

LASSEN COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

Regular Commission Meeting

November 13, 2023

City of Susanville Council Chambers
66 North Lassen Street
Susanville, CA

1:30 P.M. Open Session

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1. Convene

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:30 P.M.

Roll Call: Present: Albaugh, Gallagher, Neely, Stafford
Absent: Brown, McCourt

1.1 Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was deferred.

1.2 Adoption of Agenda:

It was moved by Commissioner Stafford and seconded by Commissioner Gallagher that the Commission adopt the agenda as presented. The agenda was adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Albaugh, Gallagher, Neely, Stafford
NOES: None
ABSENT: Brown, McCourt
ABSTAIN: None

1.3 Approval of the October 16, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

The Commission was asked to adopt the Minutes of their October 16, 2023, Regular Meeting, as presented by staff.

Commissioner Albaugh noted that Commissioner McCourt was shown both present and absent in the Roll Call. The Executive Secretary noted that Commissioner McCourt was absent and will change the minutes to reflect that.

It was moved by Commissioner Gallagher and seconded by Commissioner Stafford to approve the minutes (with the changes as discussed) as presented by staff. The motion was passed by the following vote:

AYES: Albaugh, Gallagher, Neely, Stafford
NOES: None
ABSENT: Brown, McCourt
ABSTAIN: None

1.4 Approval of Consent Calendar

It was moved by Commissioner Neely and seconded by Commissioner Gallagher that the Commission approve the Consent Calendar as presented by staff. The motion was passed by the following vote:

AYES: Albaugh, Gallagher, Neely, Stafford
NOES: None
ABSENT: Brown, McCourt
ABSTAIN: None

2. CORRESPONDENCE/PUBLIC COMMENT

No written communications were received.

Verbal communications:

No verbal comments were received.

3. REPORTS

3.1 Caltrans

Michael Oguro provided an update to the Commissioners. There were not substantive changes to the projects currently of interest in the Region. Commissioners reminded him that there are a number of county roads (A3 for example) that are used as cutoff roads for the State Highway System and therefore receive unusually large amounts of heavy truck traffic. They reiterated their desire to either have the roads taken over by the state, or receive some funding to support maintenance for these roads. Mr. Oguro said he would look into it.

Mike also provided a follow-up for a question about traffic numbers on SR 139 and how Caltrans developed that information. Mike provided an overview of their traffic count system. There had also been a specific question about Johnstonville School Road, and speed limit enforcement at and near the school. Mike confirmed that a

speed study had not been done in some time, and that it was difficult to enforce speed laws (except in school zones) if a study had not been done recently.

3.2 CHP

Jason Grimm reported on CHP activities in the region including enforcement contacts, citations, warnings, DUI stops, and DUI collisions. He noted that of the 18 collisions investigated by CHP that 7 were solo wrecks. Commissioner Neely asked if they had noticed any increase in collisions with deer near the CHP office. He noted that they had not

3.3 City of Susanville

No Report was provided for the City of Susanville.

3.4 Lassen County

Pete Heimbigner introduce Jasleen Mutti recently hired into the public works department. Among her tasks Ms. Mutti will be taking over transit planning for the county.

3.5 Susanville Indian Rancheria

No Report was provided by the Susanville Indian Rancheria.

4 NEW BUSINESS

4.01 Announcement of Items to be Discussed in Closed Session

There was no closed session.

4.02 Announcement of Action Taken in Closed Session

There was no closed session.

4.10 Action/Discussion Items

4.11 Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Feasibility Study Progress Presentation

Analy Castillo of Stantec, and the Project Manager for the Zero-Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Feasibility Study (ZEV Study), provided an update on study progress, analysis to date, anticipated outcomes, and next steps to completion. She confirmed that the study would be done early in 2024. Here update included the purpose for the ZEV Study, including interactions with California Air Resources Board (the entity requiring the study) staff, project phases, key findings from existing conditions, constraints unique to Lassen County, and next steps.

The update included an overview of the analytical tools used, and how they were applied to the existing transit systems operations and plans for fleet development.

In addition, Ms. Castillo provided the schedule for the CARB Mandated transit vehicle conversion, and noted that although the LCTC was out of compliance with the deadline for developing the current study, staff had requested and received a waiver.

Important takeaways from the presentation and next steps. Hydrogen Fuel Cell vehicles which were originally part of the study were eliminated early on as infeasible. Current analysis indicate that the current status of EV transit bus development will not work in the environment that the transit provider operates in. For example there are not EV transit vehicles that come equipped with automatic chains which is critical when operating in an environment where it occasionally snows.

Commissioners voiced their skepticism about using EV's in the cold, mountainous a region. One commissioner questions the need to do the study. The Executive Secretary responded that it was required by CARB. He added that by using the tools recommended by CARB for the assessment, and those tools showing the infeasibility of beginning the conversion to EV transit vehicles, the region will have a strong argument to make against conversion at this time.

This was an information item. No action was required from the Commission.

4.12 Final Lassen County 2023 Regional Transportation Plan

The RTP serves as the planning blueprint to guide transportation investments in Lassen County involving local, state, and federal funding over the next twenty years.

Transportation improvements in the RTP are identified as short-range/constrained (2023-2033) or long-range/unconstrained (2034-2044). The RTP must be updated every five (5) years to comply with Caltrans guidelines and be eligible for many sources of funding. The last RTP update was adopted in 2017. Any transportation capital improvement projects funded with state or federal funds must be identified in the RTP.

Genevieve Evans, Project Manager for the update, reported that at their October Regular meeting, the Commission received an in-depth review of the RTP and the year-long effort to update the document. Since then, LCTC staff have completed the Final Lassen County 2023 Regional Transportation Plan and Initial Study Checklist/Proposed Negative Declaration. The Draft RTP was presented at the October 10th meeting for review and discussion. The RTP and Environmental Document were available for review and comment from October 6 - November 6 and circulated through the State Clearinghouse as required. Comments received on the Draft RTP and Environmental Document have been incorporated into the Final RTP.

Ms. Evans noted that since the draft RTP was circulated they had received comments from Lassen County and the public. Most of these comments helped fill in information in the RTP but had not changed the overall scope or vision of the document. She also

reported that the California Department of Fish and Wildlife had commented on the environmental document requesting that we pay special attention to wildlife crossings on major highways. These comments did not require recirculating the environmental document.

The Commissioners were asked to Adopt by separate motion the 2023 Regional Transportation Plan and Environmental Document.

It was moved by Commissioner Gallagher and seconded by Commissioner Neely to adopt the Environmental Document prepared for the 2023 Lassen County Regional Transportation Plan. The motion was passed by the following vote:

AYES: Albaugh, Gallagher, Neely, Stafford
NOES: None
ABSENT: Brown, McCourt
ABSTAIN: None

Commissioner Albaugh had concerns about the language stating that Lassen County supported the states GHG and climate change goals. He asked that they be removed or rewritten. The Executive Secretary noted that in order to get funding some mention of the states priorities would need to be in the document. He feared that by rejecting them the document would not be accepted by the state, and would disqualify the county from receiving state and federal funds. He stated that staff could work with Caltrans staff to develop language that would meet the Commissions views, but also not jeopardize future funding.

The Commission agreed to table adoption of the 2023 RTP to the December meeting, pending the revision of the language regarding the states GHG and climate change goals.

4.13 Senate Bill (SB) 125 Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program / Zero Emission Transit Capital Program – Overview and Discussion

Senate Bill 125 (SB 125) amended the Budget act of 2023 to create a new one-time source of transit funding to address operational funding shortfalls created from the reduction in transit ridership during the COVID-19 pandemic and capital needs. Approximately \$5.1 billion of funding will be distributed by formula over four years and administered by Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs), such as the Lassen County Transportation Commission (LCTC) to identify and program regional transit operations and capital projects. SB 125 is being implemented by the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA).

The Executed Secretary provided an overview of SB 125, its major funding elements, how they apply to Lassen County transit, and potential uses for the money regionally. He updated them on staff discussions with CalSTA staff, Lassen Rural Bus, City and County staff, tribal representatives, and the public. He noted that the funds (thought

programmed for four years) can be spent beyond that deadline, there was significant flexibility to change plans as situations dictate, and that there would likely be follow up measures to fund transit beyond SB 125.

An allocation plan for these funds is due to CalSTA by the end of December. An outline of funding priorities will be brought to the Commission for approval at their December meeting.

This was an information item. No action was required from the Commission.

5. INFORMATION ITEMS

The following is an overview of some of the issues, projects, and coordination currently being advanced by LCTC.

5.01 Executive Summary Report

The Executive Secretary reported the following:

- *US 395 Update – The Coalition has a meeting scheduled for November 15.*
- *WCB Wildlife Crossing Grant – The agreement with the WCB has been signed and staff is in the process of finalizing the contract with Mark Thomas to do the work.*
- *SB 125 – This is a new program to help fund transit in the wake of use changes as a result of covid and other work from home activities. There is significant funding available to Lassen County (\$4.1 million) to assist transit operations and capital investments. Staff, working with the LTSA, will prepare an application to secure the funding. Applications are due to the state by December 31.*

6. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 Matter brought forth by the Commission

No issues were brought forth by the Commission.

7.2 Next Commission Meeting

Next meeting of the LCTC will be on Monday, December 11, 2023, at 1:30 PM, at the City of Susanville, City Council Chambers, 66 North Lassen Street, Susanville, CA.

7.3 Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:43 p.m.

Submitted for approval by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized initials and a long horizontal stroke.

John Clerici
Executive Secretary