



Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

MINUTES

Thursday
April 2, 2009
9:00 a.m.

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

1. Roll call

The meeting was called to order at 9:08 am.

Members Present:

Dene Bustichi	Kirby Nicol
Gustavo Gonzalez (Alt.)	Michelle Hinkle (Alt.)
Neal Coonerty	Antonio Rivas
Randy Johnson	Marcela Tavantzis
Don Lane	Donna Ziel (Alt.)
John Leopold	Aileen Loe (ex officio)

Member Absent:

Ellen Pirie

Staff Present:

George Dondero	Gini Pineda
Luis Mendez	Yesenia Parra
Rachel Moriconi	Kim Shultz
Cory Caletti	

Chair Johnson directed all to the revised agenda and indicated that Item 10 was moved from the Consent to the Regular Agenda.

2. Oral communications

Jack Nelson expressed concern about a letter from the SCCRTC to the California Office of Planning and Research (OPR) that, in his opinion, calls for relaxing CEQA standards at the project level.

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas

Executive Director George Dondero noted a handout for Item 24 (Director's Report) and the amended agenda.

Commissioner Coonerty asked that staff submit a report on the implementation of Advanced Enrollment for Voluntary Time Off with Accrual (AVTO) at the January 2010 RTC meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA (Coonerty/Lane approved unanimously as amended)

MINUTES

4. Approved draft minutes of the March 5, 2009 regular SCCRTC meeting
5. Accepted draft minutes of the March 9, 2009 Bicycle Committee meeting
6. Accepted draft minutes of the March 12, 2009 Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee meeting
7. Accepted draft minutes of the March 5, 2009 Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies meeting
8. Accepted draft minutes of the February 18, 2009 Joint meeting of the Santa Cruz County Traffic Operations (TOS) oversight committee and Safe on 17 Task Force

POLICY ITEMS

No consent items

PROJECTS and PLANNING ITEMS

9. Accepted Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee and staff recommendation regarding State Transportation Improvement Program Funds for planning, programming and monitoring (PPM)
10. **THIS ITEM MOVED TO REGULAR AGENDA**-Approve Bicycle Committee and staff recommendations regarding FY09-10 Transportation Development Act (TDA) funding requests from the Community Traffic Safety Coalition, the Ride 'n Stride Programs, and the Bike to Work Program (Resolution)

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE ITEMS

11. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues
12. Accepted FY07-08 audited financial statements (enclosed separately for commissioners)
13. Accepted FY2007-08 Fiscal Audit (enclosed separately for commissioners)

14. Approved Regional Surface Transportation Exchange Program (RSTPX) funds for the Highway 1 Soquel-Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes project and amend the FY08/09 Budget (Resolution 28-09)

ADMINISTRATION ITEMS

15. Accepted staff recommendation regarding Bicycle Committee Membership appointments
16. Accepted staff recommendation for the reappointment of delegate and representative to the California Association of Councils of Governments (CalCOG) and the Coast Rail Coordinating Council (CRCC)
17. Accepted Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee and staff recommendation regarding implementation of Voluntary Time Off Without Pay

INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS

18. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
19. Accepted correspondence log
20. Accepted letters from SCCRTC committees and staff to other agencies
 - a. Letter to John Presleigh, Assistant Public Works Director, County of Santa Cruz Public Works Department regarding support for bicycle route signage program from Daniel Kostelec, Chair of RTC Bicycle Committee
 - b. Letter to Chairman Douglas Bosco, California State Coastal Conservancy regarding support for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network from Daniel Kostelec, RTC Bicycle Committee Chair
 - c. Letter to Senator Loni Hancock, Senate 9th District regarding notice of support and request to amend SB205 - *Traffic Congestion: Motor Vehicle Registration Fees*
 - d. Letter to Assembly member Jared Huffman regarding support for ACA 9 – *Local government bonds: special taxes: voter approval*
21. Accepted miscellaneous written comments from the public on SCCRTC projects and transportation issues
22. Accepted information items
 - a. Informational flyer for the Elderly and Disabled Transit Program FTA section 5310 FY2009 application workshop schedule

- b. Article: Everybody's Business: Gas tax? Don't bet on it by Jeffrey R. Scharf
- c. Letter from Senator S. Joseph Simitian announcing the winner of the "Oughta be a law" contest winners.

REGULAR AGENDA

23. Commissioner reports-oral reports

Commissioner Rivas extended an invitation to a celebration of the late Dale Skillicorn's life at 6:00 pm at the Watsonville Community room.

Commissioner Johnson said that Mr. Skillicorn possessed a great love for the Pajaro Valley and for public service and expressed sympathy to the Skillicorn family on behalf of the Commission. He said that Dale would be sorely missed.

24. Director's report – oral report

Executive Director George Dondero reported on his presentation at a hearing at the state Assembly Committees on Local Government and Housing and Community Development titled "How Cities, Counties and COGs are using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Funds for Local Projects." Projects receiving funds in Santa Cruz County were described to the Committees and it was emphasized that there is a \$250M backlog of local road repair work waiting for funding and a \$2B shortfall for all transportation needs in the county over the next 20 years.

Mr. Dondero said that the Safe on 17 10-Year Anniversary Event is scheduled for April 6 at 9:30 am. Participants will gather at the Roadhouse restaurant on the southbound side of the Summit.

Director Dondero also reviewed some new transportation related bills being introduced at the state level and said that he would be attending the annual CalCOG Regional Issues Forum to be held April 29-May 1 in Monterey.

25. Caltrans report and consider action items

Aileen Loe, Caltrans District 5, said that District Director Rich Krumholz will be attending the Safe on 17 Anniversary Event. Ms. Loe said that staff is busy working to facilitate stimulus funding and that the state sold \$6.5B in general obligation bonds signaling a glimmer of hope amidst economic woes. She referred to a letter in the packet regarding the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes project landscaping saying that the needs for water will decline over time and that it will take approximately three years to get the plants established.

Responding to questions from Commissioners, Ms. Loe said that the landscaping project faces both water supply challenges due to the drought and funding challenges due to the State's financial problems, reiterated Caltrans' strong commitment to deliver the landscaping project and stated that federal stimulus are helping to fund a severely underfunded State Highway Operations and Protection (SHOPP) program. Director Dondero added that thanks to the efforts of Caltrans Director Will Kempton, a lot of the federal stimulus funds are going directly to the local agencies and not to the State's SHOPP program.

26. Approve Bicycle Committee and staff recommendations regarding FY09-10 Transportation Development Act (TDA) funding requests from the Community Traffic Safety Coalition, the Ride 'n Stride Programs, and the Bike to Work Program (Resolution)

Senior Planner Cory Caletti said that the annual TDA claim before the Commission represents a 2.49% reduction in allocation requests because of reduced TDA revenues. Ms. Caletti introduced representatives from the three programs.

Teresa Rogerson from the Community Traffic Safety Coalition gave an overview of the program highlighting bike traffic school, the Share the Road campaign, Safe Routes to School, motorist education and mobility education.

Commissioners discussed which schools participated in these programs and recommended some methods for increasing participation.

Katie LeBaron, Health Services Agency, expressed appreciation to the RTC for its continued support of these programs and described the Ride 'n Stride Program, saying it focuses on elementary students and promotes safe modes of alternative transportation.

Commissioners discussed concerns with helmet law enforcement in the southern part of the county and outreach to some local schools. One commissioner suggested a small grant to help purchase helmets for children throughout the county.

Piet Canin, Bike to Work, gave a PowerPoint presentation saying that benefits to biking include a healthy lifestyle, lower transportation costs and greenhouse gas reduction.

Commissioners discussed areas and schools that need increased or continued outreach and commissioners offered their assistance to increase participation.

Chuck Huddleston recommended advocating for a law requiring bicycle helmets for adults as well as children.

Commissioner Leopold moved and Commission Alternate Gonzalez seconded to approve the Bicycle Committee and staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission:

1. Review the proposed FY 09-10 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 resolutions approving claims for FY 09/10 funds for the CTSC, Ride 'n Stride and BTW Programs.

The motion (Resolutions 29-09, 30-09) passed unanimously.

27. Programming Process for Additional Economic Stimulus and Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) Funds

Senior Planner Rachel Moriconi presented the staff report saying that provisions of the federal economic stimulus plan require that ½ of the funds be used within 120 days. She said that the final bill guarantees approximately \$12.1 million for Santa Cruz County which is \$5.6 million over what was previously programmed by the Regional Transportation Commission. Ms. Moriconi said that staff recommends a call for projects and to initiate the process to select projects to receive the additional \$5.6 million in stimulus funds. Ms. Moriconi added that this process should combine selecting projects eligible to be programmed to receive \$5.8 million in Regional Surface Transportation Program funds. She also said that the deadline for project sponsors to submit proposals is extended to May 5, 2009.

Commissioners discussed whether the landscaping for the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes project would be a good candidate to receive stimulus funds. Replying to a question from Commissioner Coonerty, Mark Dettle, City of Santa Cruz Public Works, said that the City of Santa Cruz would prefer to hold off on the landscaping until the fall due to drought concerns.

Commissioner Leopold asked the Commission to sponsor a bike signage project. Ms. Moriconi said that the Commission can evaluate that project along with other nominations in June. Executive Director George Dondero said that since there is direction from the Commission, staff will add it to the list of nominations. Ms. Moriconi said that the draft list of proposed projects will be presented for review at the May Transportation Policy Workshop (TPW) meeting.

Chuck Huddleston asked the Commission to not cut back on transit saying that transit is the future.

Commissioner Bustichi noted that the purpose of these funds is economic stimulus and recommended applying this criterion to choose projects.

Commissioner Rivas moved and Commissioner Lane seconded to approve the staff recommendations that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC):

1. Approve a process for programming additional funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and FY09/10-10/11 Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funds; and
2. Issue a call for projects for \$5.6 million in ARRA and \$5.5 million in RSTP funds.

with the deadline for project submissions extended to 5/5/09.

The motion passed unanimously.

28. Review of items to be discussed in closed session

The Commission adjourned into closed session at 10:55 am.

CLOSED SESSION

29. 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

30. Report on closed session

The Commission reconvened to open session at 11:22 am. There was no report on the closed session.

31. Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Acquisition Project – Status Report & Timeline

Deputy Director Luis Mendez presented the staff report and provided updates on the status of the Phase II Environmental Site Assessment, track and roadbed inspection, lease investigation, business and management plan, appraisals and the title report.

Commissioner Bustichi requested that a future agenda include a discussion on changing the 30-day review period to a 60-day review period when information is released to the public.

Chuck Huddleston encouraged the Commission to buy the right of way.

Responding to a question from **Jack Nelson**, Mr. Mendez said that Proposition 116 funds must be allocated by end of June 2010.

32. Adjourn to special meeting of the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies

a. No agenda items this month

33. Next Meetings

The meeting adjourned at 11:28 am.

The next Transportation Policy Workshop meeting scheduled for Thursday, April 16, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. at the SCCRTC office, 1523 Pacific Ave, Santa Cruz, CA **HAS BEEN CANCELLED.**

The next SCCRTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 7 at 9:00 a.m. at the Capitola City Council Chambers, 420 Capitola Ave, Capitola, CA

Respectfully submitted,

Gini Pineda, Staff

ATTENDEES

Piet Canin
David Wright
Patrick Mulhearn
Cliff Walters
Chuck Huddleston
Jack Nelson
Les White
Katie LeBaron
Teresia Rogerson
Peter Scott
Mark Dettle
John Presleigh
Bill Comfort
Ramona Turner
Jennifer Calate

Ecology Action
Friends of the Rail Trail
Assemblymember Monning
Sierra Railroad

SCMTD
HSA
HAS/CTSC
CFST
City of Santa Cruz
County of Santa Cruz

Sentinel
Caltrans