



EASTERN SIERRA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (ESCOG)

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Friday, December 13, 2019

8:30 a.m.

Bishop City Council Chambers

301 West Line Street

Bishop, CA

Board Members

Mono County Supervisor
Stacy Corless – Vice Chair

Mono County Supervisor
Bob Gardner

Town of Mammoth Lakes Councilmember
Lynda Salcido

Town of Mammoth Lakes Councilmember
John Wentworth

Inyo County Supervisor
Jeff Griffiths –Chair

Inyo County Supervisor
Dan Totheroh

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 Jeff Griffiths called the meeting to order at 8:52 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Inyo County Public Works Associate Engineer Ashley Helms.

3. Roll Call

Chair Jeff Griffiths, Board Members Bob Gardner, Lynda Salcido, John Wentworth, Jim Ellis and Karen Schwartz were present. Vice Chair Stacy Corless and Board Member Dan Totheroh 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.

Mammoth Lakes Tourism (MLT) Executive Director John Urdi gave an update on transportation related to air service at the Bishop Airport. Mr. Urdi said that he had worked with various public and private entities to ensure that there would be a transportation network in place once commercial flights started landing at the Bishop Airport. He said that he had worked with Inyo County Public Works Associate Engineer Ashley Helms regarding parking at the airport and offsite locations. Mr. Urdi said MLT would do an intercept survey at the Mammoth Yosemite Airport to ask visitors for their zip code, where they would be staying, and how they would get to their final destination. He said that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) wanted a transportation report in Spring. He discussed current flight schedules and coordination with transportation services.

Ms. Helms spoke about potential air quality and socioeconomic impacts to Bishop and Mammoth as a result of commercial flights landing in Bishop. She requested that Air Service updates be added as a standing item on future ESCOG agendas. She said a plan had been laid out with details of what needed to be accomplished to ensure that the Bishop Airport would receive its operating certificate by October 2020. Ms. Helms reported that the first public scoping meeting for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document and air services updates would be held in January. She said that there would be meetings in Bishop and Mammoth. She said that the FAA would be the lead agency for NEPA and that Inyo County would be the lead for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Mammoth Lakes Trails & Public Access (MLTPA) Project Specialist Chelsea Taylor gave an update regarding the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership (ESSRP) and the Sustainable Recreation and Tourism Initiative. Ms. Taylor reported that the ESSRP had established a Governance Committee and had set a regular monthly meeting schedule. She said that the Initiative had a successful Connection to the Eastern Sierra Visitor Audience Working Group kick off meeting on December 11th and announced that the first gateway community workshop would take place in Lone Pine on January 16, 2020.

5. Approve the Minutes of the October 11, 2019 regular meeting.

It was moved by Bob Gardner, seconded by Lynda Salcido, with Vice Chair Stacy Corless and Board Member Dan Totheroh absent, and carried by a 6-0 voice vote to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2019 meeting.

6. Update regarding potential approval from the member agencies of the amended Joint Powers Agreement Establishing the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments as a separate Legal Entity from its Member Agencies, including assignment for forwarding necessary paperwork to the State should Mono County vote to approve

Board Member Karen Schwartz reported that the City of Bishop approved the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) by a vote of 3-2.

Board Member Lynda Salcido reported that the Mammoth Lakes Town Council approved the JPA by a 4-1 vote.

Chair Jeff Griffiths reported that Inyo County approved the JPA by a 3-2 vote.

Board Member Bob Gardner reported that the request for approval of the JPA would be on the Mono County Board of Supervisors' January 7, 2020 agenda. Mr. Gardner said that he felt optimistic about the item being approved.

Board Member John Wentworth asked who would take the lead in filing the JPA paperwork if it passed in Mono County.

Mr. Gardner said he would consult with his Council about Mono County taking the lead in filing the JPA document. Gardner said that if Mono County would not be able to assist, he would report back to the Board.

Mr. Wentworth suggested that Mono County work with the Town of Mammoth Lakes Assistant Clerk to file the JPA document.

7. Update on the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership (ESSRP) including Partnership Meeting on December 9 and establishment of liaison between the ESCOG and ESSRP to review future opportunities.

Board Member John Wentworth gave an update regarding the partnership between the ESSRP and the ESCOG and spoke about the ESSRP's newly formed Governance Committee. Mr. Wentworth said that there was a desire from the ESSRP to establish a liaison with the ESCOG. He spoke about how to structure the partnership between the JPA and ESSRP.

Chair Jeff Griffiths asked the members of the Board if they had comments on what type of governing structure should be set up for the partnership.

Mr. Wentworth said that the ESSRP Governance Committee could bring examples of various models to the ESCOG for consideration.

There was discussion between among members of the Board.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service White Mountain Ranger Station District Ranger Phillip DeSenze gave an update on a recent Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) meeting that Mono County Supervisor Stacy Corless, and Forest staff, including Forest Supervisor Tammy Randall Parker had attended. He said that the Forest Service had received a verbal commitment from LADWP leadership to develop proposals for a nexus between water quality and quantity, sustainable recreation, fire prevention and fire rehabilitation related to water quality. Mr. DeSenze said that he anticipated leadership from LADWP would come in late January to visit the field and discuss potential items that the Forest Service would like addressed and to discuss funding for those projects.

There was discussion between Mr. DeSenze and members of the Board.

8. Update on the Prop68/Sierra Nevada Conservancy's "Sustainable Recreation and Tourism" Grant, administered by the Town of Mammoth Lakes on behalf of the regional partners

This item was not discussed.

9. Update on housing activities from all member agencies.

Board Member Lynda Salcido gave an update on The Parcel project in Mammoth Lakes. Ms. Salcido reported that the Mammoth Lakes Town Council had accepted the Conceptual Plan at a joint workshop between Town Council and Planning and Economic Development Commission. She said that a Request For Qualifications (RFQ) had been put out and interviews would take place in January. She discussed concerns that the Council and community members had related to The Parcel, such as parking and snow removal. She said the Councilmembers had asked Town staff to come back with solutions to the concerns that were voiced at the joint workshop. Ms. Salcido reported that the Town Council had approved allocation of \$300,00 for other possible housing projects and to assist Mammoth Lakes Housing (MLH). She spoke about the Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce's (MLCC) new employee who worked on the MLCC's Workforce Housing program and website that matched renters, homeowners and employers. She said that the Town Council had approved application of excess Transient Occupancy Taxes (TOT) funds towards the first phase of The Parcel. She said that the expectation for occupancy for the first Phase of The Parcel was 2024 and that it would be subsidized rentals only. Ms. Salcido discussed the number of employees that did not accept employment with Mammoth Mountain due to the lack of housing, and voiced concerns about the number of people in Mammoth that were living in their cars. She reported that the Town Council was considering a voter initiative for a one-point TOT increase. She said that The Parcel would be owned by the Town of Mammoth Lakes and managed by an outside property management team.

Board Member John Wentworth spoke about regional transportation issues. Mr. Wentworth said The Parcel would be well exposed to funding from the State of California. He spoke about a Senate Bill grant related to the Walk /Bike Ride Program. He discussed pending commercial air service at the Bishop Airport and various modes of transportation to get those passengers to Mammoth. Mr. Wentworth spoke about the burden on residents if the Town cut back on parking and the need for solutions to make shopping convenient for residents and the increased need to use public transit. He reported that the Mammoth Lakes Town Council had approved the Conceptual Master Plan for the first phase of The Parcel project and said it would go through CEQA. He spoke about the need to find solutions to move people around the region that the State would assist with funding.

Board Member Bob Gardner reported that Mono County sold a single-unit condo in June Lake to Inyo Mono Advocates for Community Action, Inc. (IMACA) and said that the housing mitigation ordinance for the Davison House in Mammoth had passed. Mr. Gardner said that the County was in the process of hiring a Housing Coordinator and that Community Development had approved the housing element. He discussed the Tioga Inn project which would provide one hundred workforce housing units, and a five 800 square foot modular unit project in June Lake which should be completed by next summer. He said the Mono Basin Regional Planning Advisory Committee had developed a new committee to focus on affordable housing in the Lee Vining area.

Board Member Jim Ellis spoke about the option of modular homes being built in Texas and transported to our region as a way to save money and increase affordable housing. Mr. Ellis said a law had been passed regarding Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) and spoke about the possibility of homeowners in Mammoth allowing ADUs on their property for rentals and potentially utilizing TOT funds to assist with that cost. He gave an update on Bishop housing and said that the City had put out an RFP for a downtown corridor housing mobility study. He said they were considering building up with retail units on the bottom story and residential housing on the top story. He said that he had attended a leadership conference recently and reported that the number one topic was affordable housing.

Board Member Karen Schwartz reported that the City of Bishop was in escrow on a piece of property for the Silver Peaks project which would provide seventy units located behind the Pizza Factory in Bishop.

Chair Jeff Griffiths spoke about the Homelessness Action team that he served on. Mr. Griffiths said that Inyo County had looked at mixed use retail and changing zoning to reduce barriers to development. He said they added \$200k to their budget for a County revolving loan project to repair units in order to make them rentable. He discussed the IMACA Silver Peaks funding gap and announced that Bob Hughes was the new director for IMACA. Mr. Griffiths said that Inyo County was working with the County and IMACA on the Inyo Mono Veterans' housing project which would provide 15-20 units with a Veterans of Foreign War (VFW) Veterans' services complex. He said that there was a lot of funding for Veterans' housing available and said they had been given a commitment for a fast track from the LADWP.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

10. Update on the impacts related to Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events.

Board Member John Wentworth commended Mono County staff on their work with Southern California Edison (SCE) regarding Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS). Mr. Wentworth reported that the Mammoth Lakes Town Council had passed an agenda item which requested that SCE provide protocols regarding shutoffs in snow country. He voiced concerns about potential shutoffs during holidays when there were thousands of visitors in Town that would need to leave if the power was shutoff and the serious traffic problems that could result.

Board Member Bob Gardner said that he felt the County's relationship with SCE was improving.

Board Member Lynda Salcido spoke about the responsibility the region had to provide our visitors with information regarding what to do in the case of a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS).

There was discussion among members of the Board.

11. Discuss and approve 2020 meeting schedule.

Board Member Jeff Griffiths presented the proposed 2020 ESCOG meeting schedule.

SPEAKING FROM THE FLOOR:

Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA) Director Executive Director Phil Moores noted that the proposed October 9, 2020 meeting date would conflict with the League of California Cities Annual Conference.

There was discussion between Mr. Moores and members of the Board.

It was moved by Board Member Jim Ellis, seconded by Board Member Lynda Salcido, with Vice Chair Stacy Corless and Board Member Dan Totheroh absent, and carried by a 6-0 voice vote to approve the proposed ESCOG 2020 Meeting Schedule as amended to move the October 9th meeting to October 16th due to the League of California Cities Annual Conference.

12. Board and Council Reports

Board Member Bob Gardner reported that Mono County approved a resolution to the State to reinstate a State Ranger position at Mono Lake.

Board Member John Wentworth said that he had attended the California Economic Summit in Fresno. Mr. Wentworth gave an update on Regions Rise Together in the Inland Empire and Central Valley. He said he had met with the Park Service in Washington, D.C. regarding grant progress. He also met with Congressman Cook's Staff to discuss PSPS and Town site issues such as land jurisdiction and annual reauthorization for permits with the Forest Service. He said that he had met with USDA California State Director Kim Vaughn on December 5th to discuss housing in Mammoth and the JPA. He spoke about the Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) program and suggested that the ESCOG apply for it if the JPA passed in Mono County.

Chair Jeff Griffiths reported on a discussion Inyo County had regarding creation of a business development center. Chair Griffiths said he had spoken with Cerro Coso College staff about bringing in technical assistance for small businesses. He said that Inyo County was anticipating a State of the Parks report on December 17th and said their parks were in a serious state of disrepair. He said there was a possibility that Inyo County would revise their short-term rental ordinance to make it similar to the City of Bishop's ordinance. Chair Griffiths said Inyo County was considering a Dark Sky ordinance outside of the County campground in Independence and said that the State of California had stringent rules that they would need to comply with.

SPEAKING FROM THE FLOOR

Inyo County Assistant City Administrator Leslie Chapman spoke about a movement to create a business development center. Ms. Chapman said that she had attended a meeting with representatives from the Sierra Business Council, the City of Bishop, two chambers of commerces and Inyo County. She said the group started strategic planning for the business development center and would schedule a follow up meeting. She said that they were trying to get local tribes and the Hispanic community to join in and said it would make sense to make it a regional program. Ms. Chapman spoke about the Ferguson Group, a federal lobbying group, that she had talked with regarding federal funding and assistance with the Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) application.

Board Member Lynda Salcido spoke about the Ban the Bottle program in Mammoth and green business certification. Ms. Salcido reported that PathWater would provide filling stations for local businesses. She spoke about the new snowflakes on Main Street in Mammoth which were part of Mammoth's Winter Animation Program.

Board Member Karen Schwartz spoke about the Request for Proposal (RFP) for upgrades to downtown Bishop including new signage and design guidelines. Ms. Schwartz reported that Bishop was in the process of hiring a new City Administrator. She said there would be a new road, J Street, built behind Jack in the Box that would connect to Main Street.

Board Member Jim Ellis spoke about the possibility of a JPA between the Water District and the City of Bishop. Mr. Ellis said that he was happy about the new Climbing Rangers that had been hired.

There was discussion between Ms. Chapman and members of the Board.

13. Call for Agenda Items for Next Meeting

There were no items requested.

14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:28 a.m. to the next regular meeting on Friday, February 14, 2019 in Mammoth Lakes.