

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

Minutes

Thursday, April 3, 2008
9:00 a.m.

Board of Supervisors Chambers
701 Ocean St
Santa Cruz CA 95060

1. Roll Call

Members Present: Jan Beautz Ellen Pirie
Dene Bustichi Emily Reilly
Gustavo Gonzalez (Alt.) Antonio Rivas
Neal Coonerty Pat Spence
Randy Johnson Mark Stone
Kirby Nicol Marcela Tavantzis
Aileen Loe (ex-officio)

Staff Present: George Dondero Yesenia Parra
Luis Mendez Kim Shultz
Gini Pineda Karena Pushnik
Grace Blakeslee Cory Caletti
Daniel Nikuna Tegan Speiser

2. Oral Communications

Jack Nelson asked the Commission to make transportation choices that would not release CO2 into the atmosphere.

3. Additions or Deletions to Consent and Regular Agendas

Executive Director George Dondero said that there were replacement pages for item 9.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Pirie, Deputy Director Luis Mendez said that line 24 on page 9-8 was reduced by \$30k and that line 41 was increased by the same amount. He said that this is reflected on the other two replacement pages because the expenditure for voter polling was not shown in the corresponding budget line.

CONSENT AGENDA (Nicol/Pirie)

Commission Alternate Gonzalez abstained from approving the minutes of the RTC Meeting of March 6, 2008.

4. Approved [Minutes](#) of the March 6, 2008 Regular SCCRTC Meeting
5. Approved [Minutes](#) of the March 20, 2008 Transportation Policy Workshop Meeting

POLICY

No Consent Items

PROJECTS and PLANNING

6. Accepted Review of Draft Monterey Bay Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan and Draft Public Participation Plan

COMMISSION BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

7. Accepted Status Report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) Revenues
8. Approved Staff Recommendation to Distribute a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Independent Fiscal Auditors
9. Accepted FY 2007-2008 SCCRTC Semi-Annual Financial Statements
10. Approved Staff Recommendation on Proposition 1B Transit Security Funds for Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (Resolution 20-08)

ADMINISTRATION

11. Accepted Staff Recommendation Regarding Bicycle Committee Membership Re-appointments

COMMITTEE MINUTES

12. Accepted Draft Minutes of the March 12, 2008 Joint Safe on 17 and Traffic Operation Systems Oversight Committee Meeting
13. Accepted Draft Minutes of the March 17, 2008 Rail Acquisition Committee Meeting

INFORMATION/OTHER

14. Accepted Monthly Meeting Schedule
15. Accepted Correspondence Log
16. Accepted Letters from SCCRTC Committees and Staff to Other Agencies
 - a. Letter to the City of Watsonville Community Development Department Regarding Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration for the Proposed Santa Cruz Medical Foundation Expansion Project.
 - b. Letter Regarding 3rd District Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee request for member nomination
 - c. Letter Regarding 4th District Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee request for member nomination
17. Accepted Miscellaneous Written Comments from the Public on SCCRTC Projects and Transportation Issues
18. Accepted Information Items
 - a. Article: Public Transportation's Contribution to U.S Greenhouse Gas Reduction by Jonathan Lash, Director of the World Resources Institute
 - b. Articles: Debunking Portland: The Public Transit Myth by Randal O'Toole of the Cato Institute

SERVING AS THE SERVICE AUTHORITY FOR FREEWAY EMERGENCIES (SAFE)

REGULAR AGENDA

19. Commissioner Reports - None
20. Director's Report - Oral Report

Executive Director George Dondero said that the speaking tour that he and Senior Planner, Kim Shultz are conducting is continuing and that there are presentations scheduled for the Watsonville Chamber of Commerce and the board of the Aptos Chamber of Commerce. He said that the goal of the presentations is to provide information about the RTC, funding constraints and Highway 1 projects.

Mr. Dondero noted Item 6 on the Consent Agenda and said that the deadline for comments on the plan is April 28th.

21. Caltrans Report

Aileen Loe, Caltrans District 5, distributed a flier regarding District 5. She mentioned the annual litter clean-up day and said that it would be nice if the money spent on clean-up could be put to work in other ways. She noted that the northbound Emeline Street off-ramp will open April 7th and that the Pasatiempo off-ramp will be closed for about two months.

22. Receive Presentation from Santa Cruz County Public Works Department on Transportation Projects in the County

John Presleigh, Santa Cruz County Public Works, gave a PowerPoint presentation illustrating recently completed transportation projects and projects ready to move forward. He emphasized that the gas tax has not been indexed for inflation and that revenues are very constrained. Consequently, county roads are deteriorating and will cost more to fix when funding is finally available than they would if maintenance were not deferred. He said that the county has 600 miles of road which is the equivalent of 1200 lane miles. Mr. Presleigh said that while cities can impose a voter-approved sales tax, the county is not allowed to initiate one for the unincorporated area alone. He said that as of April 2007, the maintenance backlog was at \$100 million.

Commissioners discussed the lack of funding, the role of development impact fees and the fact that the more gas prices increase, the less gas people buy, which, in turn, lessens the revenue from gas taxes.

Commissioner Rivas arrived at 9:46 am.

Commissioner Beautz said that there needs to be a legislative change to allow counties to have sales taxes to fund their infrastructure needs. She urged the Commission to write to the legislature to change the current restrictions.

23. Bicycle Committee and Staff Recommendations Regarding FY07-08 Transportation Development Act (TDA) Funding Requests from Bike to Work and Community Traffic Safety Coalition

Senior Planner Cory Caletti gave the staff report providing background for the Transportation Development Act claims.

Theresia Rogerson, Health Services Agency, gave an overview of the Community Traffic Safety Coalition and the Ride 'n' Stride Program. Ride 'n' Stride provides education to elementary school students about biking and walking to school. Ms. Rogerson provided details about the work plans for the programs which include a bike

traffic school, a share the road campaign, and a pedestrian and bike friendly facilities program.

Responding to concerns raised by Commissioners Rivas and Gonzalez, Ms. Rogerson said that the programs participate heavily in the schools in south county with activities including bicycle helmet fittings, safety skills classes and working with school personnel to educate students about crosswalk safety. She said that she could provide funding details that show the level of support for south county.

Deputy Director Luis Mendez said that there is an opening on the Bicycle Committee for a representative from south county and that it would be beneficial to south county residents to have representation.

Piet Canin, Ecology Action, gave a PowerPoint presentation about the Bike to Work Program. He said that there was a 24% increase in participation in Bike to Work and Bike to School Day in 2007 and that there is good participation in Bike to School activities in Watsonville. He said that there was a 50% increase in beginning cyclists in 2007.

Mr. Canin said that this year Bike Week will be May 10-17. He also announced that May 17th will be Rail and Trail Day, when cyclists can ride the train to Roaring Camp at a discounted price and then ride down Highway 9 in a group with a CHP escort.

Commissioner Johnson asked if programs for middle schools would result in more cycling to school and if bike racks on campus increased ridership. Mr. Canin said that the data shows that elementary and middle school participation is about even and that secure bike facilities definitely improved ridership.

Commissioner Rivas asked Mr. Canin to make a presentation to the Watsonville City Council.

Commissioner Stone moved and Commissioner Coonerty seconded to approve the Bicycle Committee and staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission:

1. Review the attached proposed FY 07-08 work plans and budgets for the County of Santa Cruz Health Services Agency's Community Traffic Safety Coalition (CTSC) and Ride 'n Stride Programs, and for Bike to Work (BTW); and
2. Adopt the attached resolutions approving claims for FY 08/09 funds for the CTSC, Ride 'n Stride and BTW Programs.

Jack Nelson asked to comment on Item 18 and Chair Johnson asked him to proceed with his comment. Mr. Nelson said that transit is part of Portland's identity and that the letter from the Cato Institute "debunking" Portland's transit myth is biased because the Cato Institute was founded with a \$500,000 grant from an heir to an oil fortune and has oil industry sponsors.

The motion (Resolutions 21-08 and 22-08) passed unanimously.

24. Highway 1 HOV & Auxiliary Lanes Status Report

Senior Planner Kim Shultz gave the staff report, saying that Nolte & Associates would give a progress report to the Commission at the May RTC meeting.

Mr. Shultz said that the critical path for the Auxiliary Lanes Project is producing the environmental document. He said that the Highway 1 HOV Lanes Project has worked through about 85% of its issues and noted a field trip taken by senior Caltrans staff, RTC staff and the consultant team that included a review of the configuration of the northbound off-ramp at Soquel Avenue. He also said that the RTC hosted a very productive meeting with project management staff of the California Coastal Commission on March 19th.

25. Review of Items to be Discussed in Closed Session

Deputy Director Luis Mendez said that Commissioners would discuss the Rail Line Acquisition with Kirk Trost participating via telephone.

26. Oral and Written Communications Regarding Closed Session - None

The Commission adjourned into Closed Session at 10:27 am.

CLOSED SESSION

27. 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

The Commission reconvened into Open Session at 10:48 am.

28. Report on Closed Session - None
29. Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Acquisition Project - FY 07-08 Budget and Consultant Contract Amendments

Deputy Director Luis Mendez said that the due diligence work necessary for the acquisition of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line should resume soon and that it is necessary to make amendments to the FY 07-08 Budget and to consultant contracts.

Commissioner Beautz asked why it is necessary to update all work for the Land and Overall appraisal, saying that a partial updated valuation of this work was already agreed with a consulting company, Colliers Pinkard. Mr. Mendez replied that Caltrans is requiring the full updated appraisal.

Ms. Beautz asked if the original appraisal, performed by Arthur Gimmy International at a cost of \$69,500, is available to the public. Mr. Mendez said that it will be available when all the valuation work is completed.

Commissioner Rivas moved and Commissioner Reilly seconded to approve the staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission:

1. Adopt a resolution amending the FY 07-08 Budget and Work Program to shift funds within the Rail/Trail Authority Budget to continue negotiations, complete the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment and complete appraisals for purchase of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line right-of-way (ROW);
2. Adopt a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to amend the agreement with Colliers Pinkard to a maximum amount of \$27,500 to update the Land and Overall appraisal work of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line right-of-way with the most current real estate sales information; and
3. Adopt a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to add \$91,000 to the contract with Geomatrix Consultants to complete the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment.

Commissioner Spence asked about the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funding for the rail line acquisition; whether the Coastal Conservancy would consider a grant rather than a reimbursable loan; and why there was no line item in the budget

for liability insurance. Mr. Mendez said that the \$10 million in STIP funding was programmed by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) several years ago, that it is scheduled to be allocated in FY 2008-09; and that allocations depend on whether cash is available. The RTC secured a \$10 million reimbursable grant from the Coastal Conservancy in case the STIP funds are not available when needed. The Coastal Conservancy usually does not give such large amounts as grants and probably would not because the funding is targeted for acquiring the rail line right-of way and not for building a trail.. Funds for liability insurance are included in the FY 08-09 budget.

Ms. Spence asked that the Commission request some sort of grant from the Coastal Conservancy.

The motion (Resolutions 23-08, 24-08, 25-08) passed unanimously.

30. Next Meetings/Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:03 am.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop, scheduled for Thursday, April 17, 2008 has been cancelled.

The next SCCRTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 1, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. at Capitola City Council Chambers, 420 Capitola Ave., Capitola, CA 95010.

Respectfully submitted,

Gini Pineda, Staff

ATTENDEES

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| John Presleigh | County Public Works |
| Jack Nelson | |
| Piet Canin | Ecology Action |
| Les White | SCMTD |
| Cliff Walters | Sierra Railroad |
| Theresia Rogerson | HAS/CTSC |
| Ken Kannegaard | Cemex |
| Larry Covert | Cemex |
| Gordon Falen | Cemex |