven Schieffer

Tim Brattan

Tony U

Trink Praxel

Virginia Dykaar

Will Mayall