



**EASTERN SIERRA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (ESCOG)
Joint Powers Authority**

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

**Friday, February 14, 2020
8:30 a.m.**

**Mammoth Lakes Council Chamber
437 Old Mammoth Road, Suite Z
Mammoth Lakes, 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 8:36 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Inyo County Counsel Marshall Rudolph.

3. Roll Call

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

New City of Bishop City Administrator Ron Phillips introduced himself via teleconference.

5. Approve the Minutes of the December 13, 2019 regular meeting (of the ESCOG).

It was moved by Board Member Karen Schwartz, seconded by Board Member Bob Gardner, with Board Member Lynda Salcido absent, and carried by a 7-0 voice vote to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2019 regular meeting.

6. Discussion and possible action on elect new officers for the position of Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary for ESCOG -JPA.

Town of Mammoth Lakes Town Manager Dan Holler reported that this meeting had been set up as a Special Meeting since the ESCOG JPA was a new entity and a regular meeting schedule had not been set yet. Mr. Holler discussed the prior process used to elect the Chair and Vice Chair and discussed the process of appointing officers under the newly form JPA. He said that the duties of the Secretary would need to be determined prior to filling that position, whether that role was to be held by a Board Member or staff person. He recommended that the duties of the Secretary be spelled out in the new bylaws prior to appointment. Mr. Holler outlined the information in the staff report.

Board Member Bob Gardner nominated Chair Jeff Griffiths as the Chair of the ESCOG JPA. Mr. Griffiths declined the nomination. Mr. Gardner nominated Vice Chair Stacy Corless as the Chair.

Board Member John Wentworth nominated Board Member Karen Schwartz as Vice Chair.

It was moved by Board Member Dan Totheroh, seconded by Board Member Bob Gardner, with Board Member Lynda Salcido absent, and carried by a 7-0 voice vote to appoint Vice Chair Stacy Corless as the Chair of the ESCOG JPA.

It was moved by Board Member John Wentworth and seconded by Chair Jeff Griffiths, with Board Member Lynda Salcido absent, and carried by a 7-0 voice vote to appoint Board Member Karen Schwartz as the Vice Chair of the ESCOG JPA.

7. Discussion on update regarding the filing of the needed Joint Powers Agreement Establishing the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments as a separate Legal Entity from its Member Agencies.

Town Manager Dan Holler outlined the information in the staff report.

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

8. Discussion and possible action on the establishment of Ad Hoc Committees to review and bring recommendations back to the full ESCOG - JPA Board on matters related to the administration and operations to include at least the following: Bylaws; Budget – FY19-20; Financial Processes and member commitments and Fiscal Agent Agreement, Legal Representation, ESCOG-JPA Insurance; Conflict of Interest Code; and Executive Director Term, Selection, and Duties.

Town Manager Dan Holler outlined the information in the staff report.

SPEAKING FROM THE FLOOR:

Inyo County Counsel Marshall Rudolph discussed how the legal counsel for the ESCOG JPA would be structured. Mr. Rudolph said that there would be a team approach between all of the member agencies. He said that his office would be happy to take the lead if necessary, however, he would need to make sure that Inyo County Board of Supervisors were comfortable with that and reported that he had added that topic to their next agenda. Mr. Rudolph asked the members of the Board if they would like his firm to take the lead, and said if so, he would put together a legal services agreement. If the Inyo County Supervisors did not approve of his office taking the lead, he suggested the possibility of the Jones and Mayer Law Firm doing so. He said that if his office did take the lead, he would likely transition the duties of lead counsel for the JPA to one of his deputies or assistants.

There was discussion between Mr. Rudolph, Mr. Holler and members of the Board.

It was moved by Board Member John Wentworth, seconded by Board Member Jim Ellis, with Board Member Lynda Salcido absent, and carried by a 7-0 voice vote to appoint Board Members Bob Gardner and Dan Totheroh, and Vice Chair Karen Schwartz to the Administrative Ad Hoc Committee to work on the Budget for Fiscal Years 2019/20 and 2020/21; Creation of Bylaws; Development of a Conflict of Interest Code; ESCOG-JPA Insurance; and Financial Processes and member commitments and a Fiscal Agent Agreement.

It was moved by Board Member John Wentworth, seconded by Board Member Dan Totheroh, with Board Member Lynda Salcido absent, and carried by a 7-0-voice vote to appoint Board Members Jim Ellis and John Wentworth, and Chair Stacy Corless to an Ad Hoc Committee with the purpose of determining the term and duties for the position of Executive Director and selection of potential candidates.

9. Discussion with Mono County Finance Director, Janet Dutcher regarding the ESCOG fiscal services and processes provided by Mono County Department of Finance.

Mono County Finance Director Janet Dutcher outlined the information in her staff report.

Town of Mammoth Lakes Town Manager Dan Holler reported that the staff recommendation was for Ms. Dutcher to invoice each of the member agencies for the entire \$16,500 upfront based on the draft budget for the start up costs of the ESCOG JPA.

The Board gave direction for each of the member agencies to pay \$16,500 upon receipt of the invoice.

Ms. Dutcher stated that it was important to determine who would be authorized to approve invoices for payment. She said that the Board could authorize the Chair to approve payments or agendaize those items for approval by the Board in lieu of an Executive Director.

Mr. Holler recommended that Vice Chair Karen Schwartz approve payments until the Ad Hoc Administrative Committee sets a policy, rather than Chair Stacy Corless since Ms. Corless had a seat on the Mono County Board.

There was consensus by the Board that the Administrative Ad Hoc Committee would determine who would be responsible for authorizing payments on behalf of the ESCOG JPA.

There was discussion between Ms. Dutcher, Mr. Holler, and members of the Board.

The Board went into recess at 9:32 a.m.

The Board reconvened at 9:36 a.m.

10. Update on the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership (ESSRP) including Partnership Meetings on January 6th and February 3rd, and establishment of liaison between the ESCOG and ESSRP to review future opportunities.

Board Member John Wentworth outlined the information in the packet regarding the ESSRP and gave an update on the recent Sustainable Recreation Partnership meetings that had taken place. Mr. Wentworth announced that Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access (MLTPA) and the Inyo National Forest had been working with Quantified Ventures on an application for the Innovative Finance for National Forests Grant which would be submitted on February 17, 2020. If awarded, the funds would be used for a business plan for campgrounds in Inyo County, Mono County and the Inyo National Forest. He reported that Inyo National Forest Supervisor Tammy Randall Parker had announced a partnership with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) for a pilot program. He spoke about the National Parks Service's (NPS) participation in the ESSRP meetings and the Rivers, Trails and Conservations Assistance (RTCA) program. He said that he thought the ESSRP and the ESCOG JPA needed to work together at some point. He said that the next ESSRP meeting would be on March 2nd in Bishop, followed by a meeting on April 6th in Mammoth.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

11. Update on the Prop 68/Sierra Nevada Conservancy's "Sustainable Recreation and Tourism" Grant, administered by the Town of Mammoth Lakes on behalf of the regional partners

Board Member John Wentworth gave an update on the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) grant. Mr. Wentworth said there was a meeting scheduled next week with the Visitor Connection Working Group to start development of the Visitor Connection package which would include a series of recommendations for visitors regarding the Eastern Sierra. He gave an update on the TOML Climate Adaptation and Resilience Assessment and spoke about doing a Natural Asset Assessment. He reported that the next ESSRP Gateway Community Public Workshop would be on March 26th in Mammoth. He spoke about the USDA Rural Development Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG).

SPEAKING FROM THE FLOOR:

Inyo County Assistant County Administrator Leslie Chapman reported that she had reviewed the grant to consider which project might be eligible for it. Ms Chapman said that she was unsure if any of the projects she reviewed would be eligible by the time the grant application was due, but said it was possible that certain events could be eligible. She said she had hoped for money for the Small Business Center, but said that it would not be ready in time.

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

12. Update on Bishop Eastern Sierra Regional Airport (BIH) Air Service.

Inyo County Assistant County Administrator Leslie Chapman gave an update on Bishop Eastern Sierra Regional Airport Air Service. Ms. Chapman reported that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review was in process with the Federal Aviation Association (FAA) as the lead agency and said that Inyo County was the lead for the California Environmental Protection Act (CEQA) process. She said that both of the public scoping meetings were well attended. Ms. Chapman said that the next step was to review the comments gathered at the meetings and finalize the scope and review everything with the FAA, after that the analysis would begin. She reported that she was looking at next fall for the airport to receive Part 139 Certification. She said that there were a couple of outstanding issues, however, resolution of the issues was going well, and that they were considering options such as used trucks, rental vehicles and funding from the FAA. She reported that the FAA would do an inspection when construction had been completed followed by a final inspection in the fall.

Board Member John Wentworth said that the Local Transportation Commission (LTC) was working on potential transportation issues moving visitors from BIH to Mammoth, Mt. Whitney and Death Valley, in addition to other recreation destinations in the region once commercial flights were landing at BIH. Mr. Wentworth suggested joint meetings between the ESCOG and the LTC.

Board Member Jeff Griffiths reported that there was a lot of interest from private companies with regard to assisting with transportation.

Board Member Jim Ellis recommended a Public Service Announcement regarding transportation for potential providers.

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

13. Discussion regarding Grant Opportunities, including Innovative Finance for National Forest grant application “Inyo Forest Campgrounds” and USDA Rural Development Rural Business Development Grants (RBDG)

This item was combined with item #11.

14. Update on housing activities from all member agencies.

Board Member Jeff Griffiths reported that the Silver Peaks project was moving forward with the eighty-two units and said that the escrow period had been extended and should close in the next couple of months. Mr. Griffiths reported that Inyo County was considering mixed use zoning as well as a revolving loan program for rehabilitation of vacant homes to be used as rental properties.

Board Member John Wentworth reported that the Town of Mammoth Lakes' primary focus was The Parcel. Mr. Wentworth said that the RFP for a Developer had gone out and there should be a determination within the next week or two as to who would be selected. He said that the project needed to go through the CEQA process which would take nine to twelve months to complete and projected a move in date no earlier than 2022. Mr. Wentworth said that financing was being worked on and said that Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) revenue of about \$7.5-9 million was set aside for the first phase. He added that the Town Council was considering adding a special tax measure on the November ballot for a 1% TOT increase to be used solely for housing. He spoke about mobility issues and reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMTs). Mr. Wentworth said that it was imperative to increase housing for the local workforce in order to keep the Town functioning. He spoke about concerns around Mammoth Lakes Tourism's (MLT) marketing and Alterra's long-term commitment to the Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID).

Vice Chair Karen Schwartz reported that applications for an RFP for a consultant to assist the City of Bishop with their general plan and converting some commercial properties into mixed use were coming in. Ms. Schwartz said that their Planning Department had recently approved a conditional use permit for a private investor to convert a local office building into residential units. She said the City was trying to convert empty spaces into residential units. She reported that a JPA was recently formed between the City of Bishop and Rural Fire Protection District.

Board Member Jim Ellis spoke about building up rather than out in Bishop. Mr. Ellis reported that the Kingston Development was moving forward with eleven to twelve units. He said that there had been a lot of public outreach with regard to affordable housing needs and said that the League of California Cities was focused on housing and had estimated that the cost to build in California was approximately \$500 per square foot.

Board Member Bob Gardner reported that Mono County was moving forward with plans to hire a Housing Coordinator. Mr. Gardner said that there was a project in the Walker Coleville area that would provide a few units. He said that the Lee Vining Tioga Inn project which would create one hundred units was in process. He reported that the Mono Basin Regional Planning Advisory Committee had established a subcommittee on housing and was pursuing opportunities for smaller projects, in particular, an old school property for ten to twelve units. Mr. Gardner said that June Lake had two projects in the planning process which would total fifteen to twenty units; the expansion of the June Lake Brewery and the development up the street from the Brewery. He reported that the Davison House project in Mammoth was being worked on and a transitional unit had been established by Inyo Mono Advocates for Community Action (IMACA) in the fall in June Lake. He reported that he and Mono County Supervisor Jennifer Kreitz had attended a seminar regarding the policy side of homelessness issues for renters.

Chair Stacy Corless reported that the housing project in the Walker area that Mr. Gardner spoke about was through Mono County Behavioral Health (MCBH) for permanent supportive housing. Ms. Corless added that MCBH was working on a thirty unit housing project in Mammoth which would include permanent supportive housing. She said that the developer on the thirty unit project had also responded to the Town's RFP for The Parcel.

SPEAKING FROM THE FLOOR:

Mono County Finance Director Janet Dutcher announced that Mono County had been awarded the Whole Person Care Grant in the amount \$450,000. Ms. Dutcher said that they had five years to spend the funds and that there was more money to come. She said that the funds were meant to take care of community members that were at-risk of becoming homeless. Ms. Dutcher said that the Mono County award had three program objectives; fund a countywide Housing Coordinator position, develop Gap funding subsidies, and invest in infrastructure.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

15. Member Reports

Board Member Jim Ellis said that it was good to be back, and said he was glad to see that the JPA had moved forward.

Board Member Dan Totheroh spoke about a potential vaping ban in Inyo County. Mr. Totheroh reported that Inyo County had altered their short-term rental process and would no longer allow non-hosted short-term rentals. He said that the penalties for renting without a short-term permit had been increased significantly and included charges for every day rented and/or advertised without a permit.

Board Member Bob Gardner gave an update on a cannabis cultivation permit in the Walker Coleville area.

Vice Chair Karen Schwartz spoke about potential rezoning in the City of Bishop. Ms. Schwartz reported that the California Superior Court had a renewed interested in purchasing a piece of property across from the high school to build a new superior court.

Board Member Jeff Griffiths said that with development of the Bishop Airport there would need to be a new location for the annual fireworks display and reported that it had been decided that the Tri-County Fairgrounds would work and would allow for a bigger display. Mr. Griffiths reported that Inyo County was close to breaking ground on their consolidated office building. He said that the County had issued close to thirty cannabis permits in South County. Mr. Griffiths reported that he was on the Executive Board of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) Homelessness Action Team. He said that he had a discussion with one of the representatives from Go-Biz regarding Regions Rising Together and the need for a regional approach to finding the industries of the future and investing in them.

Board Member John Wentworth reported that the Town was working on land conveyance issues and could possibly package those with other communities in the region. Mr. Wentworth said that TOT was strong in Mammoth even with this season's light snowfall. He said that due to IKON Pass Blackout dates, holidays had not been as crowded, however, business on the weekends before and after the holidays had increased. He spoke about mobility studies and the Walk Bike Ride Program and said that the Regional Transit Plan recently approved by Mono County had deficits around air service and airports and said that the language in the contract was out of date and would be updated. Mr. Wentworth said that The Parcel units were being looked at as primarily rentals, not for home ownership. He reported that the Town had passed a vaping/tobacco ordinance consistent with Mono County's ordinance. He announced that he had been reappointed to the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program (ICARP) through the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) and spoke about the goals of ICARP.

SPEAKING FROM THE FLOOR:

Town of Mammoth Lakes Manager Dan Holler said that the land conveyance would take at least a two-year cycle to get through Congress.

Chair Stacy Corless introduced Mono County Chief Administrative Officer Steve Barwick. Ms. Corless gave an update on the new Mono County Civic Center and said it should be completed by June 1st. She said that staff may need interim office space between March 31st and the June 1st move in date. She announced that all four of the marketing tourism agencies in the region were awarded the 2020 Visit California's Poppy Award for Cooperative Marketing. She spoke about the upcoming Town and County Joint Workshop scheduled on February 18th in Mammoth. Ms. Corless said that she had engaged with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) to look at increasing the region's capacity to take on forest and watershed health projects. Ms. Corless said that the local lead agency, Inyo-Mono Integrated Regional Water Management Program (IRWM), had received funding through SNC for capacity building. She discussed the desire in the region to create a Fire Safe Council. Ms. Corless reported that there was a SNC Project in the Mammoth Lakes Basin treating about one hundred acres and also a preplanning effort for a landscape project of 50,000 acres. She said that she thought this was a project that the ESCOG JPA should get involved in. Ms. Corless said that Plumas Corporation was applying for the preplanning grant for the landscape project and noted that Mono County resident and Plumas Corporation Project Manager Janet Hatfield would take the lead.

SPEAKING FROM THE FLOOR:

Mono County Chief Administrative Officer Steve Barwick gave a brief background about himself and said that he was happy to be in Mono County. Mr. Barwick reported that Bob Laughton would be the new Mono County Assistant Chief Administrative Officer.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

16. Discussion and action on establishing a regular meeting schedule, time and place(s) for ESCOG-JPA and/or next meeting and Call for Agenda Items

This item was taken out of order.

There was discussion between Town of Mammoth Lakes Town Manager Dan Holler and members of the Board.

It was moved by Board Member Bob Gardner, seconded by Board Member John Wentworth, with Board Member Lynda Salcido absent, and carried by 7-0 voice vote to adopt the meeting schedule that was selected prior to the ESCOG filing as a JPA.

17. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:53 a.m. to the next regular meeting on April 10, 2020 at 8:30 a.m. in the Bishop City Council Chambers.