



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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Friday, June 12, 2020

8:30 a.m.

**Mammoth Lakes Council Chamber
437 Old Mammoth Road, Suite Z
Mammoth Lakes, CA**

*NOTE: This will be a Zoom meeting and will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of the Governor's Executive Order which suspends certain requirements of the Ralph M. Brown Act. It is strongly encouraged that you watch this meeting on the Town of Mammoth Lakes' (TOML) website at www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov or on TOML's local government cable channel 18. **Public comments can be submitted to the TOML Assistant Clerk at aplaisted@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov before and during the meeting***

Board Members

Mono County Supervisor
Stacy Corless –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

Inyo County Supervisor
Dan Totheroh

City of Bishop Councilmember
Jim Ellis

City of Bishop Councilmember
Karen Schwartz – Vice Chair

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)

1. Call to Order

Chair Stacy Corless called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Corless.

3. Roll Call

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

4. Public Comment

There were no public comments given.

5. Approve the Minutes of the May 15, 2020 special meeting of the ESCOG JPA.

It was moved by Board Member Jeff Griffiths, seconded by Board Member Bob Gardner, with Vice Chair Karen Schwartz absent, and carried by a 7-0 roll call vote to approve the Minutes of the May 15, 2020 special meeting of the ESCOG JPA as amended.

6. Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership (ESSRP) Update.

Chair Stacy Corless requested that items #6 through 9 be combined into one presentation.

Board Member John Wentworth outlined the information in the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership (ESSRP) June 1, 2020 meeting PowerPoint Presentation. Mr. Wentworth said that he felt that the ESCOG JPA could assist with some of the ESSRP projects. He spoke about the relationship the ESSRP had with Placeworks. Mr. Wentworth gave a presentation about the Eastern Sierra Recreation and Infrastructure Vulnerability Assessment and Adaption Strategy Partnership, which is an effort of the United States Forest Service (USFS). He also spoke about Regions Rise Together (RRT) and reported that he had recently attended an RRT meeting. Mr. Wentworth gave an update on ESSR Coordinator Matt Paruolo's liaison activities throughout the region and announced that the next ESSRP Meeting would be on July 6, 2020.

Chair Corless reported that she had attended the Yosemite Gateway Area Coordination (YGAC) Team meetings and spoke about the progress the YGAC had made with regard to reopening with COVID guidelines in place. She also discussed effective messaging to the region's visitors.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

7. Discussion regarding the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership “Innovative Finance for National Forests Grant Program” - Inyo National Forest and Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation (MLTPA)

This discussion was combined with Item #6.

8. Update on the Sustainable Recreation and Tourism Initiative – Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) and California Proposition 68 update.

This discussion was combined with Item #6.

9. Update on the National Parks System (NPS) “Rivers, Trails and Conservations Assistance” - MLTPA

This discussion was combined with Item #6.

10. Discussion and Direction (action) on COVID-19 regional impacts and response include decisions and actions by public land managers and/or other agencies.

Town of Mammoth Lakes Town Manager Dan Holler gave an update on the status of the various business sectors that would open in the region today and in the upcoming week. Mr. Holler spoke about the Southern California Edison (SCE) tree removal project, concerns about managing public health, and messaging to visitors and regional employees.

SPEAKING FROM THE FLOOR:

Inyo County Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Clint Quilter spoke about the business sectors that were scheduled to open in Inyo County today, and pending guidelines for personal care services. Mr. Quilter said that the County had encouraged businesses to complete their attestations and to follow COVID guidelines. He said the Forest Service released information about most of the campgrounds and spoke about which campgrounds in Inyo County had opened. He reported that the concessionaires would likely be able to open the Whitney Portal on June 19th.

City of Bishop City Administrator Ron Phillips announced that the City of Bishop had adopted the 2020/21 budget and reported that their revenue projections were down approximately 23%. Mr. Phillips said that there would be no new hiring, or Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increases on July 1st, in addition to other cost savings measures. He said that he hoped that once they reopened things would get better.

Board Member Jim Ellis announced that Bishop City Council had approved addition of a 1% Transaction and Use Tax (TUT) measure to the November ballot and said he hoped that it would add \$1.6-\$1.8 M to the overall budget if it passed.

Chair Stacy Corless reported that lodging in the unincorporated areas of Mono County would open today along with several campgrounds, and said that lodging in the Town of Mammoth Lakes (TOML) would open on June 19th. Chair Corless said that Tioga Pass would open on June 15th and discussed the new mandatory day use reservation system. She spoke about the community meetings and reported that there had been some confusion related to messaging. Chair Corless said there were concerns about the level of marketing that would be allowed. Chair Corless discussed concerns related to dispersed camping.

Board Member Wentworth said that he would reach out to Bishop with regard to campaign assistance with regard to their TUT ballot measure. Mr. Wentworth complimented everyone on their efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Wentworth warned about a potential spike that could happen after the County had been open for a while and discussed the anticipated difficulty of trying to close down again if necessary and the need for the region to work together. He spoke about the Visitor Connection Working Group.

Board Member Jeff Griffiths reported that he thought better communication with Federal partners including the Forest Service was important. Mr. Griffiths spoke about the public's reaction to the difference between Inyo County and Mono County's response to the dissemination of COVID information and said that there should be regionwide coordination. He said that the State had changed the recreational and leisure travel ban from prohibited to highly discouraged.

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

11. Board Member Reports on Local, Regional, State and Federal matters related to ESCOG JPA interests.

Board Member Jeff Griffiths said that he had been involved with the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and reported that there had been many discussions about the 1991 and 2011 realignment which pertained to funding for all of the Health and Human Services programs. Mr. Griffiths spoke about the increase in Health and Human Service needs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. He gave an update on air service in Bishop and said that it would not start this fall due to the pandemic. Mr. Griffiths reported that he had received several comments related to the Black Lives Matter protests and said that the number of requests to view the portion of Inyo County's budget that pertained to the Police Department had increased significantly.

Board Member John Wentworth reported that there was a staffing opportunity with the ESCOG. Mr. Wentworth reported that TOML was in good financial shape all things considered. He reported that TOML and Alterra had been working together and had kept an eye on health and safety as well as business. Mr. Wentworth gave an update on the Bishop Airport and air service subsidy and reported that the Federal Aviation Association (FAA) grant had come through for the Mammoth Yosemite Airport.

Board Member Bob Gardner reported that the Mono County budget calendar had been pushed back to August or September to allow the Board of Supervisors to see how things progressed through the summer. Mr. Gardner spoke about the Tioga Inn housing project and said that there would be an agenda item regarding it on the Mono County Board of Supervisors' meetings on June 29th and 30th. Mr. Gardner spoke about the SCE tree trimming and vegetation management project.

Chair Corless announced that there was an SCE Wildlife Mitigation presentation scheduled on June 16th. She reported that Mono County had finished moving out of the Sierra Center Mall and that most employees were still working from home. She said that the move in date at the new Civic Center was the beginning of July. She discussed the Great American Outdoors Act which would bring funding to the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service. She also spoke about the Eight Can't Wait program for law enforcement agencies and said that the Mono County Sheriff Department would be implement that program.

SPEAKING FROM THE FLOOR

CAO Clint Quilter gave an update on potential air service in Bishop.

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

- 12. Discuss and set date (proposed dates July 1st or 2nd at 8:30 a.m.) for special meeting to adopt the resolution adopting the ESCOG JPA Conflict of Interest Code.**

CONSENSUS: There was consensus by the Board to schedule a special meeting on July 1st at 8:30 a.m.

- 13. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 a.m. to a special meeting to be held on July 1st at 8:30 a.m.