

PLUMAS COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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MINUTES

January 24, 2011

Meeting of the Plumas County Transportation Commission (PCTC) opens with roll call at 1:30 p.m. in the Conference Room of Plumas County Public Works Department. Commissioners in attendance are: Jon Kennedy, Robert Meacher, Susan Scarlett, Dan Wilson and Chairman John Larrieu. Absent is Vice-Chair Sharon Thrall. Also in attendance are: Bob Perreault, Director of Public Works; Aaron Cabaccang and Lisa Little of Regional and System Planning for Caltrans District 2; Kathy Coots – Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor for Quincy Area; Bruce Carpenter – CHP; Jim Moore and Michael Eshlemann of Moore and Associates; Jeff Schwein – Lumos & Associates; Jimmy LaPlante and Michele Piller – Plumas Rural Services for Plumas Transit System; John Mannle - Transportation Planner for the Commission and Martin Byrne, Executive Director for the Commission.

Chairman Larrieu requests any comments for Public Forum.

1a. Public Forum

Lisa Little announces that she is now working in Systems Planning and her first assignment is to manage the SR70 Transportation Concept Report (TCR). The TCR, she explains, is a future 20-year study of the operational aspects of the route with emphasis on capacity of the route. She will coordinate with the transportation commissioners and staff as the study progresses.

Executive Director Byrne informs of an agenda change to remove Resolution No. 11-3 from Item No. 11. He explains that Plumas Rural Services and Plumas Transit Systems are now dues paying members of CalACT and there is no need for dual membership from Plumas County.

Hearing no additional public input, Chair moves on to Item 1b.

b. Chairman Larrieu Requests Input from Commissioners on Non-Agenda Items:

Hearing no input from Commissioners, Chairman Larrieu closes Public Forum.

2. Approval of Minutes of November 22, 2010.

Minutes of the November 22nd meeting are approved on motion by Susan Scarlett, second by Robert Meacher, followed by unanimous votes of approval.

3. Introducing Mr. Jim Moore of Moore and Associates to Conduct the Plumas County Tri-ennial Performance Audits.

Executive Director Byrne introduces Mr. Moore and his assistant Michael Eshlemann who are

under contract with the Transportation Commission to conduct tri-ennial performance audits for 3-cycles covering Fiscal Years 2001 thru 2009. When asked by Chairman Larrieu why these audits were not conducted within the 3-year cycles, Mr. Byrne informs that it is his responsibility but overlooked due to other priorities.

Mr. Moore addresses the Commission. He notes that Mr. Byrne has been able to provide all the information requested this morning. Mr. Moore goes on to distribute power point hard copies of the intent of the audit, its legal requirement under the Transportation Development Act (TDA) and the schedule for the work. Mr. Moore points out that the main goal of the audit is to review compliance with TDA requirements for the Transportation Commission and the transit operations for which it allocates TDA funds. Mr. Moore anticipates a draft report by mid-March and a final in mid-April.

4. Plumas Transit Systems Quarterly Report #2.

Mr. Byrne reports that his review of the quarterly report shows ridership down considerably on all transit routes. He states that for the first half of this fiscal year compared to last year percentage drops in ridership on the various routes are as follows:

Chester Route: 6,695 vs. 8,070 ... 17% decrease
Portola Route: 4,769 vs. 5,787 ... 18% decrease
Quincy Route: 8,827 vs. 9,778 ... 10% decrease

Discussion on the ridership decrease looks to the economic downturn and a drop in enrollment at Feather River College as explanations. Mr. Moore was asked before the meeting about trends he sees throughout the transit world and he identified the economy as taking a toll on ridership in municipalities and rural operations.

The discussion turned to the financial aspect of the quarterly report. Overall operating expenses were shown as being in-line with mid-year expectations at 51%. Certain line items, however, showed a considerable expenditure beyond the 50% range expected at mid-year. Commissioner Scarlett inquired about unemployment insurance and why it was shown at over 95%. During discussion it was stated that the line item budget should be increased next year but “start-up” costs were also reflected in the high percentages. Other items concerning included communications and program equipment.

5. Discussion of Citizens Petition to Install a Crosswalk of SR70 at Fairgrounds Road Intersection.

Mr. Byrne calls attention to the petition within the Commissioners packet and informs that the petition has been forwarded to traffic engineers for Caltrans. He notes that the response of the traffic engineers was not positive in terms of their support for construction of the crosswalk at this time. The focus of their response was that the bus seemed to be the main attraction for people crossing the highway. As such they proposed a look at the bus route and determine if a route change could negate the need for crossing the highway.

Discussion followed with Mr. Mannle referencing an aerial photo of the area. It clearly showed the apartment complex (48-units), where most of the pedestrians live – many being college students. It also showed the intersection and the convenience store adjacent to the bus stop.

Mr. Mannle pointed out the bus stop location, across the highway from the apartment complex and the store/gas station. He informed that he has met with transit manager to explore the possibility of a route change to limit the need to cross the highway for the bus. Other transit stop/route responsibilities could hinder the chances to change the routing but the conversation is ongoing.

Commissioner Scarlett pointed out that the sidewalk is also on the other side of the highway and it too was an attraction for pedestrians. CHP Officer Bruce Carpenter said a records search yielded very little in the way of a serious accident history involving vehicles or pedestrians at the intersection.

It was pointed out that Caltrans would not construct a crossing (without full signalization) with speeds that currently exist – a transition between 40 and 50 mph posted speed limit. It was deemed unlikely that speeds could be lowered below the current trend. Trucking was discussed. A traffic signal at the base of the hill would be undesirable for trucks starting out at the base of the grade – especially in winter driving conditions. SR70 is an alternative to SR80 as an east-west route for trucks in the winter. More discussion will be forthcoming as staff gathers more information.

6. Discussion of Proposition 1B, Transit (PTMISEA) Funds and Progress Toward Presentation to the Board of Supervisors Regarding Permanent Fleet Parking.

Executive Director Byrnerecalls previous discussions with the commissioners about PTMISEA and his idea of building an environmentally acceptable bus wash rack. He recalls his attempt for a feasibility study being denied under this capital improvement program. He points out that \$762,422 was apportioned in FY 2007-08 to the Plumas County Transportation Commission. The program is based upon bond sales with funding to be distributed over a multi-year period. A bus was purchased for \$123,410 with the funds. A balance of our apportionment of approximately \$640,000 remains to be programmed.

A November bond sale yielded only \$77 Million against a programmed amount of \$350 Million – 22% of the expressed need within the bonding cycle. This demonstrates the problematic funding picture when planning a multi-phased project to utilize the apportioned funds.

Staff now proposes to use the funds for a permanent parking facility for the bus fleet. Phases of the work, as funding is available, would include; purchase of property; paving the lot; fencing and lighting; construction of a multi-bay bus shelter; perhaps a fueling facility and a maintenance facility.

Commissioner Meacher inquires if any price quotes on properties has been made. Staff replies that no requests for prices have been made as of this time.

7. Update on Local Transportation Funds (State Sales Tax) Revenues and Projection for Fiscal Year 2011-12.

Executive Director Byrne calls attention to the drawing board with figures illustrating projected revenues and expenditures through June, 2011. He shows the current cash balance and projected revenues and expenditures with careful review of the timing of an upcoming March/April outlay of funds for the bus purchase to be refunded with ARRA, economic stimulus, funds. He points out to Caltrans staff in attendance the importance of getting a quick refund of our operating funds from ARRA. After initial expenditures for the beginning of FY 2011-12 he projects a cash balance of \$390,000, which, with monthly revenues incoming is adequate to fund the remainder of FY 2011-12. He notes that there is little room for extra operating expenditures beyond that needed to keep the system at status-quo.

8. Recommendation on Consultant to Perform the Feasibility Study for a Plumas County Mobility Management Center and Request for Matching Funds (\$2,000) to the Community Development Block Grant. Resolution No. 11-1.

Executive Director Byrne informs the commission that five proposals have been received in response to the Request for Proposals. Of the five one stands out to the selection committee, which consists of David Keller of Community Development, John Sheehan of Plumas Corp and Mr. Byrne.

The chosen firm is Nelson-Nygaard of Portland, OR. They displayed the best understanding and approach to the project as well as a strong showing of experience to the practice of mobility management.

The commissioners request an opportunity to review the proposal before concurring with the findings of the selection committee. Mr. Byrne states his willingness to distribute the proposals within the next two days.

Regarding the Resolution, Mr. Byrne points out that a \$2,000 cash match is required by the Community Development Grant – a 10% match.

On motion by Robert Meacher, second by Dan Wilson and unanimous vote of approval, **Resolution No. 11-1** is approved.

9. Update on the 2010 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

John Mannle informs the commissioners that an addition to the RTP, which is 95% complete, is needed to reflect ongoing County and USFS discussions regarding the proposed USFS Travel Management Plan with respect to OHV use. This information will be available at the next meeting of the commission (February 28th) and will likely be an addendum to the RTP. Resource agencies will be provided copies of the updated RTP. The delayed adoption is of little consequence as the upcoming STIP process will not commence until late this year.

Public Works Director Bob Perreault, who also serves as Co-Chair of the Plumas County Coordinating Council, stated that “coordination” requires a federal agency to include local policy in their planning documents, but there is a duty of the local agency to include such local policy in their adopted planning documents. Accordingly, the new RTP should clearly express local policy in regard to vehicular access to the national forest. Such new, proposed text will be prepared for consideration by the Commission.

10. City of Portola Reconstruction of Route A-15 – an Update.

Mr. Mannle informs the commission that the long awaited construction phase of the A-15 project, which will rehabilitate A-15 from the City Boundary to the commercial area of the City is finally here. The \$2.75 Million project was allocated by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) in December. Advertisement for bids is anticipated in April for the required June award of the construction contract.

11. Request for Authorization to Pay Dues to Rural Counties Task Force **Resolution No. 11-2**

Executive Director Byrne requests approval of the Resolution to pay the semi-annual dues of \$500 to support the Rural Counties Task Force (RCTF). He notes that the RCTF is a very important liaison between rural counties and the California Transportation Commission, where larger municipalities tend to drown out the needs of rural California.

On motion by Robert Meacher, second by Dan Wilson, and unanimous approval Resolution No. 11-2 is approved.

Next Meeting and Adjournment.

The next meeting is set for February 28th. The meeting adjourns at 2:45

ATTEST:

Martin J. Byrne, Executive Director