



EASTERN SIERRA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (ESCOG)

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 19, 2018

8:30 a.m.

**Bishop City Council Chambers
301 West Line Street
Bishop, California**

Board Members

Mono County Supervisor
Stacy Corless

Mono County Supervisor
Bob Gardner

Town of Mammoth Lakes Councilmember
Shields Richardson

Town of Mammoth Lakes Councilmember
John Wentworth – Chair

Inyo County Supervisor
Jeff Griffiths – Vice Chair

Inyo County Supervisor
Matt Kingsley

City of Bishop Councilmember
Jim Ellis

City of Bishop Councilmember
Karen Schwartz

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting please contact the Clerk of the Board at 760-965-3603. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City of Bishop or Town of Mammoth Lakes to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (See 42 USCS 12132, 28CFR 35.130)

NOTE: Comments for all agenda items are limited to a speaking time of three minutes.

1. Call to Order

Chair Wentworth called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Deb Schweizer, Public Affairs Officer for the Inyo National Forest Supervisor's Office, led the pledge of allegiance.

3. Roll Call

Board members Corless, Gardner, Griffiths, Wentworth, Ellis, and Schwartz were all in attendance. Board members Richardson and Kingsley were absent.

- 4. Public Comment** – Notice to the Public: This time is set aside to receive public comment on matters not calendared on the agenda. When recognized by the Chair, please state your name and address for the record and please limit your comments to three minutes. Under California law the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments Board is prohibited from generally discussing or taking action on items not included in the agenda; however, the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments Board may briefly respond to comments or questions from members of the public. Therefore, the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments Board will listen to all public comment but will not generally discuss the matter or take action on it.

SPEAKING FROM THE FLOOR:

Stephen Kalish, community member, expressed concern about minutes from meetings in 2017 not being approved or available for the public.

5. Recreation

- a. Inyo National Forest Update

Deb Schweizer announced that a new Forest Supervisor has been appointed to our region. She said that the Forest Service has been working to get some roads open in Mono and Inyo Counties. She shared budget information related to fire funding in the Forest Service, which will allow for additional local funding that has not been available for many years. She said they are actively interviewing for a district ranger. There was a discussion between the ESCOG and Ms. Schweizer.

- b. Update regarding Eastern Sierra Recreation Partnership
- c. Update regarding Eastern Sierra Recreation Coordinator

Chair Wentworth provided an update on these two items. He said that Mono County and Mammoth Lakes are working on a challenge cost-share agreement with the U.S. Forest Service. He also discussed the possibility of a shared position between Mono County and the Town of Mammoth Lakes. Board member Corless said that Mono County had set aside \$50,000 for a shared position, however, this year that funding would be spent on other recreation projects within the County. There was discussion among the ESCOG members.

6. Reliable Regional Air Service

- a. Discussion regarding Opportunities for Reliable Regional Air Service

Chair Wentworth asked the group to define “reliable regional air service.” Each of the Board members expressed their thoughts about air service.

SPEAKING FROM THE FLOOR:

Stephen Kalish said that he has seen hardly any information about this project since the last ESCOG meeting. He wants to see more transparency regarding the project.

Charles James, Big Pine resident, agrees with Mr. Kalish regarding transparency, but stated that it can often be hard to get information out to the public, and the press tends to focus on more controversial issues. He is excited to see this board working together on the project.

Sharon Clark, Mammoth Lakes resident, is supportive of moving the airport to Bishop. She said that she and her family will no longer use the Mammoth airport due to experiences with cancelled flights.

The Board members responded to comments about transparency and discussed the current status of the project.

SPEAKING FROM THE FLOOR:

Grady Dutton, Mammoth Lakes Public Works Director, said the Town will be asking for policy direction from its Town Council regarding the airport in May.

Kevin Carunchio, Inyo County Chief Administrative Officer, said that we need to respect the Statement of Intent signed by Inyo County and Mammoth Lakes, which allows autonomy for each agency. He reported on a meeting with the FAA and stated that Inyo County had submitted its Airport Certification Manual (ACM) to the FAA for review. He said that the FAA will continue to support commercial air service at the Mammoth/Yosemite Airport at this time, and Inyo County is working to get Part 139 approval. There was a discussion between the Board and Mr. Carunchio.

b. Discuss the Role of the Mono Inyo Airport Working Group (MIAWG)

There was a discussion between the Board, Mr. Dutton, and Mr. Carunchio about both Inyo County and Mammoth Lakes needing to get policy direction from their respective Board and Council and determine next steps. The Board expressed an interest in establishing a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) to govern regional airports. There was a consensus among the Board to request that staff work to schedule a MIAWG meeting in the next few weeks prior to policy items going before Inyo County Board or Mammoth Lakes Town Council, if possible.

SPEAKING FROM THE FLOOR:

Stephen Kalish asked a question of Mr. Carunchio regarding an environmental assessment and letters of intent from airlines, and he responded. Mr. Kalish said that he would like to see ESCOG direct its respective agencies to come back with what air service would look like in 1-2 years rather than 3-5 years. Regarding a Mammoth Lakes Town Council policy item, he encouraged staff to invite all Town Council candidates to any discussion regarding the airport since it may be at the last meeting of the current Town Council.

7. Update regarding California Federal Opportunity Zones. Consider authorizing ESCOG or requesting that each agency take action supporting the expansion of Opportunity Zones.

- a. “A new national community investment program that connects private capital with low-income communities across America”
 - i. <https://eig.org/opportunityzones>

Chair Wentworth introduced this item and said that the opportunity zones are a part of the new Federal budget. Parts of Bishop and Southern Inyo County may be eligible for funding. The Board requested a discussion of this item at its next meeting, when there will be a better idea about timing for next steps and the application process.

8. Discussion regarding Climate Change

- a. CA Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program
 - i. <http://resilientca.org>

Chair Wentworth said that he serves on a State board for climate change. The State is putting together a website that can be used as a resource regarding climate change. The website has descriptions for Mono and Inyo Counties and there is a public comment period on the content of those pages that ends at the end of the month. He encouraged the Board members to review the content and provide comments, if appropriate.

9. ESCOG Organizational Items

- a. Approve the minutes of February 14, 2018

There was a discussion about outstanding minutes and administrative support for the ESCOG and Inyo Mono Broadband Consortium. The Board would like to follow up on this item in a subsequent staff meeting.

ACTION: It was moved by Board member Ellis, seconded by Board member Griffiths, and carried by a 6-0 roll call vote to approve the minutes of February 14, 2018.

- b. Board and Council Reports

Board member Schwartz announced that Bishop Councilmember Pat Gardner recently passed away. The Council will appoint an interim member to fill her seat until the next election. City Manager, Jim Tatum, has been out on sick leave but recently returned. The City is continuing with its ADA sidewalk project downtown.

Board member Gardner announced that Mono County Supervisor Larry Johnston recently passed away. His term goes until the end of this year, and the election will determine who fills his seat. The County has made progress on cannabis and short-term rental regulations. They are also dealing with issues related to child care and workforce housing.

Board member Corless said that ranchers in Mono and Inyo Counties are dealing with a new regulation regarding irrigation on DWP land used for grazing. She said that Mono County will be making a final decision regarding a new South County facility in Mammoth on May 1. Mono County is still pursuing a county boundary adjustment with Madera County in the Devils Postpile National Monument area.

Vice Chair Griffiths spoke about symbiosis between ranchers in Mono and Inyo Counties.

Board member Ellis spoke about the landfill condemnation lawsuit. He said Bishop is also making progress regarding cannabis and short-term rentals. He said he will be talking with high school students about how he got into government and learning about their goals.

Chair Wentworth reported about the Town using Host Compliance to assist with transient occupancy tax (TOT) enforcement efforts. There was a discussion among the Board regarding enforcement. Chair Wentworth said the Town Council election is coming up on June 5. He reported about the Town's Housing Action Plan. He discussed challenges with the Mammoth Lakes Housing Board structure. He said that the Mayor of Aspen is coming to Mammoth Lakes next week. He attended a conference for Forest Service leadership in Colorado.

c. Discuss upcoming Sierra Nevada Conservancy visit in June

Vice Chair Griffiths said that the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) will be coming to the Eastern Sierra on June 6-7, 2018. There will be a Board meeting on June 7th and a tour and reception on June 6th. They are working on organizing a tour that will focus on recreation and water issues. The SNC was previously focused on forest health, but with the passage of Prop 68, there will be recreation funding available, so the SNC is in the process of changing its mission and strategic plan to include sustainable recreation. There was a discussion about how local agencies can engage with the SNC.

d. Update on member agencies' support for Prop 68. Consider ESCOG support for Prop. 68.

Mammoth Lakes, Inyo County, and Mono County have all approved resolutions in support of Prop 68. Bishop will have an item to discuss on its next agenda.

10. Committee Updates

- ESCOG Joint Powers Authority (JPA) Ad Hoc Committee (Gardner, Griffiths, Schwartz, Wentworth,)

Board member Gardner said that there was a meeting to discuss the concept of a JPA for managing the airports. He said there are currently mixed opinions regarding this item.

- Inyo Mono Broadband Consortium (IMBC) Advisory Council

Justin Norcross, IMBC AC representative, provided information about the background and purpose of the IMBC AC. He provided updates on work program items, including branding and broadband connectivity. The Board thanked Mr. Norcross and the other IMBC AC appointees for volunteering their time. There was a discussion among the Board and Mr. Norcross regarding how to continue to develop and enhance these efforts.

11. Call for Agenda Items for Next Meeting

- Continued item - Update regarding California Federal Opportunity Zones.
- Administrative Support for ESCOG and IMBC Advisory Council
- IMBC Advisory Council Update

- Transient rental enforcement discussion/update
- Standing Items - Recreation/Air Service

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:25.