

# Mono County Local Transportation Commission

PO Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
760.924.1800 phone, 924.1801 fax  
commdev@mono.ca.gov

PO Box 8  
Bridgeport, CA 93517  
760.932.5420 phone, 932.5431 fax  
www.monocounty.ca.gov

## MINUTES

December 10, 2012  
(Adopted March 11, 2013)

---

**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS:** Tim Hansen, Hap Hazard, Larry Johnston

**TOWN COMMISSIONERS:** Jo Bacon, Sandy Hogan, Matthew Lehman

**COUNTY STAFF:** Scott Burns, Gerry Le Francois, Jeff Walters, Garrett Higerd, Mary Booher, C.D. Ritter

**TOWN STAFF:** Peter Bernasconi, Jessica Morriss

**CALTRANS:** Forest Becket

**ESTA:** John Helm, Jill Batchelder, Brian Macklin

**GUEST:** Kelly Garcia

---

1. **CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chair Matthew Lehman called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. at the Town/County Conference Room, Minaret Village Mall, Mammoth Lakes, and Commissioner Hazard led the pledge of allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Jeff Walters reported snow stakes installation on airport road and shoulder grading on Convict Road.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**MOTION:** Adopt minutes of Special Meeting October 15, 2012, as submitted. (Bacon/Johnston. Ayes: 4. Abstain due to absence: Hazard, Hansen.)

3. **CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION:** Commissioner Lehman read aloud certificates of appreciation to departing Commissioner Hansen, who noted a tremendous amount of work even in a slow economy gave him high hopes for the future, and Commissioner Hazard, who cited numerous LTC and Caltrans accomplishments in Tri-Valley and more to do. Commissioner Bacon thanked Hazard for his efforts in securing highway signs honoring veterans, and Commissioner Lehman added that people were thankful to see the signs.

**COMMISSIONER REPORTS:** 1) Hogan: Mobility Commission meeting canceled due to lack of quorum. Transit workshop scheduled in January. MLTS coordinating committee receives \$300,000/yr from Measure R fund, 18 meetings since May. Looking at budget for various projects, some need environmental review by USFS. 2) Lehman: Received a call from Bill Cockroft regarding cutback on night transit due to budget cuts. Cockroft went to council, where John Helm addressed issues and found money from road maintenance fund. Make sure transit is available, and stay on airport road issues. Ambulance drivers consistently complain about that road. 3) Hazard: On sample ambulance ride, the road was the least of his concerns. Look for funding that doesn't impact other projects. Political sign enforcement by Caltrans: Significant cover-up and wagon-circling occurred. Sign issues were not resolved, and different operational standards existed. He urged LTC follow up to ensure equitable and equal enforcement throughout Mono. He will seek damages, has hired an attorney.

4. **ADMINISTRATION**

**A. Amendment #1 to the 2012-13 Overall Work Program:** Mary Booher said staff changes were not shown in red-line, but could be in January.

Commissioner Bacon questioned Work Element 200-12-0. *Scott Burns noted several efforts blend together with updates of Town and County Housing Elements. Sustainable communities grant also has that focus.*

Commissioner Hogan noted Appendix B was missing some headings.

Commissioner Johnston noted >\$1 million spent. Would 10 full-time people working on this be enough to get all work elements done? Wendy Sugimura will take three-year project to BOS in January.

Hogan mentioned importance keeping grants as priorities to avoid additional processes.

Johnston thought some completion dates might get pushed back. Put planners full time on it. They'd be hard pressed to get it done along with regular work. Is time frame realistic? Booher noted hurdles are not always known or what other projects could come forward. She urged more thought into those dates.

Booher noted deliverables list gives feel for accomplishments.

Could amendment be adopted today? Rollover can't be claimed till this is approved.

Forest Becket had no time to talk to Booher and get headquarters approval. Funds include other grants. Caltrans was looking only at Rural Planning Assistance (RPA).

Options: Bring back, approve now, or approve with non-substantial changes by Caltrans. Hogan wanted existing commissioners to vote on it.

**MOTION:** Approve 2012-13 Overall Work Program Amendment #1 subject to non-substantial changes by Caltrans. (Bacon/Hogan. Ayes: 6-0.) Commissioner Hazard asked why it hadn't gotten Caltrans review/approval. Booher indicated not getting it to Caltrans in time.

**B. Non-motorized Transportation:** Scott Burns indicated verbiage had been incorporated into LTC Handbook and a standard has been set. Program managers have taken non-motorized seriously. A unique situation exists because LTC commissioners are also on Town and County staff. Will be reflected in Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update. The focus on complete streets includes non-motorized. Lots of main street pedestrian, trails emphasis.

At RPAC meetings Commissioner Hansen brought up continuing bike lane signage all the way to Buckeye Road, with another widening from Buckeye to sheep ranch, then north past Devils Gate. Work's been done, and he'd like to see it continue. Widen shoulders on Twin Lakes Road and create huge loop.

Scott Burns noted Bridgeport has the county's first designated in-town bike lane.

Commissioner Bacon asked if Mono Planning would look at Casa Diablo IV pipelines. Scott Burns recalled it did not come up in companion geothermal project, but Mono and Town will look at this issue.

Commissioner Johnston expressed concern with what happens when project comes in. How does review occur? He cited issues with chip seal on US 395 and no bike lanes at Meridian intersections (cyclists have only gutter or sidewalk). Nitty gritty is missed when preliminary plans are proposed, getting from broad perspective to implementation.

Peter Bernasconi indicated that Town staff does not prepare maintenance plans for striping projects. Reconfiguring will occur with Safe Routes to School. Johnston thought it would have been an easy fix, a last little step of modifying striping by foot or two in normal process. Bernasconi described 20-40 hr to do striping plan, Town does not have capacity. Johnston wanted input from user groups to tweak maintenance projects as well. Bacon recalled maintenance going to council, not LTC. Commissioner Lehman acknowledged a need to change at town level. Commissioner Hazard saw a whole new kettle of fish with maintenance. Johnston suggested calling Eastside Velo to ask for input. Integrate at levels where can with little projects as well as big projects. Non-motorized should be a routine step in process.

**C. Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP):** Town requested this item be continued. Peter Bernasconi noted the grant didn't fund entire segment, need to refine cost estimates. A \$661,000 grant for Waterford has not been signed yet.

## **7. LOCAL TRANSPORTATION ISSUE: Meridian Boulevard School Sign with Flashing Lights.**

Drivers find it irritating. Peter Bernasconi indicated operation from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. school days, not holidays. Commissioner Lehman started looking at all signs on Meridian; maybe stop approving so many. Commissioner Hazard noticed chain control signs in town unreliably turned last several years, sometimes with days of dry road. Commissioner Johnston noted Coleville's flashing light for school zone is controlled by school district. Maybe it could happen here. Lehman confirmed flashing lights as a grant requirement. Scroll message sign at MHS? *Approved by planning commission.*

## **8. TRANSIT**

A. Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA) update

1) **ESTA operation of Red Line buses:** John Helm introduced Brian Macklin, Mammoth's operations supervisor. ESTA is operating town routes with new buses via a grant funded by US Forest Service (USFS).

Primary use was Reds Meadow shuttle, but now year-round to MMSA. Two diesel-powered bus models seat 37, have a low floor design, one step entry. Ramps replace wheel-chair lifts (cinders gum up hydraulics), with greater disabled accessibility.

Helm dispelled rumors about snow operation. Auto-chains work well in most conditions, buses also have hard chains. Ski racks? *Buses 102" wide, maximum allowable width. Ski design/snowboards would not fit in racks. Greater room in interior of bus, easier boarding.*

Macklin has driven all equipment for last seven years, has firsthand operation of MMSA and ESTA buses. He noted that during last storm, buses had outstanding traction from Canyon Lodge onto Lakeview, a very slick spot. Is loading gear onto bus a problem? *People need to become accustomed, comfortable bringing gear inside. Riders seem pleased. Taking boards to seats works well. Upholstery dampness? Super-intense Scotch guard fabric, 8" fans installed on dashboard.*

2) **Lakes Basin trolleys:** John Helm saw 50% increase in ridership since 2009-10 directly attributable to bike path. Bike trailer has 12-bike capacity, two on trolley front. When demand has exceeded capability, people wait for next 30-min trolley. He has coordinated with Town staff on need. Added bike transportation into grant, awarded money to purchase three-bike racks on bus. Trailer capacity increased from 12 to 18. Turn-around area does not allow larger trailer. Total of 21 bikes can be transported, up from 14.

Will this satisfy weekend need? *At absolute maximum demand times it may not. Increase trolley frequency. Town Council has funding constraint. Another trolley would change to 20-minute frequency. Commissioner Lehman suggested funding from elsewhere or charging bikes. Fare could be charged to everyone or just to bikes, but runs absolutely counter to what everyone wants to accomplish – cars off road. Are riders doing laps because they don't want to ride uphill? Riders Lots of families, multiple times are no longer transit. Larger trailer pulled by separate vehicle? Possibly. Could USFS discuss more trolleys? No operating funds from USFS. Commissioner Lehman saw a 50% increase now as great.*

3) **Transit Facility Improvements:** Jill Batchelder cited significant parking increase from previous impound yard. Large project will be phased in, with lighting work on building and initial parking lot. Fencing funds next year. Ultimate goal is 30,000-square foot paved area, covered parking, lighting, decreased omissions, wash bay to keep vehicles clean.

Covered bays? *Awaiting design, looking for 30 vehicles. Solar panels atop? ESTA has talked with Town about it. Commissioner Johnston recalled counties at annual conference noted no local cost on solar, handled by independent people. Whole facility could be powered with no energy costs if constructed strong enough. Commissioner Hazard suggested looking at Sierra Nevada breweries in Chico, where solar IS the roof, avoiding massive structure. Has PTMISEA been applied for? See how design part comes through. Smaller project with \$146,992. Funding for eight years has been allocated, so provide plan to develop facility at Mammoth Lakes.*

4) **Quarterly Operating Data Review:** Jill Batchelder cited passenger fare as \$.43, very low. Routes doing well include Mammoth Dial-A-Ride, Lakes Basin, Reno, and Lancaster. Mammoth Express ridership is down, but efficiency has increased. Why trolley decrease even with high visitation? *Reduced service hours due to funding.*

**B. Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS):** Scott Burns noted Hogan and Hansen have been involved. YARTS met Nov. 5, last meeting of 2012. Overall YARTS ridership was down 2% due to hantavirus scare, low-water-year impact on waterfalls. East side increased, with Tuolumne service added. Stay course with Tuolumne service with info. Losing YARTS members from Eastside: Hansen and Bauer. Members don't have to be supervisors. Madera County not participate yet? *Less resistance. Fresno ultimately will join, Tuolumne doing study, Manteca interested.* Commissioner Hogan indicated a paranoid group in Madera harps on old Yosemite Valley plan to keep cars out of valley. Commissioner Hazard attended RCRC last week, where a new representative was present. A significant turnover in board suggests a fresh approach from Madera in offering to outreach and form partnerships.

9. **CALTRANS:** Caltrans is gearing up to offer newly elected officials a sit-down with Caltrans in January. Commissioner Bacon requested new councilman Raimondo be included.

## 10. QUARTERLY REPORTS:

A. **Town of Mammoth Lakes:** Peter Bernasconi reviewed projects under way and planned. Commissioner Johnston commended work, grants, and longtime projects.

B. **Mono County:** Garrett Higerd reviewed projects, highlighting Rock Creek Road rehab. A walk of the route from top down identified issues not visible from aerial photo (widen four culverts, bridge improvements, arch culverts). A 4' bike climbing lane is planned. Gerry Le Francois is working on the environmental process. Commissioner Hazard noted Rock Creek Road pedestrian bridge across creek in addition to existing structure. Developer agreed earlier on to do it faster, cheaper than agency. Private alternative to explore.

Commissioner Hansen suggested taking advantage of torn-up streets to lay conduit and create backbone distribution system.

A sum of \$750,000 was designated to rehab airport road. Commissioner Johnston wanted to fix cracks, fast forward as priority. Higerd noted a time frame to get projects through. Maybe STIP funding would take too long. LTC could determine source of funding and consider other funding options.

C. **Caltrans:** Forest Becket reported American Disabilities Act (ADA) access on June Lake sidewalks. High Point Curve is approaching final paving in January. In wintertime?! Tom Meyers is retiring, and McElroy and Zemitis will take his projects. Conway Summit: Retaining wall upgrades, flat work. Restroom facilities, new panel displays, shelters, more large-vehicle parking, and turn pockets are proposed. Commissioner Hansen noted demolitions of Crestview, but some structures will remain. Add new sheds later. Keep sand shed, housing, truck storage. Commissioner Johnston noted lighting has shielding, but some Caltrans facilities don't; i.e., Sonora Junction. Becket noted moving north on US 6 for 8' shoulders, also north of Bridgeport.

## 11. **INFORMATIONAL**

A. **MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century):** Gerry Le Francois noted new federal legislation: TE (Transportation Enhancements) became TA (Transportation Alternatives), and formulas changed. Southern counties do better in STIP process. Mono does poorly when population factor is involved. Maybe ask LTC to lobby.

### B. **High Point Curve Update #12**

12. **UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS:** 1) OWP ( % completion?); 2) new commissioners; 3) future project discussion; 4) MAP-21 update; 5) RTIP continued

13. **ADJOURN** to January 14, 2013.

*Prepared by C.D. Ritter, LTC secretary*