

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Approved MINUTES
Monday, November 7, 2011
Ukiah City Council Chambers

ADDITIONAL AUDIOCONFERENCE LOCATION:
Caltrans District 1, 1656 Union St., Eureka

The Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) meets as the Board of Directors of:
Mendocino Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) and
Mendocino County Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE)

1. Call to Order / Roll Call . The meeting was called to order at 1:42 p.m. with Directors Rex Jackman (Caltrans/PAC; Alternate Jesse Robertson also present) on the audioconference telephone, Larry Stranske, John Pinches, Kendall Smith, and Dan Gjerde present; Chair Gjerde presiding. Director Mari Rodin arrived later. Director Susan Ranochak was excused. New member Doug Burkey of Point Arena was absent.

Staff present: Phil Dow, Executive Director; Janet Orth, Deputy Director for Administration; Loretta Ellard, Assistant Executive Director; and Nephele Barrett, Senior Planner.

2. Election of Officers – Vice Chair. A vacancy resulted in September from the vacated seat of Lauren Sinnott. The Chair opened the floor to nominations for the office of Vice Chair. Director Pinches was nominated. With no further nominations heard, the Chair declared Director Pinches elected Vice Chair by acclamation.

3. Optional Appointments to Executive Committee. There was also a vacancy on the Executive Committee. According to the bylaws, the committee comprises the Chair and Vice Chair and a third member. Director Stranske was nominated. With no further nominations heard, the Chair declared Director Stranske appointed to the Executive Committee by acclamation.

4. Convene as RTPA

5. Recess as RTPA - Reconvene as Policy Advisory Committee

Public Expression. None.

6 - 9. Regular Calendar.

6. Caltrans State Planning & Research (SPR) Grant Program:

- a. Adoption of Resolution Authorizing MCOG To Enter Into a Contract With Caltrans and Provide Project Administration for the “Pacific Coast Bicycle Route Engineered Feasibility Study” on State Route 1 in Mendocino County. Ms. Ellard introduced the item, explaining the purpose of this project, funded entirely by a \$150,000 State Planning & Research grant. MCOG would receive \$15,000 for administration and participation on a technical advisory group. Executive Director Dow and Director Jackman of Caltrans District 1 also answered questions. This study will provide public outreach, identify and recommend projects to improve the corridor, and conduct preliminary engineering in sufficient detail with cost estimates to be competitive for funding opportunities and construction.

Upon motion by Smith, second by Stranske, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*5 Ayes – Robertson/PAC- Alt., Stranske, Pinches, Smith, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 3 Absent - Burkey, Rodin, and Ranochak*): IT IS ORDERED that the following resolution is adopted.

Resolution No. M2011-15

Authorizing Mendocino Council of Governments
To Enter Into a Contract With Caltrans and
Provide Project Administration for the
“Pacific Coast Bicycle Route Engineered Feasibility Study”
on State Route 1 in Mendocino County
(Reso. #M2011-15 is incorporated herein by reference)

- b. Adoption of Resolution Authorizing MCOG To Enter Into a Contract With Caltrans and Provide Project Administration for the “Covelo Engineered Feasibility Study” on State Route 162 in Mendocino County. Ms. Ellard described the study as similar to the one approved under #6a, to identify improvement projects for nonmotorized transportation along the state highway. Again, MCOG would receive \$15,000 of a \$150,000 State Planning & Research grant. She distinguished between this grant and another work element in this year’s Planning program, also in Covelo but located throughout the community, as seen on MCOG’s tour last April. Director Pinches asked whether this study would be limited to the northern part of Round Valley. Mr. Dow stated this had yet to be determined, but he believed the scope should extend all along SR-162 from north to south through the valley, addressing the lack of shoulders and environmental issues with the drainage ditches along both sides of roadway.

Upon motion by Pinches, second by Smith, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*5 Ayes – Robertson/PAC- Alt., Stranske, Pinches, Smith, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 3 Absent - Burkey, Rodin, and Ranochak*): IT IS ORDERED that the following resolution is adopted.

Resolution No. M2011-16

Authorizing Mendocino Council of Governments
To Enter Into a Contract With Caltrans and
Provide Project Administration for the
“Covelo Engineered Feasibility Study”
on State Route 162 in Mendocino County
(Reso. #M2011-16 is incorporated herein by reference)

7. Reports and Discussion:

- a. MCOG Transportation Best Practices Tour – Davis and Sacramento, November 3-4.
b. Walk21 Conference in Vancouver, October 3-5, 2011.

The Chair invited Alan Falleri, Community Development Director, City of Willits to report on his participation and experience of both MCOG-sponsored trips. Mr. Falleri thanked the Council and staff for providing the opportunities to attend these educational tours and emphasized the value of investing in training even during difficult economic times. He was inspired by leaders from all over the world who are finding solutions to problems of energy, transportation, and other urgent issues. Promoting bicycling and walking is a cost-effective way to address present and future challenges. He praised the multimodal infrastructure found in Vancouver, including public transit and rail, and discussed lessons learned from the cities visited, where investments have been made and communities are involved. He described some

innovative developments such as transit-oriented apartments in Vancouver and public-private partnerships to build sustainable housing on the UC-Davis campus, which are already seeing returns on investments.

Chair Gjerde reported on the presentations and tours led by city staffs, campus officials, and others. He elaborated on the campus subdivision visited at UC-Davis, a \$300 million development that produces as much energy as it consumes. The visit to Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) included presentations on regional blueprint planning, bicycle use and infrastructure with public health aspects, and a tour of downtown Sacramento pedestrian and cycling features. He noted the cost effectiveness of both trips and extended thanks to MTA for providing a driver (Operations Manager Dan Baxter) and bus, and to MCOG's staff for handling logistics. He and Director Rodin are preparing a report of the Davis-Sacramento trip; Ms. Orth took photographs and video footage. Noting enthusiasm by the participants for future best practices tours, Chair Gjerde suggested that optimum timing would be about 18 months between tours.

Board discussion included applicability of these concepts to remote areas of Mendocino County, the role of equestrian trails as nonmotorized transportation in Mendocino County, compatibility with other modes or lack thereof, and the need to address each case in context.

No action was taken.

8. Report and Discussion of Draft 2012 Regional Transportation Improvement Program

(RTIP). Ms. Barrett summarized her written report. \$1,283,000 of Regional Improvement Funds are available, less \$280,000 for Planning, Programming & Monitoring (PPM). Also available is \$815,000 of Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds. Applications received exceed available funds. She described eligibility, timelines, related factors and next steps. All applications will be posted to MCOG's website (www.mendocinocog.org). Discussion included:

- MCOG's process for awarding funds to projects. (Pinches, Barrett, Dow)
- East Side Potter Valley Road construction readiness, phasing, RTIP funds already programmed for several phases of the project, and remaining funds needed; currently in right-of-way process. (Pinches, Barrett, MCDOT Director Howard Dashiell)
- Status of Caspar walkway and sidewalk projects, TE eligibility, design features, and NEPA requirements for remaining environmental work; all within County right of way. Caspar community center parking lot adjacent to pedestrian project; innovative drainage techniques, greenways, best management practices per stormwater guidelines and flooding, safety, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance. (Smith, Dashiell, Barrett, Pinches, Dow)
- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) membership according to bylaws, typical attendance, and process for amending TAC composition. The committee is formed in MCOG's bylaws, not its JPA, so a change does not require member agencies to vote on amendments. (Pinches, Dow, Gjerde, Smith, Orth)

Director Pinches asked the Chair to agendize TAC composition for an upcoming meeting. Director Smith asked that staff research other rural counties' policies for technical advisory committee formation. Executive Director Dow agreed to prepare information for Board consideration in 2012. No action was taken.

9. Consideration of Support for Rural Northern California Representation on California Transportation Commission.

Mr. Dow introduced the matter, noting that current CTC commissioners described as based in Northern California do not live in rural areas, and none live

north of Sacramento. He considers the need for representation more important than ever as decision making seems to become more parochial. A member of the North State Super Region, Mr. Jeff Farley, recently announced he would apply for an appointment to serve on the CTC and represent the rural northern region. Mr. Farley has relevant experience, as shown by his resume in MCOG's agenda packet. Mr. Dow offered options for the Council that included seeking other local candidates, a letter of support for Mr. Farley, and support of more than one candidate.

Discussion included Mr. Farley's qualifications, political nature of the appointment, lack of urgency, and MCOG's responsibility to first recruit for a local Mendocino County candidate.

Chair Gjerde directed staff to issue a press release and agendize consideration of endorsing any applicants at the February meeting.

10 -11. Consent Calendar. It was agreed to approve the minutes separately.

10. Ratify Actions of Policy Advisory Committee on September 19, 2011. Upon motion by Smith, second by Stranske, and carried on roll call vote (*4 Ayes – Stranske, Pinches, Smith, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 1 Abstaining – Jackman/PAC; 3 Absent – Burkey, Rodin and Ranochak*): IT IS ORDERED that the PAC's actions of September 19, 2011 are ratified.

11. Approval of September 19, 2011 Minutes. Upon motion by Stranske, second by Pinches, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*5 Ayes – Jackman/PAC, Stranske, Pinches, Smith, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 3 Absent – Burkey, Rodin and Ranochak*): IT IS ORDERED that the minutes are approved as written.

Director Rodin arrived at 2:50 p.m.

12. Recess as Policy Advisory Committee - Reconvene as RTPA - Ratify Action of Policy Advisory Committee. Upon motion by Smith, second by Stranske, and carried unanimously (*5 Ayes – Rodin, Stranske, Pinches, Smith, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 2 Absent – Burkey and Ranochak*): IT IS ORDERED that the actions taken by the Policy Advisory Committee are ratified by the MCOG Board of Directors.

13. Reports - Information

- a. Mendocino Transit Authority. General Manager Bruce Richard reported on status of MTA's Facility Solarization & Modernization construction project. He also reported on two grant-funded hybrid bus purchases; delivery is expected within six to eight weeks.
- b. North Coast Railroad Authority. Ms. Ellard reported on the quarterly teleconference meeting she had attended that morning, noting status of the City of Ukiah Redevelopment Agency's option agreement to purchase the 11-acre Ukiah rail depot site, and related state and federal funding implications of the potential transaction.
- c. MCOG Administration & Planning Staff
 1. *Summary of Meetings*. Executive Director Dow referred to his written staff report. He noted the first two Rails With Trails public workshops were very well attended, with more than 70 people in Willits and at least 40 people in Ukiah, including Director Rodin and City staff. Both meetings were video recorded.

2. *Planning Overall Work Program FY 2012/13 Application Cycle.* Ms. Ellard announced that MCOG is accepting applications from eligible entities through December 1.
3. *U.S. 101 Bypass of Willits - Mitigation & Monitoring Plan (MMP).* Mr. Dow reported on the public meeting held last month in Willits on the MMP to address mitigation needs to acquire the federal "404" permit. A panel of state and federal agency personnel answered audience questions at the meeting. The public comment period closes November 9. Mr. Dow summarized the permit process, noting his letter on behalf of MCOG to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the Council's information packet.
4. *U.S. 101 Perkins Street Interchange, Ukiah.* Mr. Dow reported funding goals for this long-standing proposed improvement project.
5. *Miscellaneous.* Mr. Dow has been meeting with a group in Gualala, including Supervisor Hamburg, to resolve issues raised by the Community Action Plan. He alerted the Council that he might request their approval to use available planning funds for a project identified in Gualala's plan.

Ms. Barrett distributed copies of the recently adopted Regional Transportation Plan to the Council members.

- d. MCOG Directors. Director Pinches noted a report in the Council's information materials, by Acting Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty to the CTC, "Mobility 21 – California's Funding Outlook," which shows the severely declining trend of excise tax revenues relative to inflation. A brief discussion followed.
Director Smith reported on the Simpson Lane Roundabout ribbon cutting that morning. The roundabout has been well received to date by the public. Landscaping is not yet complete; options include public art. She commended the positive partnership of MCOG, County of Mendocino, and Caltrans that resulted in construction. Discussion followed, including safety, reduced traffic speeds, and other benefits. Chair Gjerde also attended the ceremony, observing that, despite some early public opposition, the response is now positive toward the roundabout. Dow reported that Caltrans plans to build another one this spring on Route 20 in Lake County.
- e. California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) Delegates. There were no reports.

14. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 3:17 p.m.

Submitted: PHILLIP J. DOW, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Janet Orth, Deputy Director for Administration