

SAN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
AND
SERVICE AUTHORITY FOR FREEWAY EMERGENCIES

Minutes

Thursday,
April 6, 2006
9:00 a.m.

Board of Supervisors Chambers
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz CA 95060

1. Roll Call

Members Present: Jan Beautz Antonio Rivas
Gustavo Gonzalez (Alt.) Pat Spence
Mike Keogh Mark Stone
Dennis Norton Marcela Tavantzis
Ellen Pirie Mardi Wormhoudt
Emily Reilly
Cheryl Willis (ex-officio)

Members Absent: Randy Johnson

Staff Present: Pat Dellin Rachel Moriconi
George Dondero Karena Pushnik
Gini Pineda Kim Shultz
Grace Blakeslee Cory Caletti
Luis Mendez David Brown

2. Oral Communications

Commissioner Rivas said he had met with Caltrans about expediting solutions to problems on Green Valley Road and the new high school. He asked for a temporary railing to protect students crossing the bridge, and said that the problem will be worse next year when a new grade will be added, increasing enrollment by 400-500 students. He also said it is difficult for drivers on Green Valley Road who are trying turn left to access the southbound entrance to Highway 1 because of increased traffic coming from the high school. He asked for a temporary expedited solution to that problem also.

3. Additions or Deletions to Consent and Regular Agendas

Acting Executive Director Pat Dellin noted that a Bike to Work brochure was distributed relating to Item 11, and that Commissioners had received a Director Report, additional comments from the public, and a letter relating to Item 35.

Chair Pirie moved Item 33 to 35.1

Commissioner Wormhoudt asked for an addition to be made to the staff report for Item 28 that the completed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would be returned to the Commission before finalizing. The Commission agreed by consensus.

Commissioner Spence asked if a seat on the Transportation Funding Task Force (TFTF) could be offered to the Watsonville Board of Realtors, since the County Board of Realtors does not include Watsonville.

Chair Pirie said the item will be added to the Transportation Policy Workshop agenda and asked that a suggested candidate be forwarded to staff.

Senior Planner Karena Pushnik requested that corrections to the TFTF Workbook or Guide be given to her as soon as possible.

CONSENT AGENDA (Wormhoudt/Beautz) as amended

4. Approved Minutes of the March 2, 2006 Regular SCCRTC Meeting
5. Approved Minutes of the March 16, 2006 Transportation Policy Workshop Meeting

POLICY

No consent items

PROJECTS and PLANNING

6. Accepted Update on the Transportation Funding Task Force Project
7. Accepted Status Report on Highway 1 Projects
8. Accepted Information Item on Commute Solutions' Outreach Efforts and Program Activities

9. Accepted Information Item on California Strategic Highway Safety Plan

COMMISSION BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

10. Approved Staff Recommendations Regarding FY 05-06 Amended Claims from the Santa Cruz Metro Transit District (SCMTD) for Transportation Development Act (TDA) Funds and State Transit Assistance (STA) Funds (Resolutions 31-06, 32-06)
11. Approved Bicycle Committee and Staff Recommendations Regarding FY06-07 Transportation Development Act (TDA) Funding Requests from Bike to Work and the Community Traffic Safety Coalition (Resolutions 33-06, 34-06)
12. Approved Staff Recommendation Regarding Expenditure for Rideshare Database Access through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (Resolution 35-06)
13. Approved Staff Recommendations Regarding Renewal of Open Purchase Orders (Resolution 36-06)
14. Accepted Semi-Annual Financial Reports on the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission Budget (enclosed separately for Commissioners)
15. Approved Staff Recommendation to Submit AB2766 Grant Applications to the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District for Park and Ride Lot Enhancement Program (Resolution 37-06)
16. Accepted Status Report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) Revenues

ADMINISTRATION

17. Approved Bicycle Committee and Staff Recommendations Regarding Appointments to the Bicycle Committee
18. Accepted Updated Roster for the Budget & Administration/ Personnel Committee

COMMITTEE MINUTES

19. Accepted Draft Minutes of the February 13, 2006 Bicycle Committee Meeting

20. Accepted Draft Minutes of the March 9, 2006 Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee Meeting

INFORMATION/OTHER

21. Accepted Monthly Meeting Schedule
22. Accepted SCCRTC Staff Comment Letters on Draft Environmental Documents and Plans Prepared by Other Agencies
 - a. Letter Regarding the Arana Gulch Master Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report
23. Accepted Correspondence Log
24. Accepted Letters from SCCRTC Committees and Staff to Other Agencies
 - a. Letter from the Bicycle Committee Regarding the Arana Gulch Master Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report
25. Accepted Miscellaneous Written Comments from the Public on SCCRTC Projects and Transportation Issues
26. Accepted Handouts from Staff and Commissioners at Previous Regional Transportation Commission Meetings
27. Accepted Information Items
 - a. Monterey-Salinas Transit Announcement of a Monterey Bay Rapid Transit Regional Workshop

SERVING AS THE SERVICE AUTHORITY FOR FREEWAY EMERGENCIES (SAFE)

28. Approved Staff Recommendations Regarding the Freeway Service Patrol Cooperative Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding with Partnering Agencies (Resolutions 38-06, 39-06)

REGULAR AGENDA

29. Commissioner Reports - Oral Reports

Commissioners took turns thanking Interim Executive Director Pat Dellin for her 18 years of service to the Regional Transportation Commission, with special appreciation for the term she served as Executive Director. Commissioners noted her outstanding ability and her caring nature.

Commissioner Pirie presented Ms. Dellin with a Proclamation of Appreciation on behalf of the Commission.

Ms. Dellin said she considered the opportunity to serve as Acting Executive Director to be a tremendous learning experience and expressed her appreciation to the Commission for giving her the time to decide if she wanted to continue in that capacity. She acknowledged former Executive Director Linda Wilshusen as her mentor and added that it would be hard to step away from some of the projects with which she was involved. Ms. Dellin credited her staff for its professionalism and assured incoming Executive Director George Dondero that he would have its full support.

On behalf of the entire staff, Senior Planner Tegan Speiser and Deputy Director Luis Mendez in appreciation of her unique and effective style ensuring a good working environment, encouraging staff development and providing good results in spite of significant challenges presented Ms. Dellin with a customized street sign imprinted with "Pat Dellin's Way" on one side and "Exit Here" on the reverse.

Commissioner Wormhoudt moved and Commissioner Beautz seconded to approve a resolution recognizing Ms. Dellin's dedicated public service. The motion (Resolution 40-06) passed unanimously.

Incoming Executive Director George Dondero said he has some big shoes to fill and that it was great to be here. Commissioners welcomed him to the SCCRTC.

30. Director's Report - Oral Report

Acting Executive Director Pat Dellin introduced Lisa Powell, recently hired as a Transportation Planner II. With a Bachelor of Sciences degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Colorado at Boulder, Lisa is a certified professional engineer and has several years of experience working for an engineering firm as a transportation engineer.

Ms. Dellin asked Commissioners to spread the word about the Transportation Funding Task Force public workshops. She referred to a flier showing the dates, times and locations of the five workshops.

31. Caltrans Report

Interim District 5 Director Cheryl Willis introduced herself, stating that she had started her career with Caltrans in District 5 and was looking forward to working with the Commission until a permanent replacement for Gregg Albright has been selected. She said that there was an open recruitment under way to fill the position.

Ms. Willis noted that due to the recent rains, Highway 152 was closed and will be repaired as soon as weather permits. Traffic is being re-routed to Highway 129.

32. Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes Project Components and Public Awareness Campaign - Oral Presentation by Luis Duazo and Colin Jones, Caltrans District 5

Luis Duazo and Colin Jones, Caltrans District 5, gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining the major features of the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes Project. They showed maps of the planned lanes and an estimated timeline. Soundwalls will be constructed first, except in areas that will need retaining walls built. Metal median barriers will be replaced with concrete and landscaping will include a wide variety of native species including coastal redwood, coast live oak and big leaf maple. Traffic impacts were discussed and an update on public awareness outreach efforts. It was noted that the Morrissey Boulevard and Pasatiempo exits will be the alternatives routes during the closure of the Emeline off-ramp and that there will be a four-way stop sign installed at the Morrissey Boulevard exit prior to the beginning of the next school year.

Information is available by calling the 24-Hour Project Hotline at 888 836 0866, the local Caltrans number 831 423 0396 from 8 am - 5 pm, Monday through Friday, and at the project website at www.hwy-17,caltrans.ca.gov.

Commissioner Reilly suggested that the webcams be placed so that bicyclists and pedestrians, in addition to motorists, will be able to access information. Ms. Reilly also asked for a more detailed explanation of how Caltrans planned to provide information when unforeseeable situations arise and to ensure that the public knows where and how to communicate questions or problems. She suggested that city and county employees, schools, the Metro and other facilities be given the necessary information to provide to

the public and asked for a list of the groups and facilities that Caltrans has identified for outreach. Ms. Reilly asked that in addition to the signs on the freeway about the project and contact information, there be signs on the local streets in the project area.

Commissioner Rivas said that Commissioners can assist by giving information to members of the community with whom they have contact.

Commissioner Spence, after receiving confirmation that the Merge Lanes Project will not extend to La Fonda, suggested that a Park and Ride lot be built at the Morrissey Boulevard interchange as part of the Auxiliary Lanes Project.

Commissioner Norton asked for a presentation to be given to the local jurisdictions.

Acting Executive Director Pat Dellin underscored that Caltrans staff will be available to community organizations and that there will be public awareness broadcasts on Community TV.

33. 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program - Priorities in Light of Constrained Funding - Moved to Item 35.1
 - a. Staff Report
 - b. Summary of 2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) Projects
 - c. Memo to California Transportation Commission Staff

CLOSED SESSION

34. Conference with Real Property Negotiator for Acquisition of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Property: Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line from Watsonville Junction to Davenport

Agency Negotiator: Kirk Trost, Miller, Owen & Trost

Negotiation Parties: SCCRTC, Union Pacific

Under Negotiation: Price and Terms

OPEN SESSION

35. Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Acquisition - Status of Project Reports and Revised Timeline

Deputy Director Luis Mendez summarized the staff report which included status reports on project reports and documents and a revised timeline. He said that a letter Commissioners Norton and Pirie asked for further information regarding the condition of the right-of-way. He added that there was a resolution to approve additional funding to complete the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment.

Commissioner Keogh said that a bullet point for the Business Operating Plan should be included on page 35-3 of the staff report. He also suggested disbanding the Rail Acquisition Task Force, saying that as the time to make a decision whether to purchase the right-of-way got closer, it was important for the full Commission to be involved in making decisions.

Cliff Walters, Sierra Railroad, made suggestions regarding how the Commission should see the function of a short-line operator. He said that in most cases the short-line operator was responsible for negotiating contracts between the shippers and the Class I railroad and that the Commission should focus on hiring a short-line operator who acted as an agent on behalf of the Commission in addition to managing and running the railroad.

Bill Comfort said that most of the public support for acquiring the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Right-of-Way came from the idea of a trail being built and suggested that a modest feasibility study should be done before finalizing the purchase.

Commissioner Pirie suggested that Commissioner Keogh write a letter with his suggestion that the Rail Acquisition Task Force be abandoned to be added to the Transportation Policy Workshop agenda, since it could not be addressed at today's meeting because it was not included in the agenda.

Commissioners discussed the Rail Acquisition Task Force meetings, saying that as it gets closer to the time to make a decision regarding the purchase, a small group is less desirable. Commissioner Beautz said the idea of all Commissioners attending every RATF meeting might not be possible and suggested sending all materials to all

Commissioners as an alternative to asking the entire Commission to attend the meetings. She asked for a report on that alternative.

Departing Executive Director Dellin said that a major presentation to the Commission on all the trail options, including the Coastal Trail, the Rail Trail and the Monterey Bay Scenic Sanctuary Trail was planned for the May Regional Transportation Commission meeting. Information regarding a Request for Proposals for a short-line operator would probably be included also.

Commissioner Wormhoudt moved and Commissioner Beautz seconded to approve the Rail Acquisition Task Force (RATF) and staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission:

1. Accept the attached status report on the project's reports and documents;
2. Consider the attached letter from Commissioners Pirie and Norton proposing collection of further information about the condition of the rail Right of Way;
3. Determine if there is any other information that the RTC would like to help inform your decision on whether to purchase the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line;
4. Direct staff to work with the Rail Acquisition Task Force to develop a cost and funding plan for the additional information requested in items 2 and 3 above and return to the RTC with recommendations;
5. Approve the attached revised timeline for the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Acquisition Project; and
6. Approve the attached resolution to complete the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment.

The motion (Resolution 41-06) passed unanimously.

35.1 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program - Priorities in Light of Constrained Funding - Formerly Item 33

Acting Executive Director Pat Dellin provided a staff report stating that because the state has raided transportation funding in recent years due to state budget crises, it is difficult to know how much a region will actually receive when planning projects for its Regional Transportation Improvement Program.

Ms. Dellin said that the California Transportation Commission (CTC) is putting all Regional Transportation

Improvement Program (RTIP) plans together deciding what projects should be funded statewide. This process takes a lot of control away from individual regions. She said that the CTC staff is supposed to come out with staff recommendations tomorrow and that the CTC will make its decision by the end of the month to approve what will really be funded. She said that she and Chair Pirie went to the last California Transportation Commission meeting and pleaded the case for Santa Cruz County and that CTC staff said it would receive input regarding what the Commission thinks should be included depending on how ready the projects are, how desperate the need is for the projects to be completed, what matching funding is available and whether federal funding would be lost if the projects are not programmed within a certain timeframe. She concluded by saying that knowing that a lot of projects won't get funded we, the Commission should go back to the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) and try to figure out how to fund some of these projects.

Ms. Dellin referred to the add-on pages for Item 33 regarding State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funding for the Rail Line Acquisition. She explained that the new staff recommendation was to ask the California Transportation Commission to program the STIP Funds for the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Acquisition project in FY 07-08, instead of FY 06-07 as previously requested by the RTC.

Ms. Dellin said that the benefit of leaving the funding in FY06-07 is that if the project is wrapped up this year, the Commission won't have to borrow money from the Coastal Conservancy and sign the restrictive covenant agreement, but if the project is delayed and the funding is left in FY06-07, the STIP funding could be lost, not just for the rail line but for county.

Commissioner Wormhoudt moved and Commissioner Rivas seconded to approve the staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission request that the California Transportation Commission program the STIP Funds for the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Acquisition project in FY 07-08, instead of FY 06-07 as previously requested by the Regional Transportation Commission, along with the original staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission:

1. Refer to the summary of the *2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program* approved by the Commission in

- January, 2005 and the RTIP Highlights provided to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) at the March public hearing in Sacramento;
2. Review the initial priorities identified by staff for Highway/Road projects in the *2006 State Transportation Improvement Program* (STIP) and make adjustments as appropriate;
 3. Direct staff to work with Commissioners, partner agencies, legislators, and others to advocate that the California Transportation Commission (CTC) include our region's priorities in the *2006 STIP* when it is adopted later this month;
 4. Direct staff to report at the May 4, 2006 RTC meeting the actions taken by the California Transportation Commission regarding adoption of the *2006 State Transportation Improvement Program* (STIP); and,
 5. As the adopted *2006 STIP* will most likely differ from the RTC's *2006 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Improvement Program* (RTIP), direct staff to work with the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) to develop recommendations to the Regional Transportation Commission on any follow-up actions.

The motion carried unanimously.

36. Next Meetings/Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop is scheduled for April 20, 2006 at the SCCRTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA.

The next SCCRTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 4, 2006 at 9:00 a.m. at the City of Capitola, 420 Capitola Avenue, Capitola, CA.

Respectfully submitted,

Gini Pineda, Staff

ATTENDEES

Colin Jones	Caltrans
Bob Yount	E and D TAC
Genevieve Bookwalter	Santa Cruz <i>Sentinel</i>
Bill Comfort	
Theresia Rogerson	Human Services Agency
Dena Loijos	Human Services Agency
John Presleigh	County Public Works
Piet Canin	SC Transportation Management Agency
Donna Ziel	Mark Stone's Alternate
Cliff Walters	Sierra Railroad
Bob Scott	SCCRTC Technical Advisor