

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

DRAFT MINUTES

Thursday
September 4, 2008
9:00 a.m.

Board of Supervisors Chambers
701 Ocean Street, 5th Floor
Santa Cruz, CA

1. Roll Call

Members Present:

Jan Beautz	Randy Johnson
Bob Begun	Emily Reilly
Dene Bustichi	Dale Skillicorn
Tony Campos	Pat Spence
Neal Coonerty	Mark Stone
David Murray (ex officio)	

Members Absent:

Ellen Pirie	Antonio Rivas
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Staff Present:

George Dondero	Karena Pushnik
Luis Mendez	Rachel Moriconi
Yesenia Parra	Kim Shultz
Gini Pineda	

2. Oral Communications

Jack Nelson referred to a letter he wrote with attached articles included in Item 16 and asked the Commission to consider that climate change is happening faster than anticipated when making policy decisions.

3. Additions or Deletions to Consent and Regular Agendas

Executive Director George Dondero said that there was an add-on page for Item 19, a handout of the slide presentation for Item 21 and two sets of add-on pages for Item 22. He also noted that postcards of artwork by Sally Matheson illustrating the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes Project were given to the Commissioners.

CONSENT AGENDA (Skillicorn/Beautz)

4. Approved Minutes of the August 7, 2008 Regular SCCRTC Meeting
5. Approved Minutes of the August 21, 2008 Transportation Policy Workshop Meeting

POLICY

No Consent Items

PROJECTS and PLANNING

No Consent Items

COMMISSION BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

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

ADMINISTRATION

7. Approved Payment of Social Security Funds and Accrued Interest to Employees Opting into Social Security and Departing Employees
8. Approved Community of RTC Employees (CORE) Long Term Disability Plan Option (Resolution 02-09)

COMMITTEE MINUTES

9. Accepted Draft Minutes of the August 11, 2008 Bicycle Committee Meeting
10. Accepted Draft Minutes of the August 12, 2008 Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting

INFORMATION/OTHER

11. Accepted Lift Line Operations Status Report
12. Accepted Volunteer Center of Santa Cruz County Transportation Program 4th Quarter and Year End Final Report
13. Accepted Monthly Meeting Schedule
14. Accepted Correspondence Log
15. Accepted Letters from SCCRTC Committees and Staff to Other Agencies

- a. Letter to the City of Santa Cruz Regarding Accessibility of Parking Lot #5 from John Daugherty, Chair of the Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee
 - b. Letter to the Board of Directors of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) Regarding METRO Request for Input on Senior/Disabled Buss Pass Policy from John Daugherty, Chair of the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee
 - c. Letter to Mark Dettle, Director, City of Santa Cruz, Department of Public Works Regarding King Street Bicycle Facilities
 - d. Letter to Chris Schneiter, Assistant Director, City of Santa Cruz, Department of Public Works Regarding San Lorenzo River Walkway Repair
 - e. Letter to RTC Chair, Tony Campos Regarding Rail Acquisition from Daniel Kostelec, Chair of the RTC Bicycle Committee
 - f. Letter to the City of Santa Cruz, Mayor Ryan Coonerty Regarding Tour of California
 - g. Letter to Jack Sohriakoff, County of Santa Cruz Public Works Department from Daniel Kostelec, Chair of Bicycle Committee
16. Accepted Miscellaneous Written Comments from the Public on SCCRTC Projects and Transportation Issues
 17. Accepted Information Items
 - a. Article: Gas Prices Remind Us: We must bring BART to Valley: by Paul Locatelli, San Jose Mercury News, August 3, 2008
 - b. Article: Carmel Chamber Endorses Transportation Investment Plan: Central Coast Reporter, August 2008

SERVING AS THE SERVICE AUTHORITY FOR FREEWAY EMERGENCIES (SAFE)

REGULAR AGENDA

18. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Beautz presented a certificate of appreciation to Bob Pesce for his service on the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E&D TAC). Mr. Pesce had been on the Committee since 1989 and was a great representative with good ideas and dedication to public service.

Mr. Pesce said that transportation issues for disabled people are challenging and that it is important to make life as easy as possible for an aging population.

John Daugherty, Chair of the E&D TAC, thanked Mr. Pesce, saying that he kept members on point during meetings and had an aptitude for details.

19. Director's Report

Executive Director George Dondero introduced Sally Matheson, the local artist who painted a series of watercolors of the construction of the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes project. Ms. Matheson said that the workers needed recognition and that the project was well run. Her work will be on exhibit at the Dead Cow Gallery on River Street from September 5-30, 2008.

Mr. Dondero noted two grants awarded to the RTC by the Air District. He also said that there will be two guest speakers from the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments at the November RTC meeting to speak about their experience with the regional blueprint planning process. He commented on staff efforts to improve outreach to the community by way of the Speakers Bureau presentations, the recently created Public Relations Team and the joint public outreach effort in conjunction with the SCMTD. He added that a consulting team has been selected to upgrade the SCCRTC website which will provide even better service to the community.

20. Caltrans Report

Dave Murray, Caltrans District 5, said that Highway 129 will be closed for up to 12 hours to remove a crane that fell down the side of the slope during improvements to the highway.

21. Highway 1 Projects- Progress Report

Chris Metzger, Nolte Associates gave an update on the HOV Lanes Project reviewing the status of the Environmental Document, the engineering alternatives, planned public outreach and the project timeline.

Parag Mehta reviewed progress on the Auxiliary Lanes Project reporting on the environmental process, public outreach, design elements and project timeline.

Commissioners discussed current estimated costs and the time period for the environmental review for both projects.

Jack Nelson said that sustainable design elements should be included in the projects.

22. State Legislative and State Budget Update

Senior Planner Rachel Moriconi noted that the state budget has not been adopted and that the RTC has repeatedly opposed diverting transportation funds to the state general fund. She referred to a list of projects that could be affected if Proposition 42 is suspended in order to backfill the general fund. In the event that Proposition 42 funds are diverted, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) will reprogram the 2008 State Transportation Improvement Program

(STIP), which will cause delay or deprogramming of projects programmed in the STIP. Since Santa Cruz only received 32% of its share of 2008 STIP funds, staff will advocate that any delays or deprogramming come from regions programmed to receive more than their fair share of funds.

Ms. Moriconi added that the CTC decided not to reevaluate the Public Transportation Account (PTA) funds because a significant change in available PTA funds is not expected for FY 08-09. RTC staff is advocating that the AB 3090 reimbursement for the Metrobase project be allocated. Ms. Moriconi handed out an updated matrix showing bills that were sent to the Governor for his signature. SB 375 (Steinberg), which mandates that land use planning be incorporated into transportation planning, still has ambiguous language, and amendments are planned for the next legislative session. Ms. Moriconi added that AMBAG has received a blueprint grant to prepare a plan for our region and that it will include components of a preferred growth plan.

Executive Director Dondero emphasized the need for a local revenue stream to fund transportation projects and to decrease reliance on the shrinking state and federal funding.

Commissioners discussed the effect of the reductions on specific projects.

Commissioner Stone, referring to the letter from CalCOG to Senator Steinberg, said that it is best to be at the table when it comes time to implement this bill, rather than be excluded from future discussions.

- 23. Review of Items to be Discussed in Closed Session – N/A
- 24. Oral and Written Communications Regarding Closed Session – N/A

CLOSED SESSION – Removed from Agenda

- 25. 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

- 26. Report on Closed Session – N/A
- 27. Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Acquisition –Freight Railroad Consulting Services and Coastal Conservancy Reimbursable Grant

Commissioner Campos said to inform staff if Commissioners would like more information regarding the Coastal Conservancy reimbursable grant.

Deputy Director Luis Mendez presented the staff report recommending approval to enter into agreements with the selected freight railroad services consultants and to carry over corresponding funds from the FY 07-08 budget to the FY 08-09 budget. The consulting services are to be provided at an hourly rate plus reimbursable costs with a maximum expenditure of \$25,000 for each consultant. Mr. Mendez briefly reviewed the Coastal Conservancy reimbursable grant information included in the staff report.

Commissioners asked if increasing freight shipments would require an additional EIR, whether a new business plan would be necessary, and if the amount of the contracts is within budget. Mr. Mendez said that a new EIR would not be necessary and that since the previous business plan was developed in 2004, a new plan would be more comprehensive. He assured Commissioners that the recommended cap for the consulting services is within budget.

Commissioner Stone moved and Commission Alternate Skillicorn seconded to approve the staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) approve a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to enter into agreements with Renaissance Rail Group and Egan Consulting Group for freight railroad consulting services and carrying over funds from the fiscal year (FY) 07-08 budget to the FY 08-09 budget for this work.

The motion (Resolution 03-09) passed unanimously.

Commissioner Spence asked questions regarding payback of the Coastal Conservancy reimbursable grant. Deputy Director Mendez explained the possible payback scenarios involving STIP funds, RSTP exchange funds, the reimbursable grant and AB 3090 reimbursement.

Executive Director Dondero added that at this time these questions are speculative until the state passes a budget and until the Commission has decided whether to buy the rail line and whether to use the Coastal Conservancy reimbursable grant funds.

28. Next Meetings/Adjournment

Commissioner Campos asked if the locations for the October and November RTC meetings could be switched. Staff will investigate the possibility of switching the locations and inform the Commissioners.

The meeting adjourned at 10:29 am.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 18, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. at the SCCRTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA.

The next SCCRTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 2, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. at the Board of Supervisors Chambers, 701 Ocean St, Santa Cruz, CA.

Respectfully submitted,

Gini Pineda, Staff

ATTENDEES

John Daugherty	E&D TAC
Robert and Donna Pesce	E&D TAC
Chris Metzger	Nolte
Parag Mehta	Nolte
Les White	SCMTD
Jack Nelson	
Cliff Walters	Sierra Railroad
John Presleigh	County DPW
Sally Matheson	