

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CALAVERAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
COUNTY OF CALAVERAS, STATE OF CALIFORNIA
December 3, 2008**

Council Members Present: Gregg Baxter – Chair, Jack Lynch – Vice-Chair, Lee Seaton, Bob Leitzell, Tom Tryon, and Jon Ellis
Council Members Absent: Merita Callaway
Alternates Present: Steve Wilensky
Staff Present: Tim McSorley – Executive Director
Tyler Summersett – Transportation Planner
Melissa Eads – Senior Administrative Analyst
Elle Runyan – Clerical Assistant

Regular Meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Chair Gregg Baxter.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA

- Council Member Tryon pulled Consent Agenda Item 2c for discussion.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Minutes of November 5, 2008 Regular Meeting - ACTION
2. Correspondence
 - a. Article: “State Funding for Transportation”
 - b. Article: “California Alliance for Leadership Mobility”
 - c. Letter from Timothy J. McSorley, Re: Bear Valley Village DEIR
 - d. Article: “A Road to a Better Economy, An Old Idea Gains Ground”

*Approval of the Consent Agenda not including Item 2c.:
Moved: Leitzell Second: Ellis Approved: 7-0-0*

DISCUSSION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEM 2c.

- Council Member Tryon asked Director McSorley to explain the “reduction factor” he discussed in the first paragraph on page 2 of his comment letter on the Bear Valley Village DEIR.
- Director McSorley explained that the study identified a reduction factor for Bear Valley’s trip generation rates based on an allocation of projects that the County adopted in their RIM program. This 25% reduction was to the cost apportioned to state highway projects. The Board of Supervisors did not specifically allocate a percentage of projects to the state system.
- Council Member Tryon commented on the next paragraph regarding the visual quality of the Ebbetts Pass Scenic Byway. He stated that when the BOS adopted the Scenic Highway Corridor Management Plan, it was with the understanding that there would be no impact on private property or economic development or road construction. It looks like there is a definite impact in discussing some five story buildings in the Bear Valley Village Project.
- Director McSorley explained that it is a policy that buildings within a quarter of a mile must comply with the Corridor Management Plan for the Byway.
- Continuing to the next paragraph on air quality, Council Member Tryon felt since most of the air quality issues were a result of transport issues from the Valley that we should focus on Highway 4 traffic flow.
- Director McSorley explained that the Draft EIR focused on the air quality district in Alpine County, and since the majority of vehicles travel through Calaveras, which is in a non-attainment area, they didn’t address air quality here at all. He felt it should be addressed and that’s the reason it was included in the letter.
- Council Member Tryon then asked for an explanation of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan mentioned at the end of the paragraph.

- Director McSorley further explained that the GHGRP had not been prepared yet and he was requesting that it be in place before the project construction begins.
- Council Member Ellis expressed concern for the air quality issue in Bear Valley. With the increase in traffic – projected at four times the volume, we will need to mitigate road congestion in the future.
- Council Member Leitzell agrees that we must face the issue of increased traffic along Highway 4 – our two lane highway cannot handle the volume.

Public Comments on Item 2c. (Letter from Timothy McSorley)

- Gary Caldwell, member of the public, agreed with Council Member Tryon’s recollection that one day the Corridor Management Plan would have an impact on development. He feels that other members of the BOS must have known that when they made their decision, also.
- Mr. Caldwell supports the Executive Director’s conclusion that congestion and pollution will decrease the quality of air and he stated that this issue should be pointed out as written in Item 2c.

REGULAR AGENDA

3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- No member of the public came forward.

4. **CALTRANS REPORT**

- Dan Brewer, Caltrans District 10, reminded the CCOG to have the appropriate staff determine if any projects would be applicable to criteria set in the announcement regarding the Economic Stimulus package. (“Ready to go” within a time period of 120, 180 or 365 days)
- Director McSorley clarified that this would be applicable to any project, not just those that have funding or have a particular type of funding.
- Mr. Brewer congratulated the County on their award of just under \$300,000 through the FTA 5311F Program. This money can be used to purchase buses and for the Lodi route.
- The annual consolidated planning grants packages have been announced and are available online. These include Partnership Planning, Environmental Justice, Transit Technical Planning Assistance, Transit Professional Development, and Community-based Transportation Planning grants. The deadline for these grant packages is April 1, 2009.
- Council Member Leitzell commented that the Economic Stimulus package was not a “done deal”, it’s been proposed.
- Gary Caldwell, member of the public, reiterated his comments from the last CCOG meeting, and is now encouraging the CCOG to send a letter to urge the County and City to take advantage of these dollars for projects “on the shelf”.
- Mr. Brewer added that the Economic Stimulus project deadline is this Friday, December 5th!
- Council Member Tryon suggested we submit the Wagon Trail. Director McSorley stated that we are OK with funding for this phase of Wagon Trail.

5. **COUNTY REPORT**

- Mike Miller, Public Works Director, announced that Public Works has a list of unfunded projects from the 2008-2011 Capital Improvement Program listing for the Economic Stimulus package that will be sent in by the deadline.
- Director Miller wanted to present some follow-up material on the 12/26 Intersection in Valley Springs. In 2003, Caltrans gave a list of viable and unviable alternatives – one of these being the single lane roundabout. Miller read some excerpts from the roundabout report to explain why Public Works is leaning toward signalization.
 - Total capital cost of a roundabout breakdown: Right of Way acquisition would be \$1.8 million, compared to the preferred alternative of \$609,000. Roundabout cost totaled \$2.6 million, compared to the preferred alternative of \$1.3 million.
 - Staff did a configuration for a double lane roundabout which would be necessary to accommodate all types of vehicles traveling on these highways.

- In 2003, a Caltrans Project Study Report determined that with a four-way stop, by 2014 you would have a 180 second delay before passing through the intersection; a signal without widening – 202 seconds; signal with dual left lane – 107 seconds; a single lane roundabout – 44 seconds. Caltrans did not select the roundabout as an alternative in 2003.
- The Federal Highway Administration has a design standard. A CD will be made available to the public which will give roundabout information. A video was then shown depicting a single lane roundabout and how various large vehicles handle the turn.
- To build a 2 lane roundabout in Valley Springs we would have to acquire 3 of the 4 buildings at the current site, appropriate shoulder width, right turn lanes, and pedestrian walkways.
- Public Works will still consider the roundabout as an alternative, but their preferred choice is signalization.
- Council Member Tryon stated that he was not able to attend the Transit Report meeting and wondered if Public Works planned to cut any routes.
- Director Miller answered that cuts would not be done lightly. There would be public notification and much data collection and study sessions before doing so.
- Council Member Leitzell stated that as the contractor running the buses, Public Works should be looking at a return well over 10%. He is concerned that we are halfway through the year and nothing has changed, therefore this would be another year of not reaching the 10% farebox recovery ratio, and CCOG will need to withhold funds.
- Director Miller replied that predictions are available, but feels that the withholding of money is a temporary penalty.
- Council Member Ellis asked if the MOU dated July 9, 2003 is the one that allows the County to operate Transit. Director Miller agreed that was the correct one. Council Member Ellis wanted to identify the role CCOG plays and illustrated with some points from the MOU.
- Director Miller stated that he would like to look at the agreement. Council Member Ellis asked if there was an addendum to this MOU. Director Miller answered that he would need to look into it.
- Alternate Council Member Wilensky paraphrased Jamie Azarvand's explanation stating that this was a joint agreement when there was a shared responsibility and when the BOS transferred that responsibility to the Department of Public Works, there was no further need for an agreement between parties when only one (Public Works) was controlling.
- Chair Baxter thanked Jamie Azarvand, Public Works Analyst, for her very accurate reporting in the Transit study session held last month.
- Steve Difu, member of the public, asked whether the RV going around the roundabout several times was a true depiction. Council Member Leitzell agreed it was choreographed to allow those present to see what happens when a large vehicle has to maneuver through the circle.
- Gary Caldwell, member of the public, hopes there will be an objective evaluation of all alternatives for the intersection of Highways 12 & 26. Since Council Member Tryon had been critical of the farebox return, Mr. Caldwell did some research into statistics from other operators in the state. From the State Controller's website (using data from 2005/2006) of the 370 transit operators in the state, 70% of the operators reported a farebox return of less than 20%. Only 8 operators have a farebox return greater than 40%. The great majority, almost 90% report less than 30%. This is not a profit-making business.

6. STATE HIGHWAY PROJECTS

a. *SR-4 Angels Camp Bypass*

- Director McSorley stated he handed out a statement from Caltrans giving the financial status of the Bypass. Work is proceeding on the bridges and will continue, weather permitting.

b. *SR-4 Wagon Trail Realignment*

- Letters requesting Right of Entry have gone out to property owners within the study area.
- Environmental concerns will be input into the Quantm software in January 2009.

c. *TE Projects*

- Scott Maas' written report is included in the agenda packet.

d. RESOLUTION 09-20 Re: ARNOLD RIM TRAIL – CEDAR CENTER BIKEWAY CONNECTION
TE PROJECT – ACTION

- Renaming this trail section will allow further coordination with the Forest Service.

Approval of Resolution 09-20:

Moved: Lynch Second: Leitzell Approved: 7-0-0

7. PUBLIC MEMBER APPOINTMENT

STEVE DIFU:

- Mr. Difu moved to Calaveras County seven years ago and has been very involved in Angels Camp. (i.e. Angels Camp Planning Commission & Advisory Board member, participant in City Council meetings, volunteer on many City improvement projects.)
- Council Member Lynch asked how he felt about the County policy of not diverting traffic from state highways through residential neighborhoods. Mr. Difu agrees with keeping the quality of life. Balance residential, transit and commercial. It is attainable and should not be ignored.
- Council Member Wilensky asked, “What do you know about transportation issues outside of the Ebbett’s Pass Corridor and do you have any comments about priorities and things that might interest you in that arena?” Mr. Difu would evaluate the merits of any project and would educate himself to know the areas in question. He feels that friction between supervisors based on district concerns is unfortunate.
- Council Member Seaton asked, “What have you learned from your involvement in public service?” Mr. Difu stated that being direct and questioning staff could rub people the wrong way, but he enjoyed the challenge of public service.
- Chair Baxter asked if he would speak about his professional experience. Mr. Difu has been in the trucking business for forty-five years. He has strong instincts as far as what he reads and hears.
- Council Member Ellis asked to hear his opinion of the Public Transit System. Mr. Difu answered that he believes it is handicapped by the economic situation. We need to get more businesses involved. If we’re running at a loss, figure out why. Public transportation is necessary when there is a need for it.

MICHAEL HATHAWAY:

- Mr. Hathaway has been a licensed architect for over thirty years, involved in large projects designing traffic circulation systems. He sat on the LAFCO board for more than 10 years – was Chair for 2 terms. He was involved with transportation elements while serving on the Calaveras County Economic Development Company in the 1990’s. He was also Chair of the Arnold Community Plan revision committee. These experiences show he has good leadership capabilities and the ability to work with others.
- Council Member Lynch asked how he felt about the County policy of not diverting traffic from state highways through residential neighborhoods. Mr. Hathaway agrees with the policy because there are always alternatives. It’s not a good idea to bring a great amount of traffic through residential areas not initially designed that way.
- Council Member Lynch asked how he felt about improvements to Moran Road. Mr. Hathaway stated it was unfeasible.
- Council Member Wilensky asked, “What do you know about transportation issues outside of the Ebbett’s Pass Corridor – such as Highways 12 & 26 from Valley Springs to West Point?” Mr. Hathaway stated he was very familiar with the Valley Springs area – he had involvement with studies for bypasses and circulation issues.
- Council Member Ellis asked to hear his opinion of the Public Transit System. Mr. Hathaway stated it is a sorely needed service, but due to geography and population, it probably can’t run without losing money. He would like to get involved and help find solutions.
- Council Member Seaton asked, “From your time at LAFCO, what lessons had you learned?” Mr. Hathaway answered that he learned to listen to people in a public forum and to take different points of view into consideration.

SARAH LUNSFORD:

- Sarah Lunsford stated that she would bring an objective viewpoint to the Council. She has worked for the Legislature and also for local media. She can see how Calaveras County fits into the state and the importance of state funding. Planning is very important – rural counties must adjust to changes and she is equipped to help with those adjustments.
- Ms. Lunsford feels that the ability to listen and really hear communications is the key.
- Council Member Wilensky asked, “What do you know about transportation issues outside of the Ebbett’s Pass Corridor and how would you represent that interest?” Ms. Lunsford answered that the County needs to be viewed as a whole, and that decisions affect everyone. Research into the issues and then project by project is the way to approach her lack of knowledge.
- Council Member Ellis asked to hear her opinion of the Public Transit System. Ms. Lunsford is very supportive, but this is a public service, not a money making endeavor.
- Council Member Lynch asked how she felt about the County policy of not diverting traffic from state highways through residential neighborhoods. Ms. Lunsford agrees this is a good policy – residential neighborhoods are not set up to handle traffic diversions on a permanent basis.

PAT MAURER:

- Pat Maurer has planning and budgeting expertise; she has experience as an analyst, engineer, planner and project manager. We have challenges in the Valley Springs area, but she agrees we must view the County as a whole. She finds working with people is enjoyable and challenging, and she’s ready to give back to the community in a different way.
- Council Member Ellis asked to hear her opinion of the Public Transit System. Ms. Maurer feels we can’t make money, but we must keep costs low by minimizing where we can. There is a real need for public transportation for people with minimal choices.
- Council Member Lynch asked how she felt about the County policy of not diverting traffic from state highways through residential neighborhoods. Ms. Maurer is 100% behind it – if you can avoid it, do so at all costs.
- Council Member Seaton asked what she would hope for from service on the CCOG board. Ms. Maurer wants to learn as much as possible and become more involved in her community. She wants to learn how CCOG works and how we get things done.

DISCUSSION OF PUBLIC MEMBER CANDIDATES:

- Council Member Tryon commented on the exceptional group of candidates. He felt that we need to have a geographical representation on the CCOG. If one of the first three candidates were chosen, six out of the seven members would be from Angels Camp or along the Highway 4 corridor. He feels Pat Maurer is qualified and is his choice.
- Alternate Council Member Wilenski stated that this is a remarkable set of candidates, but we must be mindful of the whole - half of the people live off the Highway 4 corridor. He feels that Pat Maurer would fit well on the board.
- Council Member Seaton agrees that the geographical premise is important as we are a regional and countywide organization. He agrees that Pat Maurer is qualified and supports her selection.
- Council Member Ellis stated that a decision is difficult because the candidates are all uniquely qualified. After working on the Arnold Plan with Mike Hathaway, Ellis feel that his work on LAFCO and with Economic Development would help with tough questions we might face in the future.
- Director McSorley stated that while all CCOG members are allowed in add input, only the four elected officials may vote on the appointment.
- Before the meeting, Council Member Lynch had thanked each candidate for their willingness to volunteer and serve this county on the CCOG board. He agrees all are imminently qualified. Council Member Lynch discounts the geographical consideration and feels that any candidate could make qualified decisions. He supports Steve Difu.

Motion to Adopt this Minute Order Appointing Pat Maurer as CCOG’s Public Member:

Moved: Wilensky

Second: Tryon

Approved: 4-0-0 (Only elected members vote)

8. RESOLUTION APPROVING FTD SECTION 5311 PROJECT FUNDS FOR FY 2008/09 - ACTION

Motion to Adopt this Resolution:

Moved: Seaton Second: Wilensky Approved: 7-0-0

9. STAFF REPORTS

a. Director McSorley:

- Director McSorley has been monitoring the Federal Authorization process – will keep you posted.
- Pertaining to Public Works' roundabout presentation: Director McSorley had a hand in preparing some referenced documents a number of years ago. We anticipate looking at this alternative at the 12/26 intersection and also a number of other intersections throughout the county.
- In response to discussion last month on why Calaveras County got \$0 from PUC 99314 Allocations: We don't get these allocations because we operate under Article 4 instead of Article 8. This has to do with different facilities and different types of jurisdictions. However, we do file claims under Article 8 – we'll be looking at that in the Short Range Transit Plan and perhaps we can recoup some funds.
- We had several meetings regarding the Valley Springs project, we're moving forward with creating a Stakeholders group.
- We will hold an orientation meeting in January 2009 for our new members to the board (including Brown Act training) – date to be forthcoming.
- Our next meeting will be on February 4th at which time we will appoint a new Chair.
- Next week McSorley will attend CTC to get up to speed with the State and Local Partnership Program under Prop 1B.
- Melissa Eads, Sr. Administrative Analyst, shared some information regarding the Strategic Planning Process. Gladys Cornell of Aim Consulting met with Staff to talk about how we function as an organization and provided a brief questionnaire to be distributed to each Council member. You can complete this form online and e-mail it directly to Gladys to keep your information confidential.
- Director McSorley presented Certificates of Recognition to Bob Leitzell for serving three and a half years and to Lee Seaton for serving six years as Council Member with the Calaveras Council of Governments.
- All are invited to the 10th Anniversary Celebration of the CCOG – yes, Hobnob at the CCOG! December 16th – featuring the famous clam chowder! Don't miss it!

b. Summersett:

- The Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) is a 5 year business plan for transit. It looks at capital development, finances, route structure, and the most effective and efficient way to run the system. It will give us appropriate performance measures for our county and our specific system.
- We are in negotiations with a consultant who will help us prepare a business plan that will serve Calaveras Transit effectively. We will have the opportunity to look at creative options to hopefully get us to that 10% farebox recovery ratio.
- A SRTP will be brought to the Council in March or April of 2009.

10. CITY REPORT

- Council Member Lynch stated that a letter was sent by the City to Will Kempton, Director, Department of Transportation, regarding the accessibility to acreage east of the intersection of Highways 4 & 49. It's important that we have a voice to allow reasonable access to this commercial land, since it is fenced off at this time. The response from Caltrans mentions our "partnership" and their support of the development of SR 49. Council Member Lynch further quoted from the response letter, "With the Access Management Plan, your concerns should be addressed adequately."
- Council Member Seaton commented that in the past there had been hostility between Caltrans and the CCOG which had been counterproductive to our goals. It was apparent that we needed a new dynamic to work with this critical state agency. Since then, the CCOG and City staff have made mutual commitments with Caltrans and we should recognize these accomplishments. Also, we are in an incredibly strong position to seek our fair share of the Economic Stimulus Package, since we have projects that we are working on, this funding could bring them to fruition.
- Director McSorley mentioned that he was approached by the Caltrans Planning Group to develop a Corridor Management Plan for all of SR49, some very exciting news.

11. COUNCIL REPORT

- Alternate Council Member Wilenski announced that there would be a board meeting of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy at Kautz Winery from 9:00 am – noon tomorrow. This group has some great leadership and they're investing quite a few dollars in Calaveras County.
- Council Member Ellis expressed his concern over the role of the CCOG with regard to oversight, and would like to clarify that at the next meeting. Also, what can be done with the money held back due to the farebox penalty?
- Director McSorley acknowledged that the transition of Transit responsibilities from the CCOG to Public Works perhaps was not fully vetted when it occurred. The goals and responsibilities were not clearly defined. To McSorley's knowledge, the MOU has not been superceded, so to a large degree we are still operating under the provisions of that MOU. The Strategic Planning Process and the Short Range Transit Plan process will help to clarify these issues, probably not by February's meeting, however.
- Alternate Council Member Wilenski suggested that because there are some legal documents that appear to have expired, the County personnel here might want to make a request to County Council asking what the specific legal governing documents are related to Public Transit and the relationship between CCOG and County.
- Chair Baxter feels that the County Board and Public Works are doing an excellent job of managing the Transit System in serving the territory that they do. He feels that if CCOG were managing, we would be in the same situation.
- Chair Baxter also mentioned he would like to discuss connectivity of our transit system with the Altamont Commuter Express Trains in Stockton. Baxter will be travelling to Washington next week to meet with some congressional staffers about some stimulus money for the ACE train maintenance facility and other projects.

12. MEETING ADJOURNED

Meeting adjourned by Chair Baxter at 8:55 p.m.

Gregg Baxter, Chair
Calaveras Council of Governments

ATTEST:

Elle Runyan, Recording Secretary
Calaveras Council of Governments