



## Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

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### Minutes

**Thursday, December 4, 2014  
9:00 a.m.**

**Santa Cruz County Council Chambers  
701 Ocean St.  
Santa Cruz, CA**

1. Roll call

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m.

Members present:

|                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Tim Gubbins (ex-officio) | Don Lane          |
| Dennis Norton            | Eduardo Montesino |
| Greg Caput               | Neal Coonerty     |
| Zach Friend              | Bruce McPherson   |
| Daniel Dodge             | Lynn Robinson     |
| Randy Johnson            | Dene Bustichi     |
| John Leopold             |                   |

Staff present:

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| George Dondero  | Luis Mendez     |
| Grace Blakeslee | Yesenia Parra   |
| Rachel Moriconi | Ginger Dykaar   |
| Karena Pushnick | Maggie Bardacke |
| Amy Naranjo     |                 |

2. Oral communications

**Jack Nelson**, resident of Santa Cruz County, relayed that an article from the December issue of Scientific American magazine discussed how the polar jet stream is heating the arctic at a faster pace than the rest of the planet. He stated that the Citizens' Climate Lobby, endorses raising the price of gasoline to reflect the true cost of fossil fuels. The goal being to encourage creative approaches to move around without a vehicle in order to reduce the demand to widen Highway 1 and save money by lessening the cost of highway maintenance.

3. Additions or deletions to consent and regular agendas

A handout for Item 18 was distributed.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Commissioner Leopold moved and Commissioner Robinson seconded the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously, with Commissioners Lane, Leopold, Robinson, McPherson, Montesino, Caput, Coonerty, Friend, Dodge, Bustichi, Norton, and Johnson voting "aye."

### **MINUTES**

4. Approved draft minutes of the November 6, 2014 Regional Transportation Commission meeting
5. Approved draft minutes of the November 6, 2014 Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE) meeting
6. Accept draft minutes of the November 13, 2014 Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee meeting

### **POLICY ITEMS**

*No consent items*

### **PROJECTS and PLANNING ITEMS**

*No consent items*

### **BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES ITEMS**

7. Accepted status report on Transportation Development Act (TDA) revenues

### **ADMINISTRATION ITEMS**

8. Approved contract for RTC office lease

### **INFORMATION/OTHER ITEMS**

9. Accepted monthly meeting schedule
10. Accepted correspondence log
11. Accepted letters from RTC committees and staff to other agencies - *none*

12. Accepted miscellaneous written comments from the public on RTC projects and transportation issues
13. Accepted information items
  - a. Letter from California Legislature to express concern regarding the proposal from the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) and Air Resources Board (ARB) to identify "disadvantages communities" and the benefits allocated to these communities from Cap and Trade program revenues
  - b. Letter from the California Intercity Passenger Rail (CIPR) Leadership Coalition regarding the draft guidelines for the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Program

### **REGULAR AGENDA**

14. Commissioner reports– oral reports- *none*
15. Director's report – oral report

Executive Director George Dondero updated the Commission on the Passenger Rail Service Study. He noted that the project is ongoing and the consultants are still analyzing data in coordination with RTC staff. Staff work is underway and further details will be brought to the January or February meeting. He noted that the RTC is currently being audited by Caltrans to determine the overhead charges on grants awarded to the RTC. A report of the results is expected late March to early April. He also recommended the Commission view an online video titled "Just Your Average Sidewalk" (Agenda Item 15a).

16. Appoint 2015 RTC Chair and Vice Chair

*Commissioner Dodge arrived*

Commissioner Montesino appointed John Leopold as Chair and Commissioner Don Lane as Vice Chair. Commissioner Montesino moved and Commissioner Dodge seconded a motion to approve the appointments. The motion passed unanimously, with Commissioners Lane, Robinson, McPherson, Montesino, Caput, Coonerty, Friend, Dodge, Leopold, Norton, Johnson, Bustichi voting "aye."

*Commissioner Leopold continued the meeting as Chair*

17. Caltrans report and consider action items

Tim Gubbins, Caltrans, presented his District Director's report. He reminded everyone to drive carefully in rainy weather; reported that the Highway 152

pavement overlay project was postponed due to weather; gave an update on the crosswalks and parking on Highway 9 in Boulder Creek; said that pavement work at the rail crossing on Highway 129 is funded by Iowa Pacific and should begin shortly; and announced that Steve Price, Caltrans District 5 Deputy Director of Maintenance and Operations, is retiring after working 23 years with the district.

Commissioners discussed how to reduce drivers' speed on state highways; appreciation of Caltrans for the work done on the Highway 9 corridor, projects in South County, for providing tips for driving in rainy weather, and waiving fees for a street parade in Watsonville.

18. Project Updates from County of Santa Cruz Public Works – oral presentation

Steve Wiesner, Assistant Director of Public Works, gave a presentation on projects funded by the RTC in unincorporated areas of the County including Nelson Road, Seacliff State Park, Aptos Village, Twin Lakes, Casserly Bridge, Smith Road, Highway 17, East Cliff Drive, and Freedom Boulevard. He suggested that Commissioners and the public view a 60 Minutes episode on gas taxes and said that the County is looking at local taxes that could provide more funding to support work to improve local roads. He thanked his staff, Public Works Director John Presleigh, and expressed appreciation for RTC Commissioners and staff.

Commissioners discussed the excellent work the County has done through cooperation with schools, jurisdictions, and the State; expressed appreciation for the maintenance projects that have been completed and all the county is doing with the little funding available; and the completion of the County's first green bike lane in Soquel.

19. Mural for Railroad Bridge Abutment in Capitola

Deputy Director Luis Mendez presented the staff report.

After brief discussion, Commissioner Bustichi moved and Commissioner Robinson seconded the staff recommendation to approve the painting of a mural on the western abutment wall of the railroad bridge over Wharf Road in Capitola depicting beach goers traveling to Capitola Village surrounded by begonia flowers. The motion passed unanimously, with Commissioners Lane, Robinson, McPherson, Montesino, Caput, Coonerty, Friend, Dodge, Leopold, Norton, Johnson, Bustichi voting "aye."

20. Unified Corridors Plan (UCP)

Senior Transportation Planner Grace Blakeslee presented the staff report.

Commissioners discussed the need and cost for consultants to produce county-wide transportation modeling tools; the importance of partnering with Metro;

the importance of considering what is ahead to assure tools will be applicable in future, for example SB 743; the technical knowledge required to create modeling tools and the differences between the expertise of a consultant and RTC staff; and the fact that having good modeling tools is a foundation for good transportation planning.

**Jack Nelson**, County Resident, said that he saw the UCP modeling tool as a way to ask a better question in order to get a better answer; noted that there are other county corridors used by cyclists; that past models were not very good at predicting future travel; and the importance of community input.

**Heather Adamson**, Principal Planner with the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), stated that AMBAG hires consultants to work with staff to build very specialized transportation modeling tools and that it is common for counties to develop sub-regional models as the regional models do not have the sensitivity at the local level. The data from their tools are used when applying for grants and funding as well as SB375 requirements.

Commissioner Norton moved and Commissioner Montesino seconded the staff recommendation to approve a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the County of Santa Cruz for development of countywide transportation modeling tools. The motion passed **(Resolution 9-15)** with Commissioner Lane, McPherson, Friend, Coonerty, Caput, Montesino, Dodge, Robinson, Norton and Leopold voting "aye" and Commissioners Bustichi and Johnson voting "no."

Commissioner Friend departed the meeting.

## 21. Santa Cruz Rail Line Bridge Rehabilitation Project

Deputy Director Luis Mendez presented the staff report.

Commissioners discussed California Coastal Commission permits; the construction's project management company; the project's completion schedule and cost; and the ad-hoc committee membership and procedures.

Commissioner Leopold will appoint an ad-hoc committee for the Rail Line Bridge Rehabilitation project's contract change orders.

Commissioner Robinson moved and Commissioner Norton seconded to:

1. Approve temporary borrowing from the Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) Exchange fund to pay invoices associated with the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Rehabilitation project.

The motion passed unanimously, with Commissioners Norton, Lane, Robinson, Montesino, Caput, Coonerty, Bustichi, Dodge, Johnson, McPherson, and Leopold voting "aye."

22. Adjourned to special meeting of the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies at 10:57 am.

23. Next meetings

The next RTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 15 at 9:00 a.m. at the Santa Cruz City Council 809 Center St., Santa Cruz CA

The next meeting of the Transportation Policy Workshop is scheduled for Thursday, February 19, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. at the RTC Offices, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA.

Respectfully submitted,

Yesenia Parra, Administrative Services Officer

**Attendees**

Heather Adamson  
Brooke Miller  
Steve Wiesner  
Jack Nelson  
John Presleigh  
Gine Johnson

AMBAG  
County Counsel  
County Dept. of Public Works  
Resident  
County Dept. of Public Works  
Commissioner McPherson's office