

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

APPROVED MINUTES

Monday, June 3, 2024

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

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: John Haschak, Mike Carter, and Josefina Duenas in Ukiah; Bernie Norvell and Dan Gjerde in Fort Bragg; and Dean Meester for Caltrans/PAC in Eureka (not voting). Chair Gjerde presiding. PAC member Tatiana Ahlstrand was excused by prior arrangement. Directors Greta Kanne and Jeff Hansen were absent.

Guests: Stephen Kullman and Patricia Terry of Redwood Coast Energy Authority were present on the teleconference as a resource for Agenda #12.

Staff present in Ukiah: Nephele Barrett, Executive Director; Janet Orth, Deputy Director & CFO; Loretta Ellard, Deputy Planner; Michael Villa, Project Coordinator; and Jody Lowblad, Administrative Assistant.

Staff present by Zoom: Lisa Davey-Bates, Transportation Planner; James Sookne, Program Manager.

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

- a. Report of Motorist Aid Call Box Program Status. Executive Director Barrett summarized her written staff report. Currently the SAFE is in process of upgrading call boxes, though spare parts are not easily available, so out-of-service “bagged” boxes may be seen on the highways. CASE Systems, the contractor, was recently acquired by Knightscope, a security and robotics company. A number of boxes remain in need of 4G radio upgrades and/or maintenance, including satellite boxes. Staff will be working with Knightscope to resolve these. There are few if any other firms providing these services, so staff hopes to return to normal operations soon. There were no Board questions or discussion. No action was taken.

- b. Adoption of FY 2024/25 Mendocino SAFE Budget. Project Coordinator Villa reviewed his written staff report, describing the SAFE enabling legislation, purpose and funding source, \$1 per vehicle registration fee collected by California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). He noted total revenues and expenditures budgeted, including estimated carryover funds. Revenues have been steady for many years. Expenditures are detailed in the budget. The planning contractor, Davey-Bates Consulting (DBC) anticipates unused funds at the end of the current contract period, September 30, 2024, will be returned to the SAFE fund balance. 31 callbox upgrades are needed, with 20 budgeted in the coming fiscal year, assuming the equipment is available. Board questions and discussion included:

Director Haschak asked about the difference between budget and actual expenses over the past two years, and how much SAFE would actually spend in the next year. Mr. Villa expected some carryover and hoped that upgrade installations could be fully expended. Ms. Barrett explained budgeted items are maximum amounts, including cumulative prior-year balances carried forward resulting from lack of available parts for timely system upgrades, and savings from repurposed spare parts released by other SAFE agencies. It is likely the estimated \$208,000 expense budget will be less, though unknown at this point. Some uncertainties remain due to supply chain and a new service contractor. Director Haschak commented that the work needs to be done, while keeping to a sustainable budget.

The Chair called for public comment, with none heard.

Upon motion by Carter, second by Haschak, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (5 Ayes – Haschak, Carter, Norvell, Duenas and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 2 Absent – Kanne and Hansen): IT IS ORDERED that the FY 2024/25 SAFE Program Budget is approved as recommended by staff.

4. Recess as SAFE – Convene as RTPA

5. Recess as RTPA – Reconvene as Policy Advisory Committee

6 - 8. Consent Calendar. Director Carter suggested a minor amendment for proper name format on Page 2, Agenda #9, Public Expression, revised to “Steve Henderson, a.k.a. Gizmo.” There were no objections. **Upon motion** by Carter, second by Haschak, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (5 Ayes – Haschak, Carter, Norvell, Duenas and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 3 Absent – Kanne, Hansen and Ahlstrand): IT IS ORDERED that consent items are approved.

6. Approval of May 6, 2024 Minutes – as amended

7. Approval of May 2, 2023 Transit Productivity Committee Minutes – as written

8. Adoption of Resolution Reprogramming MTA’s FY 2021/22 Project List for a New FY 2024/25 Project Under the California State of Good Repair Program, Superseding Resolution #M2021-13 – Mendocino Transit Authority – replacement vehicles

Resolution No. M2024-02

Reprogramming MTA’s FY 2021/22 Project List for a
New FY 2024/25 Project Under the California State of Good Repair Program
Superseding Resolution #M2021-13
(Reso. #M2024-02 is incorporated herein by reference)

9. Public Expression. Steve Henderson, a.k.a. Gizmo, spoke in recognition of public transit and school bus drivers.

10. Fiscal Year 2024/25 RTPA and COG Budget. Ms. Orth referred to her written staff report, summarizing final notes and changes since the May draft budget workshop. The budget package was made available as a separate electronic document along with the agenda packet, with print copies available by request. Total revenues come to \$16,442,032 and total proposed allocations \$9,849,165. A substantial amount remains for later allocation, primarily due to delay of the State budget in releasing the new Senate Bill 125 formula transit capital funds (\$5.3 million in this budget). She and Ms. Barrett explained how this affected the Administration budget’s funding sources, with some flexibility as shown in the allocating resolution’s Exhibit A.

Public transit allocations are as recommended during budget development, though a budget amendment is now anticipated to reallocate an estimated \$1,750,000 of Local Transportation Funds as a result of federal Covid-relief funds received by MTA, identified in FY 2022/23 fiscal audits. Ms. Barrett added that once this is resolved in the coming year, MTA plans to request that MCOG amend its SB 125 allocation plan to claim remaining funds and address an operations shortfall.

The final budget proposal was recommended by the Executive Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, Transit Productivity Committee, Social Services Transportation Advisory Council and staff. In Board discussion, Director Haschak asked about the significant funding cut to Senior Centers transportation programs. Staff reported hosting a workshop on May 30, so the directors have been informed and relief options will be explored. MCOG cannot directly provide funding, only allocate certain funds through MTA, who contracts with the centers for services.

The Chair invited public comments; none were made.

Upon motion by Haschak, second by Carter, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (5 Ayes – *Haschak, Carter, Norvell, Duenas and Gjerde*; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 3 Absent): **IT IS ORDERED** that the following six resolutions are adopted as recommended by staff and committees:

- a. Adoption of Resolution Allocating Fiscal Year 2024/25 Funds and 2023/24 Carryover Funds for Administration, Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities, Planning, and Reserves

Resolution No. M2024-03

Allocating Fiscal Year 2024/25 Funds and 2023/24 Carryover Funds for Administration, Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities, Planning and Reserves
(Reso. #M2024-03 is incorporated herein by reference)

Local Transportation Fund (LTF)		
LTF Reserve	247,368	
MCOG Administration & Other Direct Costs	554,900	
2% Bicycle & Pedestrian	73,770	
Planning Program – new funds	127,301	
Planning Program – carryover	59,028	
Total LTF		1,062,367
Surface Trans. Block Grant Program – Admin.		115,803
ATP Infrastructure Grants – Admin.		1,422,305
Complete Streets Program – Admin.		1,104,114
PPM Funds - Planning		288,042
RPA Funds - Planning		363,000
FTA Grant - Planning		132,795
Total Allocations		4,488,426

- b. Adoption of Resolution Finding That There Are Unmet Transit Needs That Are Reasonable To Meet for Fiscal Year 2024/25

Resolution No. M2024-04

Finding That There Are Unmet Transit Needs That Are Reasonable To Meet for Fiscal Year 2024/25

(Reso. #M2024-04 is incorporated herein by reference)

#S-1	Service/micro transit for Covelo and Laytonville – contingent on SB 125 funding availability
#P-3	Evening service 6pm to 10pm for all routes, primarily in Ukiah – Ukiah service is reasonable contingent on funding partnership with Mendocino College

- c. Adoption of Resolution Allocating Fiscal Year 2024/25 Local Transportation Funds and State Transit Assistance to Mendocino Transit Authority

Resolution No. M2024-05

Allocating Fiscal Year 2024/25 Local Transportation Funds and State Transit Assistance to Mendocino Transit Authority

(Reso. #M2024-05 is incorporated herein by reference)

Local Transportation Fund (LTF)		
MTA Operations	2,721,637	
Unmet Transit Needs	0	
Senior Center Operations	518,407	
Transit Planning	0	
Total LTF		3,240,044
State Transit Assistance (STA)		
MTA Operations	1,197,778	
MTA & Senior Center Capital	0	
Capital Reserve Fund	0	
Total STA		1,197,778
Capital Reserve Program		
Current Year - MTA	0	
Current Year – Senior Centers	0	
Long Term – MTA and Seniors	0	
Total Capital Reserve		0
Total Transit Allocations		4,437,822

- d. Adoption of Resolution Allocating Surface Transportation Block Grant Program Funds for Fiscal Year 2024/25 MCOG Partnership Funding Program, Local Assistance, and Distribution By Formula To Member Agencies

Resolution No. M2024-06

Allocating Surface Transportation Block Grant Funds for Fiscal Year 2024/25 MCOG Partnership Funding Program, Local Assistance, and

Distribution by Formula To Member Agencies

(Reso. #M2024-06 is incorporated herein by reference)

MCOG Partnership Funding Program		100,000
Local Assistance – Project Delivery		90,000
Formula Distribution to Members		
Mendocino County DOT	184,223	
City of Ukiah	247,924	
City of Fort Bragg	165,534	
City of Willits	155,368	

City of Point Arena	102,689	
Total Formula Distributions		855,738
Total RSTP Allocations		1,045,738

- e. Adoption of Resolution Allocating Fiscal Year 2023/24 Carryover Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) Program Grant Funds for FY 2024/25

Resolution No. M2024-07

Allocating Fiscal Year 2023/24 Carryover Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) Program Grant Funds for FY 2024/25
(Reso. # M2024-07 is incorporated herein by reference)

MCOG Grant Administration & Management		15,417
Formula Distribution to Members		
County of Mendocino	125,051	
City of Ukiah	0	
City of Fort Bragg	46,410	
City of Willits	0	
City of Point Arena	0	
Total Formula Distributions		171,461
Total REAP Allocations		186,878

- f. Adoption of Resolution Allocating Fiscal Year 2024/25 Funds for SB 125 Formula-Based Transit & Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) and Zero Emission Transit Capital Program (ZETCP)

Resolution No. M2024-08

Allocating SB 125 Formula-Based TIRCP and ZETCP Funds for Fiscal Year 2024/25
(Reso. # M2024-08 is incorporated herein by reference)

MCOG Administration & Management – Year 1	27,659	
MCOG Administration & Management – Balance	82,977	
Total MCOG Administration & Management		110,636
Mendocino Transit Authority for multi-year project, pending claim procedures	5,325,866	
Total FY 2024/25 TIRCP and ZETCP Allocations		27,659

11. Acceptance of Transit Productivity Committee Report of May 2, 2024 – Annual Transit Performance Review.

Ms. Orth reported the recommendation, summarizing her written report. No changes were recommended to MCOG’s adopted Transit Performance Standards. The most recent adjustment was to Passengers per Hour, and the TPC agreed to allow more time to rebuild ridership post-pandemic before making any further changes to those targets. She briefly covered the other adopted standards, which are working well with annual administrative adjustments per policy.

In the annual performance review, the data showed level results or better, as calculated in tables provided in the agenda packet along with staff report summarizing results. Notably, all service types showed a drop in costs. The TPC recommended that MCOG be aware of opportunities to support and market specialized transportation services provided by the Senior Centers to help increase ridership.

The Chair invited public comments, hearing none.

Upon motion by Haschak, second by Carter, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (5 Ayes – Haschak, Carter, Norvell, Duenas and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 3 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that: 1) MCOG’s 2024 Transit Performance Standards are approved as presented;

- 2) the committee’s report of Annual Transit Performance Review through December 31, 2023 is accepted, noting improvement in fixed route performance, maintenance of effort by DAR and by Senior Centers specialized services as a whole, and cost reduction for all service types over the past year;

Service Type	2023	3-Year Average
Dial-A-Ride (DAR) maintained same 3-year average; Farebox slipped in 2023 but met Cost per Passenger, for equivalent 2 of 4 annual result	2 of 4	2 of 3
Short Distance Bus Routes maintained the same 3-year average, also met Cost/Hr in 2023, improving annual performance	2 of 3	2 of 3
Long Distance Routes dropped from 3 of 3 to 1 of 4 in 3-year average, meeting just Farebox; and met Cost per Passenger in 2023, improving annual result	2 of 4	1 of 4
Senior Centers maintained the same 3-year average; Farebox slipped in 2023 but met Cost per Hour, for equivalent 1 of 4 annual result	1 of 4	2 of 3

- 3) the committee’s recommendation is taken under advisement of opportunities to support and market specialized transportation services provided by the Senior Centers to help increase ridership.

12. Discussion/Consideration of RuralREN (Regional Energy Network) Developments. Ms. Barrett summarized her report, including the Petition for Modification by Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), other petitions and responses, and a new Administrative Law Judge’s Ruling Seeking Comment on Potential Path Forward for Rural Regional Energy Network. This last proposal would divide the RuralREN into two separate entities, RREN North and RREN Central. MCOG had taken a neutral position during this period. To make official comments, due June 14, it is necessary to file a motion for party status. A new RREN North program could start in January at earliest.

Mr. Kullman and Ms. Terry of RCEA were on hand for questions. Board discussion included:

- Would there be approximately same amount of money for Mendocino County as before? The proposal was a little higher, since the original business plan was not quite adequate to meet needs with MCOG as a subcontractor. With MCOG as a full members under the ALJ proposal, the underfunding would be addressed; this would remain to be resolved with other regional partners to the REN. (Gjerde, Barrett)
- Would MCOG be a full partner? RCEA would agree to that if MCOG so desires. Staff’s report was accurate. Concerning a breakdown of funds among partners, in refiguring the budget, RCEA did increase the allocation for MCOG from the original business plan that was filed. (Haschak, Kullman)
- Good news that MCOG would become a full partner in a new configuration. (Gjerde)
- This will serve the northern part of the state better and be a more manageable program, even though it has been a bit painful to reach this point. A new RuralREN North entity will be more truly rural than before. (Kullman, Barrett)

There was no public comment on this item.

Upon motion by Haschak, second by Carter, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (5 Ayes – Haschak, Carter, Norvell, Duenas and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 3 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that staff is authorized to file a Motion for Party Status and submit comments to the California Public Utilities Commission on the Administrative Law Judge’s ruling of May 21, 2024 by the June 14, 2024 deadline.

13. Consideration of Letter to Support Implementation of Roadside Wildfire Prevention Measures for Trailers in California. Ms. Orth introduced Steve Henderson, a.k.a. Gizmo, who made the proposal and had authored a sample letter, provided in the agenda packet. He demonstrated the proper way to attach a trailer with ball-type drawbar style connection. As a volunteer firefighter, he has seen failures from improper installation, causing chain dragging and ignition from sparks. Educational information is needed at point of sale, using a QR code to access best practices. This and other measures, such as a compliance sticker to enforce existing California regulatory code, would address much of the “miscellaneous” category of causes of roadside wildfires in the state.

Chair Gjerde thanked Mr. Henderson for bringing this to everyone’s attention and supported sending a letter to DMV and others as proposed, with minor changes such as adding California Highway Patrol (CHP) to the distribution. Additional recipients were mentioned in discussion.

Director Haschak also thanked Henderson for his work on this issue to date and agreed with the need for action, advising that staff assist with drafting a support letter. Discussion followed on Henderson’s additional recommendation to repurpose fire hoses for covering trailer chains.

A motion was made by Director Norvell, seconded by Director Haschak to send a letter of support as proposed. **Discussion on the motion:** Director Carter advised requesting that DMV hand out information rather than CHP, so that everyone receives information while purchasing a trailer or renewing a license, rather than at random stops, noting that CHP motorcycle officers have limited space to carry materials. He objected to the term “mandatory” for CHP traffic stops, otherwise was in support. Ms. Barrett stated that normally this level of detail would not be included in a support letter. Director Gjerde asked to clarify the motion authorizes staff to prepare a letter and does not need to come back to Board; the motion maker concurred. Director Haschak was confident that staff would draft an acceptable letter. There was no public comment.

The motion carried unanimously on roll call vote (*5 Ayes – Haschak, Carter, Norvell, Duenas and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 3 Absent*): IT IS ORDERED that staff is directed to send a letter to the following agencies in support of wildfire safety measures for trailers sold in California:

- Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Safety Division
- California Department of Highway Patrol (CHP)
- California Insurance Commissioner
- Caltrans Safety Programs
- Senator Mike McGuire
- Assemblymember Jim Wood
- Various Mendocino County fire authorities

14. Recess as Policy Advisory Committee – Reconvene as RTPA – Ratify Action of Policy Advisory Committee. **Upon motion** by Haschak, second by Carter, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*5 Ayes – Haschak, Carter, Norvell, Duenas and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 2 Absent*): IT IS ORDERED that the actions taken by the Policy Advisory Committee are ratified by the MCOG Board of Directors.

15. Reports - Information

- a. Caltrans District 1 – Projects Update and Information. Planner Dean Meester noted the Milestone report provided in the agenda packet.
- b. Mendocino Transit Authority. Executive Director Jacob King stated no report this month.
- c. Great Redwood Trail Agency. Director Haschak reported a meeting was held May 16 and that the Draft Master Plan was still open for public comment.

- d. MCOG Staff - Summary of Meetings. Ms. Barrett referred to the written report.
- e. MCOG Administration Staff
 - i. *Status of Staffing Contracts Negotiated by the Procurement Consultant, Regional Analysis & Planning Services (RAPS) – to August 12 meeting*. Ms. Barrett reported briefly that the consultant had stated last meeting that contracts would be ready for approval today, however that timeline did not allow for legal counsel review. The contracts are expected to be ready for the next meeting agenda.
 - ii. *Miscellaneous*. None.
 - iii. *Next Meeting Date* – Monday, August 12, 2024 (Note second Monday of the month).
- f. MCOG Planning Staff
 - i. *Work Element 9 - Noyo Harbor Multimodal Circulation Plan*. Deputy Planner Ellard gave an update on this project. She had expected a consultant to be under contract by now; this was delayed for an extra step to interview the top two proposers. Staff is now in final negotiations with the top-ranked proposer and expects to execute a contract in a week or so, followed by a kickoff meeting. A key component will be public outreach, which will be coordinated with the Noyo Harbor Blue Economy effort now underway. The project is anticipated to take about a year and a half to conduct.
 - ii. *Work Element 10 - Update/Expand Local Road Safety/Action Plans*. Ms. Ellard reported this project is wrapping up. Since last reported, two in-person stakeholder workshops and one virtual were held. Attendance has been low although advertised. One board member attended each, along with local agency staff and a few public members. The project team and member agencies will meet next and plans are to be completed by end of June, with presentations to each city council and the Board of Supervisors. This will put the local agencies in a good position to apply for the next rounds of federal highway safety and safe streets grants.
 - iii. *Miscellaneous*. None.
- g. MCOG Directors. None.
- h. California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) Delegates. Director Haschak reported that CALCOG met May 22 in Sacramento for Legislative Day lobbying, which included a hybrid teleconference board meeting he was able to attend. They discussed SB 125 and other State budget updates.

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

Submitted: NEPHELE BARRETT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Janet Orth, Deputy Director & CFO