

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
Transportation Policy Workshop

MINUTES

Thursday, March 16 2006  
9:00 am  
SCCRTC Conference Room  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Members Present:     Jan Beautz             Ellen Pirie  
                          Cliff Barrett (Alt.)     Emily Reilly  
                          Gustavo Gonzalez       Pat Spence  
                          Mike Keogh             Mark Stone  
                          David Koch             Marcela Tavantzis  
                          Dennis Norton         Mardi Wormhoudt

1.     Introductions
2.     Oral Communications
3.     Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

Commissioner Keogh asked that Item 4 be removed from the Consent Agenda. Chair Pirie designated the Item as 12.1

**Consent Agenda** (Wormhoudt/Reilly) – as amended

4.     Approve Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee and Staff  
       Recommendations to Amend the FY 05-06 Budget to Include the Recent Amendment  
       to the Rail Acquisition Financial Plan (Resolution) – Moved to Regular Agenda as  
       Item 12.1
5.     Accepted Announcement of Cheryl Willis as Interim District Director for Caltrans  
       District 5
6.     Accepted Update Regarding Efforts to Protect Proposition 42 Funding

**Regular Agenda**

7.     Oral Report on Transportation Funding Task Force - Taken out of order after Item 8

Fred Keeley, Convener of the Transportation Funding Task Force, said that almost all of the 80 members of the Task Force have agreed to participate and that he has met with over 50 representatives to date.

Mr. Keeley described the Task Force process as having a “horizontal structure” with no chair and no subcommittees. He said that instead, Task Force members will mingle with the members of the public in attendance at the five meetings scheduled in the five Supervisorial Districts in roundtable discussions. Participants will be provided with a Participation Guide and a Workbook.

During these meetings, people will be asked to list and discuss transportation problems they want to solve in their neighborhoods, their communities and throughout the region. The workbooks will be used to note the issues. Then members and the public will be asked to regroup at tables with a different mix of people and approach a second round of questions concerning what transportation options would work or not work in their neighborhoods, communities and the region. Finally, a third set of discussion groups will be presented with a list of different types of transportation revenues and a description of what one year of each funding source could provide, in order to generate a sense of scale proportionate to the issues and possible solutions.

The information gathered at the workshops will be posted on the website in order to invite further community involvement. The Task Force will try to discern if there are patterns in neighborhoods and/or throughout the community.

An Orientation for Task Force members will be held March 23, 2006.

Senior Planner Karena Pushnik said that the Task Force website is up and running and that the website address is [www.tftaskforce.org](http://www.tftaskforce.org). She noted that the time for the Watsonville meeting had been changed to 1:30 to 4:30 pm.

Commissioner Reilly suggested that a map of the meeting locations be provided.

8. Oral Report on Status of State Infrastructure Bond Measure Development – Taken out of order prior to Item 7

Acting Executive Director Pat Dellin referred to an article from the *San Jose Mercury News* that said that because the Governor and legislators ultimately could not agree on what to include in the proposed multibillion dollar bond measure the night before this meeting, the measure will not be ready to be included on the June ballot. Ms. Dellin noted that there was therefore no long term fix to Proposition 42, and that this lack could impact future State Transportation Improvement Program funding.

**Les White** agreed that negotiations continued up to the last moment and an attempt to craft an education only bond also failed to garner sufficient support.

Commissioner Beautz arrived.

9. Oral Report on the 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Hearings held by the California Transportation Commission (CTC)

Director Dellin said that she and Chair Pirie attended the California Transportation Commission (CTC) State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) hearings in Sacramento. Chair Pirie said that a contingent of Santa Cruz residents also attended and were allowed to testify in opposition to the Highway 1 Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes Project. The CTC informed the attending Santa Cruz residents that these comments should be made at the regional level.

Ms. Pirie added that the reality of the situation is that there is not enough money for the projects that are requesting funding. She said that she asked that if the CTC must pick and choose, to pick projects already in line for State Transportation Improvement Program funding, which does not include the Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes Project.

10. Update on the Highway 1 Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes Project

Acting Executive Director Pat Dellin presented an update on the funding available for the Highway 1 Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes Project. She said that the California Transportation Commission's recommendation for the 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funding will be available in April, and that there may not be sufficient funding available to accommodate the RTC's Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) proposal. The federal earmark obtained for the project cannot be used without the matching funds from the state.

Ms. Dellin said that staff will report back in April about the likelihood of STIP funds available for this and other projects.

Director Dellin added that a legal opinion from County Counsel regarding the question of segmentation was attached.

11. Target Date for Completion of the RTC Autonomy Project

Senior Planner Tegan Speiser reiterated that the reasons for the Commission to seek autonomy were due to the need for operational efficiency and direct control over Commission activities. In addition, concerns about liability, especially regarding the acquisition of the rail line, had been raised by some members of the Board of Supervisors.

Ms. Speiser said that the autonomy timeline has been reworked and that the new target date is October 2006.

Commissioner Beautz moved and Commission Alternate Barrett seconded to approve the Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee and staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission:

1. Accept this status report on the RTC Autonomy Project, including an updated work plan and timeline; and
2. Approve the new target date for separation of October 1, 2006.

The motion passed unanimously.

12. Transition Plan for RTC Executive Director

Chair Pirie opened the discussion surrounding the terms of Acting Executive Director Pat Dellin's retirement. At issue was whether allowing Ms. Dellin to ride out her accumulated leave and formally retire in August was contrary to County policy. It was noted that this procedure had been approved for her predecessor.

Chair Pirie suggested a limited term additional Executive Director position to allow Ms. Dellin to use her accumulated leave.

County Administrative Officer Susan Mauriello said that other department heads were not given this special treatment and that Ms. Dellin would be accumulating vacation and leave while she was riding out her already accumulated leave, costing the Commission approximately \$11,000. She added that the approval for Ms. Dellin's predecessor was granted due to special circumstances surrounding a personal tragedy with the understanding that she was authorized for a medical leave.

Commissioners discussed the issue, noting that County policy was not entirely clear and that there was a precedent for other department heads in the past. It was also noted that Ms. Dellin had acted in good faith and had given a good deal of notice, staying on until a replacement had been found and guiding the Commission through tumultuous times.

Commissioner Beautz noted that County policies are not always a good fit for small agencies and that the SCCRTC was fiscally independent from the County and would soon be a separate government agency.

Commissioner Wormhoudt, while praising Ms. Dellin's work and dedication, said that policies needed to be consistent and opposed the plan. Commissioner Stone agreed saying he was concerned about setting a policy direction.

Director Dellin offered to donate her additional accrued time to the employee catastrophic time bank, if that would help the situation, adding that her goal was to retire at the appropriate age. She said that she would have planned her retirement differently if she had been aware that there could be an issue with her original plan.

Ms. Mauriello said there was no policy to accommodate this offer, but that perhaps the Memorandum of Understanding could be modified.

Commissioner Keogh pointed out that Acting Executive Director Dellin has more than earned her right to retire under favorable circumstances. She acted in good faith and could have chosen to take her vacation and then announce her retirement, leaving the Commission without her assistance in seeking her replacement and in overseeing the many challenging projects of the last six months.

Commissioner Tavantzis, saying that Ms. Dellin's loyalty needs to be recognized, moved and Commissioner Spence seconded to approve the Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission request that the County establish a limited term additional Executive Director position effective March 25, 2006 to August 25, 2006 at the salary range previously established on March 7, 2006 for the Executive Director position and place Ms. Dellin in the limited term position.

The vote passed with Commissioners Wormhoudt, Reilly, Stone and Commission Alternate Barrett voting "no".

12.1 Approve Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee and Staff Recommendations to Amend the FY 05-06 Budget to Include the Recent Amendment to the Rail Acquisition Financial Plan (Resolution) – Formerly Item 4

Commissioner Keogh objected to the addition of \$70,000 for completion of the appraisals, saying that the costs should have been more accurately estimated initially and that the Phase II Site Assessment should have already been done.

Acting Executive Director Pat Dellin said that a full report regarding the rail line acquisition will be brought to the Commission at the next meeting. She said that the appraisal was delayed by illness of a key consultant and that staff was also frustrated.

Commissioners discussed the budget amendments. It was noted that the appraiser is under a direct contract with the SCCRTC and not sub-contracted through Miller, Owen & Trost.

Ms. Dellin said that the underlying financial plan for the rail line acquisition had already been approved but not the budget amendment.

Commissioner Wormhoudt moved and Commissioner Reilly seconded to approve the Budget and Administration/Personnel (B&A/P) Committee and staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission approve a resolution amending the FY05-06 Budget to incorporate the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Acquisition Project Financial Plan approved by the Regional Transportation Commission at its January Transportation Policy Workshop meeting.

The motion (Resolution 30-06) passed with Commissioner Keogh voting "no".

13. Next Meetings / Adjournment

The next regular RTC meeting will be held **Thursday, April 6, 2006 at 9:00 a.m.** at the Board of Supervisors Chambers, 701 Ocean Street, 5th Floor, Santa Cruz, CA.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop will be held **Thursday, April 20, 2006 at 9:00 a.m.** at the RTC Office, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA.

Respectfully submitted,

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Gini Pineda, Staff

**ATTENDEES**

Paul Elerick	CFST
Don Hoernschemeyer	CFST
Bob Yount	MAC/ A&D TAC
Dania Torres-Wong	County of Santa Cruz
Susan Mauriello	County Administrative Officer
Les White	SCMTD
Bill Comfort	
Genevieve Bookwalter	Santa Cruz <i>Sentinel</i>
Rahn Garcia	County Counsel
Pat Dellin	SCCRTC Staff
Karena Pushnik	SCCRTC Staff
Luis Mendez	SCCRTC Staff
Tegan Speiser	SCCRTC Staff