

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Approved MINUTES
Monday, June 5, 2023

Primary Location:

County Administration Center, Board of Supervisors Chambers
Room 1070, 501 Low Gap Road, Ukiah

Teleconference Locations:

Fort Bragg City Hall, 416 N. Franklin St., Fort Bragg
Point Arena City Hall, 451 School St., Point Arena
Caltrans District 1, 1656 Union St., Eureka

General Public Teleconference by Zoom

ADDITIONAL MEDIA:

[Mendocino County Video](#) or find
[YouTube link at http://www.mendocinocog.org](http://www.mendocinocog.org) under Meetings

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 and Roll Call. The meeting was called to order at 1:34 p.m. with Directors present: Dan Gjerde, John Haschak, Mike Carter, Greta Kanne, Josephina Duenas and Bernie Norvell in Ukiah; Jeff Hansen in Point Arena; and Tatiana Ahlstrand (Caltrans/PAC) in Eureka. Chair Gjerde presiding.

Staff present in Ukiah: Nephele Barrett, Executive Director; Janet Orth, Deputy Director & CFO; Loretta Ellard, Deputy Planner; Alexis Pedrotti, Program Manager; and Jody Lowblad, Administrative Assistant.

Staff present by Zoom: Lisa Davey-Bates, Transportation Planner; James Sookne, Program Manager; and Michael Villa, Project Coordinator.

2. Assembly Bill 2449 Notifications and Considerations. This item is to receive and address requests from Board members to participate in the meeting from a non-posted location, subject to conditions set forth in AB 2449. There were no such requests.

3. Convene as SAFE – Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies. Ms. Pedrotti presented the three agenda items, reporting background and details, noting that a turning point in the Mendocino County SAFE motorist aid call box program had been reached and staff would be addressing the Board with these issues more often in the coming year.

- a. Report of Motorist Aid Call Box Program Status. Currently 141 call boxes are operating in the system along state highways, 97 of which are traditional cellular models and 44 use satellite technology. As reported last year, 3G service was terminated by Verizon, the operator. Staff has been working with the contractor, CASE Systems, to upgrade equipment to 4G. They were able to develop a radio for the call boxes and have completed 70 percent of conversions to date; the remainder are bagged as inoperable. Satellite boxes are unaffected. The main issue constraining progress now is lack of funding, which is limited to a portion of Department of Motor Vehicles registration fees. Staff is evaluating the entire system to determine a sustainable level of deployment.

Ms. Pedrotti addressed a common question of need for call boxes in the age of cell phones. Usage reports indicate the average number of calls received by CHP as the Primary Answering Point is 1.93 per day. In her opinion the system is worthwhile. Mendocino SAFE has invested significantly in satellite boxes as an early adopter, expecting the high operating costs would go down over time, which has not been the case. Meanwhile cellular service has improved, so that some satellite boxes could be replaced with cellular to reduce costs; CASE has identified eleven as eligible. A few boxes on SR 20 no longer have enough solar exposure to charge batteries due to growth of tree canopy, so are candidates for removal. Staff proposes to move forward by way of an action plan to evaluate, then remove, shift or install equipment based on system needs. Regular maintenance deals with issues such as knock-downs, storm damage, and deterioration.

- b. Adoption of FY 2023/24 Mendocino SAFE Budget. Staff's proposed budget shows estimates and actuals over several years. Ms. Pedrotti described line items and reasons for funds carried over from prior years. Revenue through DMV is \$1 per vehicle registration in the county. \$10,000 is proposed for new radio upgrades (added in a revised draft budget), along with costs for cellular and satellite service, CHP contract, and staffing for a total of \$116,668 annual expenditures in 2023/24. Revenues are estimated at \$261,027 including new funds, existing fund balance and a small amount of interest earnings. Ms. Barrett commented that while cellular service could replace some satellite boxes to help with sustainability, certain satellite locations should be maintained as much as possible where most needed, such as along SR 162. She noted urban areas have pulled out call box systems, though they are still valuable here on certain corridors. Board questions and discussion included:
- Agrees the system is valuable. What kinds of calls are coming in? (Haschak) CHP does not report to that level of detail. The highest volume at 75 calls were reported from SR 162 milemarker 14.4; of these a few were likely extreme emergencies, while others were less dire and a small percentage may have been repeated calls for assistance. One of the first, this is a satellite box, as reception is inadequate there in the canyon. (Pedrotti)
 - What are locations of the two out-of-service boxes between Willits and Fort Bragg? (Norvell) Mile markers are known and can be confirmed after the meeting. (Pedrotti)
 - Brief discussion of cellular reception in segments of SR 20 west. Exact locations unknown, but has been improving. Tree canopy blocks solar power, not cellular service. (Gjerde, Pedrotti, Barrett)
 - The boxes should be maintained, as there are times when needed, particularly by low-income motorists; thanks for providing the service. (Duenas)

The Chair invited public comment; none was offered.

- c. Adoption of Resolution To Approve Agreement with the State of California Department of California Highway Patrol (CHP). The standard agreement was made available for review in the agenda packet materials, for a total not to exceed \$2,160 for SAFE call box program dispatch and related services during Fiscal Years 2023/24 through 2025/26.

Upon motion by Haschak, second by Carter, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes – Haschak, Carter, Kanne, Hansen, Norvell, Duenas and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that 1) the FY 2023/24 SAFE Program Budget is approved as recommended by staff, and 2) the following resolution is adopted:

Resolution No. S2023-01

To Approve Agreement with the State of California Department of
California Highway Patrol (CHP)
(Reso. #S2023-01 is incorporated herein by reference)

4. Recess as SAFE – Convene as RTPA**5. Recess as RTPA – Reconvene as Policy Advisory Committee**

6 - 7. Consent Calendar. The Chair invited any comments; none were heard. Upon motion by Norvell, second by Carter, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*8 Ayes – Haschak, Carter, Kanne, Hansen, Norvell, Duenas, Ahlstrand/PAC and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent*): IT IS ORDERED that consent items are approved.

6. Approval of May 1, 2023 Minutes – as written

7. Approval of May 12, 2023 Transit Productivity Committee Minutes – as written

8. Public Expression. None.

9. Presentation: Clean California Grant Program – Caltrans District 1. This item was taken after #11, presented by Julia Peterson of Caltrans District 1: Transformative Initiative – Remove Litter, Create Jobs, and Beautify California. Highlights included:

- \$1.2 billion to Clean & Beautify, with about a third expended by Caltrans to remove and prevent litter, another third to Caltrans beautification projects (such as Boonville, Covelo), and roughly a third to local grants
- In Mendocino County, “Dump Days” covered about ten percent of population, collecting 1,608 mattresses, 1,004 appliances, and 12,315 tires in Covelo, Fort Bragg/Caspar, Gualala and Ukiah – events were successful with high demand
- Beautification in downtown Covelo—community wanted solar lighting and speed bumps; a pilot project will provide movable bumps, locals will install their own art and street furniture
- Special Peoples Program (SSP), “a Caltrans work mentoring program providing temporary litter collection jobs and life skills training to parolees and veterans” —a Mendocino County crew operates out of Ukiah providing litter pickup (performing above target), receiving social services, and gaining work experience for new job opportunities
- Other programs include Litter Standdowns (Caltrans crews) and Adopt-a-Highway
- Local Grant Program – Cycle 1 awarded funds to seven projects in District 1
- \$100 million available in Cycle 2, due May 31 (closed), awards to be made in next few months.

Ms. Peterson invited Board questions and comments, including:

- SR-162 day use in summer between Legal Bridge and Dos Rios needs litter cleanup. (Kanne)
- Thanks for all the work in Covelo and being flexible; safety is a high priority there. With dump days, people see what government can do. What are some educational components? (Haschak) Taking responsibility and pride, games for kids, coloring book, booth at events.
- It’s important not to continue picking up people’s garbage. (Haschak) A budget change is requested to continue four years; meanwhile ramping down. Agree with need to teach.
- Impressed with how quickly projects came together, so well received. Looking forward to the project being implemented in Covelo. Any more proposed? (Barrett) Yes, some funding remains and they plan to expend all. Caltrans is vetting projects now; if any more ideas are shovel ready, let her know promptly. Eligible projects include murals, art, landscaping, for quick construction on a state highway, to be completed by December 2023; examples given.
- County of Mendocino was approached by two other counties for a joint project; County does not have funds for its portion, so is pursuing grants. Will forward information. (Gjerde)
- Are more free dump days planned for Willits and Laytonville? (Haschak) Yes, July/August for Willits; Caltrans is looking for a large enough site in Laytonville.

10. Technical Advisory Committee Recommendations of May 24, 2023: Adoption of Final Fiscal Year 2023/24 Planning Overall Work Program (OWP). This item taken before #9 while waiting for the presenter to arrive. Ms. Pedrotti presented the final OWP as recommended by the TAC, highlighting changes since the draft version was reviewed at the Council’s budget workshop in May. She noted minor changes requested by Caltrans and several projects carried over from the previous fiscal year with estimated fund balances; actual carryover balances will be identified in the first amendment, anticipated in August. As proposed, the FY 2023/24 Final Overall Work Program includes 15 work elements and totals \$894,365. For comparison, the Final (Amended) FY 2022/23 Overall Work Program contains 14 work elements and totals \$1,203,314. Questions and public comment were invited; none were offered.

Upon motion by Carter, second by Haschak, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (8 Ayes – Haschak, Carter, Kanne, Hansen, Norvell, Duenas, Ahlstrand/PAC and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that the final Transportation Planning Overall Work Program for Fiscal Year 2023/24 is adopted as recommended by the Technical Advisory Committee and staff, and the Executive Director or designee is authorized to sign certifications and the OWP Agreement and to forward to Caltrans as required.

11. Fiscal Year 2023/24 RTPA and COG Budget. This item also was taken before #9 while waiting for the presenter to arrive. Ms. Orth referred to her written staff report, summarizing final notes and changes since the May draft budget workshop. Total revenues come to \$16,175,346, and total proposed allocations \$15,753,101. The Planning OWP increased the budget by \$235,001, mainly as estimated funds carried forward. She reviewed relevant details of the final budget proposal, as recommended by the Executive Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, Transit Productivity Committee, Social Services Transportation Advisory Council and staff. Two Unmet Transit Needs were recommended by both transit committees as “reasonable to meet.” Questions were invited. Director Kanne gave compliments on preparation of the budget package.

Upon motion by Haschak, second by Carter, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (8 Ayes – Haschak, Carter, Kanne, Hansen, Norvell, Duenas, Ahlstrand/PAC and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that the following five resolutions are adopted as recommended by staff and committees:

- a. Adoption of Resolution Allocating Fiscal Year 2023/24 Funds and 2022/23 Carryover Funds for Administration, Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities, Planning, and Reserves

Resolution No. M2023-02

Allocating Fiscal Year 2023/24 Funds and 2022/23 Carryover Funds for Administration, Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities, Planning and Reserves
(Reso. #M2023-02 is incorporated herein by reference)

Local Transportation Fund (LTF)		
MCOG Administration & Other Direct Costs	559,626	
2% Bicycle & Pedestrian	86,846	
Planning Program – new funds	141,479	
Planning Program – carryover	122,868	
Planning program – prior year funds	29,135	
Total LTF		939,953
Surface Trans. Block Grant Program – Admin.		101,116
Rural Counties Task Force – Admin.		38,500
ATP Infrastructure Grants – Admin.		6,500,000
PPM Funds - Planning		259,750
RPA Funds - Planning		319,000

State Highway Account - Planning		22,133
Total Allocations		8,180,453

b. Adoption of Resolution Finding That There Are Unmet Transit Needs That Are Reasonable To Meet for Fiscal Year 2023/24

Resolution No. M2023-03

Finding That There Are Unmet Transit Needs That Are Reasonable To Meet for Fiscal Year 2023/24

(Reso. #M2023-03 is incorporated herein by reference)

#S-3	Affordable public transit link to Humboldt County, stopping in Piercy, Leggett, Laytonville – <i>contingent on grant award to Humboldt Transit Authority</i>
#P-2	Fixed route timing that coincides with retail workforce shifts in the Fort Bragg/ Mendocino coast area

c. Adoption of Resolution Allocating Fiscal Year 2023/24 Local Transportation Funds, State Transit Assistance, and FY 2022/23 Carryover Capital Reserve Funds to Mendocino Transit Authority

Resolution No. M2023-04

Allocating Fiscal Year 2023/24 LTF, STA, and 2022/23 Carryover Capital Reserve Funds to Mendocino Transit Authority

(Reso. #M2023-04 is incorporated herein by reference)

Local Transportation Fund (LTF)		
MTA Operations	3,621,782	
Unmet Transit Needs	50,000	
Senior Center Operations	681,249	
Transit Planning	0	
Total LTF		4,353,031
State Transit Assistance (STA)		
MTA Operations	1,293,571	
MTA & Senior Center Capital	150,000	
Capital Reserve Fund	0	
Total STA		1,443,571
Capital Reserve Program		
Current Year - MTA	0	
Current Year – Senior Centers	0	
Long Term – MTA and Seniors	705,462	
Total Capital Reserve		705,462
Total Transit Allocations		6,502,064

d. Adoption of Resolution Allocating Surface Transportation Block Grant Program Funds for Fiscal Year 2023/24 MCOG Partnership Funding Program, Local Assistance, and Distribution By Formula To Member Agencies

Resolution No. M2023-05

Allocating STBG Funds for Fiscal Year 2023/24 MCOG Partnership Funding Program, Local Assistance, and Distribution by Formula To Member Agencies

(Reso. #M2023-05 is incorporated herein by reference)

MCOG Partnership Funding Program		100,000
Local Assistance – Project Delivery		90,000
Formula Distribution to Members		
Mendocino County DOT	133,871	
City of Ukiah	180,162	
City of Fort Bragg	120,290	
City of Willits	112,903	
City of Point Arena	74,622	
Total Formula Distributions		621,848
Total RSTP Allocations		811,848

- e. Adoption of Resolution Allocating Fiscal Year 2022/23 Carryover Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) Program Grant Funds for FY 2023/24

Resolution No. M2023-06

Allocating Fiscal Year 2022/23 Carryover Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) Program Grant Funds for FY 2023/24

(Reso. # M2023-06 is incorporated herein by reference)

MCOG Grant Administration & Management		20,197
Formula Distribution to Members		
County of Mendocino	177,228	
City of Ukiah	69,536	
City of Fort Bragg	46,410	
City of Willits	35,365	
City of Point Arena	0	
Total Formula Distributions		328,539
Total REAP Allocations		348,736

12. Acceptance of Transit Productivity Committee Report of May 12, 2023 – Annual Transit Performance Review. Ms. Orth reported the recommendation, summarizing her written report. No changes were recommended to MCOG’s adopted Transit Performance Standards, as all essential adjustments were completed last year. In performance review, two main observations rose to the top: 1) operating costs had dropped significantly from 2021 to 2022, and 2) none of the service types were able to meet the Passengers per Hour benchmark in 2022, indicating the need to rebuild ridership, an industry-wide problem. It was considered premature to revise the standard again during ongoing pandemic recovery. All service types met two of three standards or better over the three-year period.

In Board commentary, Director Haschak noted recent discussions at CALCOG meetings about the looming transit fiscal cliff, so this report could have been worse. Ms. Orth elaborated on status of federal transit relief funds. The Chair invited public comments; none were heard.

Upon motion by Carter, second by Duenas, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (8 Ayes – Haschak, Carter, Kanne, Hansen, Norvell, Duenas, Ahlstrand/PAC and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that the committee’s report of the Annual Transit Performance Review through December 31, 2022, remarking good performance while emerging from two years of the COVID pandemic. is accepted as provided in the board agenda packet materials and summarized as follows.

Service Type	2022 *	3-Year Average
Dial-A-Ride (DAR) met one more standard in 2022 (Cost/Hour), maintained same 3-year average	2 of 3	2 of 3
Short Distance Bus Routes maintained the same 1-year and 3-year average	1 of 4	2 of 3
Long Distance Routes met one in 2022 (Cost/Hour), compared to one in 2021 (Farebox), maintained same 3-year average	1 of 4	3 of 3
Senior Centers maintained the same 1-year and 3-year average (Farebox, Cost/Hr)	1 of 4	2 of 3

* Note fourth standard applied where 2 of 3 not met; however, none met the fourth (Cost per Passenger.)

13. Recess as Policy Advisory Committee – Reconvene as RTPA – Ratify Action of Policy Advisory Committee. Upon motion by Norvell, second by Carter, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes – *Haschak, Carter, Kanne, Hansen, Norvell, Duenas and Gjerde*; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that the actions taken by the Policy Advisory Committee are ratified by the MCOG Board of Directors.

14. Reports - Information

- a. Caltrans District 1 – Projects Update and Information. Director Ahlstrand reported the project nomination survey closed last week; thanks to those who provided feedback. The Asset Management team was reviewing comments to be incorporated as feasible; additional outreach will proceed as soon as more project specific information is ready. The System Management team is developing a route concept for the SR 222 Talmage Road Corridor Plan including input from the April community workshop; a draft is anticipated for review and comment this summer. The Willits “road diet” project will be reported when Safety staff is present; reach out with questions in the meantime.
- b. Mendocino Transit Authority. There was no report from MTA.
- c. Great Redwood Trail Agency. Director Haschak stated no news to report.
- d. MCOG Staff - Summary of Meetings. Ms. Barrett referred to the written report.
- e. MCOG Administration Staff
 - i. *Covelo SR 162 Corridor Multi-Purpose Trail Project.* Ms. Barrett reported above-ground vegetation removal is ongoing, except for two locations that are still too wet. The team is waiting for conditions to dry out more before breaking ground. Project is moving forward.
 - ii. *Staff Events in June: 24th Annual California Transportation Foundation (CTF) Forum; 14th Annual California Climate & Energy Forum.* Ms. Barrett reported staff would be attending these conferences, June 7 in Sacramento and June 13-14 in Santa Rosa respectively. The CCEC Forum is of interest due to MCOG’s intent to join the multi-county RuralREN (Regional Energy Network). Director Haschak indicated he would attend the climate forum.
 - iii. *Miscellaneous.* None.
 - iv. *Next Meeting Date.* Monday, August 14, 2023 – second Monday of the month.
- f. MCOG Planning Staff
 - i. *Feasibility Study - Mendocino Transit Authority's Ukiah Transit Center.* Ms. Ellard reported continuing work with the consultant and MTA. The project team has been reviewing six potential sites that meet screening criteria. The J.C. Penney location was eliminated as the owner unwilling to make space available. Other sites are on Mason Street, Perkins Street, corner of Brush & Orchard, and corner of Orchard & Gobbi. Property owners being contacted to determine availability.

- ii. *Feasibility Study - Mobility Solutions for Rural Communities of Inland Mendocino County.* Ms. Ellard reported the team continued to vet recommendations reported to the Council at the May meeting. In the next week or so they will advertise a community-wide virtual meeting to review sites. Presentation of the final plan and recommendation will be on the August agenda.
- iii. *Miscellaneous.* Ms. Ellard reported MCOG staff's participation with MTA's project team on the Short Range Transit Development Plan. The same consultant was engaged as for the Transit Center project, so there is good coordination.

At the most recent Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting, staff introduced a program under the federal Investment in Infrastructure & Jobs Act (IIJA) called Safe Streets For All to fund both planning and capital for safety projects. A call for projects has been released with proposals due July 10. Ms. Ellard described how MCOG had sponsored Local Road Safety Plans to qualify for Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) grants, and all of the MCOG member agencies that applied were recently awarded funds as a result of the plans. The TAC requested that MCOG apply for a planning grant to update and enhance existing plans in order to qualify under future cycles of this new program. \$5 billion is available over five years, so more funds will be coming annually.

In Board discussion, Chair Gjerde asked for examples of safety improvements. Ms. Ellard and Ms. Barrett discussed technical differences between the programs. Likely project candidates include North State Street, Sherwood Road, and Branscomb Road, and are not required to be connected to a state highway.

- g. MCOG Directors. None.
- h. California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) Delegates. Director Haschak announced CALCOG's Legislative Day in Sacramento, but was unable to attend; Director Norvell agreed to attend as Alternate Delegate.

15. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Submitted: NEPHELE BARRETT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Janet Orth, Deputy Director & CFO