

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Approved MINUTES

Monday, August 19, 2019

County Administration Center, Board of Supervisors Chambers

ADDITIONAL AUDIOCONFERENCE LOCATION:

Caltrans District 1, 1656 Union St., Eureka

ADDITIONAL MEDIA:

*Find YouTube link at <http://www.mendocinocog.org> under Meetings
or search Mendocino County Video at www.youtube.com*

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 1:37 p.m. with Directors Kevin Tucker, Alternate (Caltrans/PAC), Jim Brown, Richey Wasserman, Larry Stranske, John Haschak, and Michael Carter present; Vice Chair Carter presiding. Director Tess Albin-Smith was absent.

Staff present: Nephela Barrett, Executive Director; Janet Orth, Deputy Director/CFO; Loretta Ellard, Deputy Planner; Monica Galliani, Administrative Assistant; and James Sookne, Program Manager. Ms. Galliani was introduced as a new employee.

2. Convene as RTPA

3. Recess as RTPA - Reconvene as Policy Advisory Committee.

Public Expression. John Bower, a Gualala property owner, expressed concern over the Gualala Downtown Design Plan. He stated that the plan would limit on-street parking space in front of Surf Market by over 50%, which could potentially hurt business. Other local members of the public are also concerned and would like to work with Caltrans to make a different, modified plan. He expressed gratitude toward Frank Demling, the Caltrans project manager, for seeking solutions. Mr. Bower also expressed a need for financial support for maintenance of his privately owned airport.

George Provencher, property owner and resident of Gualala, also expressed concern over the Gualala streetscape. He stated that the rise in tourism is increasing the need for parking. There has been a petition calling for adjustments to the Downtown Design Plan. Caltrans has been flexible and considerate toward public input.

Ms. Barrett stated that she would like to agendaize the topic of the Gualala streetscape for the next meeting.

5 - 8. Regular Calendar.

5. Presentation: Introduction to the California Public Utilities Commission – CPUC Local Government Liaison. Ms. Orth introduced Naveed Paydar, Ph.D., Local Government Liaison. In a slide presentation, he provided a history of the CPUC, as well as an overview of the function and reach of the organization. The CPUC is a statewide regulatory agency that sets policy and oversees various programs such as energy efficiency and public assistance. He emphasized the role of the organization in the event of wildfires in California, explaining what it aims to do to help. He then invited questions. Board discussion included:

- Is Pacific Gas & Electric's power shutoff program necessary when there are other alternative safety measures? (*Wasserman*) – Dr. Paydar described several approaches and stated this program is the safest and most effective, given the limited resources available.
- Has PG&E initiated any programs to help low-income families with the power outages? (*Wasserman*) – No, but it has prioritized communication with people who rely on electricity to survive, such as people actively using oxygen tanks.
- Criticism of CPUC for allowing PG&E too much authority for the shutoffs. Has PG&E addressed new wildfire risks coming from the private use of generators in preparation for power shutoffs? (*Haschak*) – The most important measure to take to prevent these new threats is to increase public awareness and training on how to be safe during these power shutoffs. Discussion of public comments during the proceedings. Aging infrastructure needs more attention.
- Has CPUC considered breaking the private utilities into smaller units in the future? (*Haschak*) – That would be decided by the state legislature. Meanwhile the utilities are regulated daily, and there is a trend toward more reliable, decentralized energy and storage with more use of solar technologies
- Is the shutdown procedure a matter of public record? (*Wasserman*) – Yes.

Vice Chair Carter thanked Dr. Paydar for the presentation. No action was taken.

6. Adoption of Resolution Approving the Fiscal Year 2019/20 Project List for Funding in the California State of Good Repair Program – Mendocino Transit Authority's Ukiah Transit Center Project. Ms. Barrett provided a background of the California State of Good Repair Program. She stated that the guidelines had changed this year, resulting in a new responsibility of regional transportation agencies to approve project proposals submitted by transit operators in their jurisdictions. She explained that in previous years, Mendocino Transit Authority had submitted their Ukiah Transit Center project for funding, and has chosen to do so again this year. For fiscal year 2019/20, the fund estimate is \$131,002. Staff recommended approval of the project and asked that the list be amended to include the previous two years of funding, for a total of \$388,597. A handout was distributed showing the proposed revisions.

Carla Meyer, MTA General Manager answered questions. A discussion ensued about where the project would be located; it has yet to be determined. A request for proposals is planned for later this year.

Upon motion by Director Brown, second by Director Wasserman, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*6 Ayes – Brown, Stranske, Wasserman, Haschak, Tucker/PAC, Carter; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 2 Absent – Albin-Smith and Gjerde*): IT IS ORDERED that the following resolution is adopted.

Resolution No. M2019-08

Approving the FY 2019/20 Project List
for the California State of Good Repair Program
(Reso. #M2019-08 is incorporated herein by reference)

7. Discussion: 2020 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Fund Estimate. Mr. Sookne provided a summary of the STIP fund estimate for 2020. A target amount of \$3,134,000 for the Mendocino County region was estimated by the California Transportation Commission. After MCOG's Planning, Programming & Monitoring allocation, this amount would leave \$2,899,000 available for existing projects in Mendocino County, such as the North State Street Intersection/ Interchange and Low Gap Road/North Bush Roundabout projects. He stated that there are studies yet to be conducted regarding the statistics of these projects, so it may be too early to begin

programming these funds. The topic will be brought before the Technical Advisory Committee next week and a recommendation made for MCOG's review at the November meeting.

In board discussion it was noted there had been some controversy surrounding the Low Gap/Bush roundabout project. Staff recommended waiting to program construction funds until the traffic studies are completed and options presented. No action was taken.

8. Discussion/Direction: SB 277 (Beall/Frazier) Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation

Program – Local Partnership Program. Ms. Barrett explained that the new amendments to Senate Bill 277 would alter the amount of money that small, rural counties receive through the State's Local Partnership Program. The new amendments do not state that there will be a guaranteed minimum (\$100,000) of funding, which the "self-help" cities of Mendocino County have been relying on to supplement their local sales taxes dedicated to transportation projects. She proposed to write a letter to the California senators with her comments. Board discussion included:

- Has the League of California Cities commented on the matter? (*Wasserman*) – Both the League and CALCOG have taken a neutral position because some of their members support and others oppose it.
- Director Stranske recommended that Ms. Barrett send a letter to the Senators. He compared the bill to the Rail Trail project, emphasizing that larger entities in other parts of the state are able to secure more of the state funding.

Upon motion by Director Stranske, second by Director Haschak, and carried on roll call vote (*5 Ayes – Brown, Stranske, Wasserman, Haschak, Tucker/PAC, Carter; 0 Noes; 1 Abstaining – Tucker/PAC; 2 Absent – Albin-Smith and Gjerde*): IT IS ORDERED that the Executive Director is authorized to prepare and submit a comment letter on Senate Bill 277 (Beall) to the authors and relevant legislators, urging them to include a guaranteed minimum funding in the Local Partnership Program.

9 - 12. Consent Calendar. Upon motion by Director Brown, second by Director Stranske, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*6 Ayes – Brown, Stranske, Wasserman, Haschak, Tucker/PAC, Carter; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 2 Absent – Albin-Smith and Gjerde*) IT IS ORDERED that consent items are approved:

9. Approval of June 3, 2019 Minutes – as written

10. Approval of May 2 and May 21, 2019 Transit Productivity Committee (TPC) Minutes – as amended to correct name spelling

11. Approval of First Amendment to Fiscal Year 2019/20 Transportation Planning Overall Work Program (OWP) – To reprogram unexpended prior-year planning funds, increasing total OWP funding from \$989,346 to \$1,064,430, an increase of \$75,084.

12. Approval of Minor Amount (\$527) of Funding Share by Formula for Statewide Local Streets & Roads Needs Assessment

13. Recess as Policy Advisory Committee - Reconvene as RTPA - Ratify Action of Policy

Advisory Committee. Upon motion by Director Brown, second by Director Stranske, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*5 Ayes – Brown, Stranske, Wasserman, Haschak, Carter; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 2 Absent – Albin-Smith and Gjerde*): IT IS ORDERED that the actions taken by the Policy Advisory Committee are ratified by the MCOG Board of Directors.

14. Reports - Information

- a. Mendocino Transit Authority. Ms. Meyer reported that MTA applied for but did not receive a federal Low/No Emission grant, which would have replaced the solar canopy's transformer with one compatible for charging electric busses, but will apply again next year. MTA also plans to apply for Volkswagen mitigation trust funds to purchase an all-electric cutaway bus. The route committee has been active, receiving direct input from the public. Ms. Meyer then gave a summary of the current route adjustments, which have increased ridership. She commented on MCOG funding MTA's new GPS system and announced that a mobile app, RouteShout 2.0, is now available for riders to locate busses.
- b. North Coast Railroad Authority. Ms. Ellard reported on the August 14 NCRA meeting. Among several items of interest, NCRA has been unable to get any of the \$500,000 released that was included in the Governor's budget for the NCRA budget. It was reported that the agency only has enough funds to last about a month, and if funding is not released by their September meeting, they will need to consider taking action to shut down.
Director Haschak commented as a newly appointed NCRA board member that a lack of funding and resources has made it difficult to carry out goals of the board. A brief discussion followed.
- c. MCOG Staff - Summary of Meetings. Ms. Barrett referred to her written staff report.
- d. MCOG Administration Staff
 1. Ms. Barrett gave a summary of the Local Government Planning Supports Grants Program, recently enacted in the state budget, which will fund planning related to housing production and implementation of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation. MCOG and the Department of Housing and Community Development will be working on funding and guidelines in the upcoming months.
 2. *Miscellaneous*. None.
- e. MCOG Planning Staff. Ms. Ellard reported that the SB743 Vehicle Miles Travelled Regional Baseline Study received a bid from Fehr & Peers, and MCOG worked with Caltrans to implement sole-source procurement with this firm. MCOG will be having a kickoff meeting in the upcoming weeks.
MCOG issued a Request for Proposals under the Mendocino County Fire Vulnerability Assessment & Emergency Preparedness planning grant. Bids will be due September 13. The RFP information is available on the MCOG website. Ms. Ellard added that MCOG will be soliciting proposals from MCOG member agencies for Local Transportation Fund (LTF) Two Percent Bicycle & Pedestrian Program grants in conjunction with the STIP cycle.
- f. MCOG Directors. Director Haschak announced a walk/bike activity in Willits on Thursday, August 29 at 5:30 p.m.
Director Stranske reported that traffic flowed remarkably well through Willits today despite it being the first day of school. Granite did a good job on the Sherwood Road intersection. Soon there will be opportunities to add trees and other details. As a commuter through the area, Ms. Orth also commented on the impressive quality of the new intersection.

- g. California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) Delegates. Ms. Barrett gave a report from the recent CALCOG Directors Association of California meeting she attended, saying discussions centered around the draft federal “SAFE Vehicles Rule” that would revoke California air quality regulations and impact transportation projects. These rules are not expected to affect Mendocino County since it is in attainment of air quality standards. [Refer to MCOG’s June 2019 Information Packet for details.] The other main topic centered around the housing related planning grants. The next annual forum will be held in April 2020 in Riverside.

15. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

Submitted: NEPHELE BARRETT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Monica Galliani, Administrative Assistant, with Janet Orth, Deputy Director/CFO