

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

Minutes

Thursday, May 1, 2008

9:00 a.m.

Capitola City Council Chambers
420 Capitola Ave
Capitola CA 95010

1. Roll Call

Members Present:	Jan Beautz	Ellen Pirie
	Dene Bustichi	Ed Porter (Alt.)
	Tony Campos	Antonio Rivas
	Neal Coonerty	Pat Spence
	Randy Johnson	Mark Stone
	Kirby Nicol	Marcela Tavantzis
	Aileen Loe (ex-officio)	Emily Reily
Staff Present:	George Dondero	Yesenia Parra
	Luis Mendez	Kim Shultz
	Gini Pineda	Karena Pushnik
	Rachel Moriconi	Tegan Speiser

2. Oral Communications

Commissioner Stone reported on the California Council of Governments (CalCOG) Regional Issues Forum which he attended recently. He said that a major topic for discussion was regional blueprint planning and that smaller jurisdictions are struggling to find ways to incorporate land use policy with transportation planning. He said that CalCOG took a position on SB375 of "oppose unless amended" as proposed by CSAC and the League of Cities. SB375 deals with greenhouse gas emissions reductions by establishing stronger connections between land use and transportation planning decisions.

Commissioner Nicol welcomed the Commission to Capitola.

Bill Comfort asked that all reports, surveys, plans and other materials regarding the purchase of the rail line be provided to the public at least 60 days before a public hearing on the project.

Commissioner Beautz said that she is also concerned that the public has enough time to review the information and recommended that information be made public 60 days prior to any hearing.

Jack Nelson said that sometimes politicians don't connect with scientific conclusions regarding global warming and that climate change can reach a tipping point and then begin to develop very quickly.

Peter Scott, Campaign for sensible Transportation, said that there will be a forum on transportation and land use on 5/22 at the Live Oak Grange and invited Commissioners and staff to attend.

3. Additions or Deletions to Consent and Regular Agendas

Executive Director George Dondero said that there were handouts for Item 19 and a PowerPoint printout for Item 23. He corrected the title for Item 8 by removing the words "and Amend RTC FY07/08 Budget and to Reflect Updated TDA Revenue Projections."

CONSENT AGENDA (Pirie/Beautz)

4. Approved Minutes of the April 3, 2008 Regular SCCRTC Meeting (Commission Alternate Porter abstained.)

POLICY

No Consent Items

PROJECTS and PLANNING

5. Accepted Quarterly RTC Work Program Update

6. Accepted Update on the 2008 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

7. Approved Staff Recommendation to Submit AB2766 Grant Applications to the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (Resolution 26-08)

COMMISSION BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

8. Accepted Status Report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) Revenues

ADMINISTRATION

9. Accepted Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&D TAC) and Staff Recommendations Regarding Appointment to the E&D TAC.

COMMITTEE MINUTES

10. Accepted Draft Minutes of the March 10 and April 14, 2008 Bicycle Committee Meetings

11. Accepted Draft Minutes of the April 9, 2008 Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting

12. Accepted Draft Minutes of the April 10, 2008 Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee Meeting

INFORMATION/OTHER

13. Accepted Monthly Meeting Schedule
14. Accepted Correspondence Log
15. Accepted Letters from SCCRTC Committees and Staff to Other Agencies
 - a. Letter from the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee Regarding transportation needs to/from the Dragonslayers Program in Aptos
 - b. Letter to the County of Santa Cruz Planning Department Regarding Notice of Preparation of a Negative Declaration for the Proposed Project on the Southwest Corner of Brommer Street and 17th Avenue in Santa Cruz
 - c. Letter of Opposition to The Honorable Jenny Oropeza, Senator, 28th District Regarding SB 1507 (Oropeza) Highway Construction
 - d. Letter from the Bicycle Committee to the City of Santa Cruz Regarding Mission Street Safety Improvements
 - e. Letter to Community Development Department in the City of Watsonville Regarding Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration for the Proposed Jennings Business Park
16. Accepted Miscellaneous Written Comments from the Public on SCCRTC Projects and Transportation Issues
17. Accepted Information Items
 - a. CHP News, April 1, 2008: "Arrive Alive-Don't Drink and Drive"
 - b. Eugene Skoropowski, Managing Director, Capitola Corridor Joint Powers Authority: Transportation Research Board: Workshop 115, January 13, 2008: Measuring & Managing Shared Use-Today's Arrangement: What works
 - c. Open Letter to the Members of the 110th Congress from the Association for Commuter Transportation

SERVING AS THE SERVICE AUTHORITY FOR FREEWAY EMERGENCIES (SAFE)

No Consent Items

REGULAR AGENDA

18. Commissioner Reports – Taken under Oral Communications
19. Director's Report

Executive Director George Dondero announced that Bike Week is May10-17th. He reported that the Speakers Bureau is continuing to make presentations. He said that during an interactive presentation to the Santa Cruz Area Chamber of Commerce some recurring themes were heard including decisions to locate or re-locate businesses in response to increasing congestion. Mr. Dondero said that discussions regarding safety on Mission Street began with a meeting on April 18th convened by Assemblyman John Laird.

20. Caltrans Report

Aileen Loe, Caltrans District 5, said that the written report on highway projects is up to date. Ms. Loe reported that Director Kempton awarded \$260,000 to the AMBAG region for blueprint planning grants and that the California Transportation Commission (CTC) will consider, at its May meeting, an addendum to the 2007 Regional Plan Guidelines to address greenhouse gas and climate change. She added that the CTC will also consider the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) at the May meeting.

Commissioner Stone said that blueprinting, which started as a bottoms up effort, was most successful for regions that adopted the concept and incorporated it into their own planning. He said that the more the state pushes blueprinting from the top down, the more difficult it becomes for regions to implement blueprinting as they know their individual needs best and he cautioned against this approach from the state.

Commissioner Rivas arrived at 9:34 am.

21. SCCRTC Committee Appointments

Commissioner Beautz moved and Commissioner Pirie seconded to approve the staff recommendations to re-appoint Commissioners Beautz, Campos, Rivas, Pirie, Stone and Coonerty to the Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee and Commissioners Beautz, Campos, Stone, Nicol, Pirie, Coonerty and Bustichi to the Rail Acquisition Committee.

The motion carried unanimously.

22. Receive Presentation from the City of Capitola by Steve Jesberg, Director of Public Works

City of Capitola Public Works Director Steve Jesberg gave a PowerPoint presentation of planned transportation projects within the City of Capitola. Among the projects that he listed were an overpass lane addition on 41st Avenue which will add a third southbound lane; sidewalks on Bay Avenue; plans for traffic calming on Capitola Road and Clares Street; and reconstruction of a section of 38th Avenue. Mr. Jesberg said that Capitola intends to expand the summer shuttle service to include 41st Avenue and the Clares Street area. He said that the shuttle, which would operate every 15 minutes, is free to the public on weekends and holidays from Memorial Day to mid September

Commissioner Tavantzis asked where the right-of-way for the proposed southbound lane on 41st would come from. Mr. Jesberg said that the existing median would be reduced.

23. Highway 1 Projects Progress Report

Chris Metzger, Nolte Associates, presented a PowerPoint updating the Commission on the status of the Soquel to Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes and the Highway 1 HOV Lanes Projects.

Regarding the Soquel to Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes Project, Mr. Metzger said that the updated project report was re-submitted to Caltrans in April for review and that the administrative draft environmental document was also re-submitted. He said that a

proposed open house and public hearing is planned for September. He reviewed the current schedule and said that he anticipates construction in winter/spring 2010.

Commissioner Pirie asked how long after the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes Project is finished would the Auxiliary Lanes Project construction begin. Mr. Metzger said that if both projects continue on schedule, that there would be about a one-year gap between the completion of the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes project and the beginning of construction for the Auxiliary Lanes Project.

Mr. Metzger continued with his report on the Highway 1 HOV Lanes Project. He said that the environmental document will be submitted to Caltrans for review in May 2008 and to the Federal Highway Administration this summer. Mr. Metzger explained the methods currently being used to address global warming and greenhouse gas emissions in the environmental document and the requirements of the California Coastal Commission (CCC). He said that the CCC staff recognized the mobility advantages of the HOV alternative. Other engineering issues included median widths, the Soquel Avenue interchange, storm water runoff and the 41st Avenue/Porter Street Configuration. Mr. Metzger reviewed the project schedule.

Commissioners discussed the Environmental Protection Act, water quality controls, entrance to the freeway at 41st Avenue, locations of park and ride lots and the configuration of the Bay/Porter interchange. It was noted that turn pockets would provide a smaller footprint than loop ramps at the interchange.

When discussing the timeline for construction completion, Ms. Loe said a funding plan needs to be in place before FHWA will approve the environmental document.

24. Federal Legislative Update - Oral Presentation by Carolyn Chaney, RTC's Federal Assistant

Commissioner Reilly replaced Commission Alternate Porter at 10:20 am.

Senior Planner Rachel Moriconi introduced RTC Federal Legislative Assistant Carolyn Chaney. She said that staff works with Ms. Chaney on tracking legislative bills that originate in Washington and with securing federal earmarks. Ms. Moriconi also requested that Commissioners provide comments on the draft principles proposed by the California Consensus Group.

Ms. Chaney outlined current federal funding challenges as well as those that lay ahead for transportation projects and programs. She highlighted tracking efforts with the reauthorization of the federal transportation bill (SAFETEA-LU); the status of the Highway Trust Fund; proposals to suspend the federal gas tax; annual federal budget and appropriations; AMTRAK funding; climate change legislation and actions; and other issues identified in the RTC's 2008 Federal Legislative Agenda. She urged the RTC to send a letter to federal legislators opposing a suspension in federal gas taxes over the summer months due to the estimated impact to the State of California of almost \$665 million in revenues and the elimination of 20,000 jobs statewide.

Ms. Chaney reported that funding decisions will likely be postponed until after the presidential election. She stated that earmarks will probably continue and that the RTC's request for \$2.25 million for the Pajaro Station is among the FY09 requests.

Ms. Chaney described proposals in the Federal Aviation bill to shift funds from the General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund, but said that that the administration would likely oppose it. She said that the bill also proposes a tax credit to holders of qualified state-issued bonds for intercity passenger rail. She suggested that the RTC send a letter supporting these provisions of the aviation bill.

Ms. Chaney said that Congressman Farr will be involved in the transportation reauthorization bill and will testify before Congress and has asked for input from the Commission regarding his testimony.

She also said that there is talk of an infrastructure stimulus package that would apply to projects that are ready to go. This package may be run through state programs and would create jobs.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Beautz regarding the HOV Lanes project, Executive Director Dondero said that since the government is looking for projects that are ready to go, the environmental clearance must be complete. He added that since there wouldn't be enough money to fund the entire project, parts of the project that are ready could be broken out if this funding does materialize.

Commissioner Stone cautioned that the new authorization is programmatic and that the more that the transit agencies and highway agencies allocate the funds, the more difficult it may be for small regions to get a fair share of the funding.

25. Amendments to the FY07-08 and FY08-09 Budgets and Work Programs to Accommodate Transportation Development Act (TDA) Revenue Shortfalls

Deputy Director Luis Mendez gave the staff report. He said that because Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues are not keeping up with estimates, staff obtained new estimates from the Auditor/Controller's office. The Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee discussed options for addressing the lower revenues in both FY 07-08 and FY 08-09 and made the recommendations shown in the staff report.

Les White, SCMTD, said that in addition to the lower TDA allocation from the RTC, their dedicated sales tax is generating less revenue than estimated, and SCMTD's ParaCruz service will have to add rides to dialysis centers for which MediCal will no longer provide funds. However, SCMTD does not anticipate service cuts at this time. He said that in FY 2010 the Metro will have to extract about \$1.8million out of reserves to avoid service cuts.

Commissioner Pirie moved and Commissioner Nicol seconded to approve the Budget and Administration/Personnel (B&A/P) Committee and staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC):

1. Adopt a resolution amending the FY 07-08 Budget and Work Program to

reduce the TDA revenue estimate and allocations and incorporate the reduced allocation to the RTC into the RTC's operating budget;

2. Adopt a resolution amending the FY 08-09 Budget and Work Program to reduce the TDA revenue estimate and allocations;
3. Direct staff to return to a special meeting of the B&A/P Committee on May 22, 2008 with recommendations for incorporating the reduced FY 08-09 TDA allocation to the RTC into the RTC's operating budget.

The motion (Resolutions 27-08 and 28-08) was approved unanimously.

25. Review of Items to be Discussed in Closed Session – N/A
26. Oral and Written Communications Regarding Closed Session – N/A

CLOSED SESSION – Removed from Agenda

27. Conference with Real Property Negotiator Pursuant to Government Code 54956.8 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

28. Report on Closed Session – N/A
29. Next Meetings/Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:06 am.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop is scheduled for Thursday, May 15, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. at the SCCRTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA.

The next SCCRTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 5, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. at Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisor Chambers, 701 Ocean St., Santa Cruz, CA

Respectfully submitted,

Gini Pineda, Staff

ATTENDEES

Mark Griffin
Bill Comfort
Peter Scott
Marc Adato
Les White
Cliff Walters
Chris Metzger
Jennifer Calate

AMBAG

CFST
Ecology Action
SCMTD
Sierra Railroad
Nolte
Caltrans