



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

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**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

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**Friday, August 14, 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](http://www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov) or on TOML's local government cable channel 18.*

**Public comments may be submitted to the TOML Assistant Clerk at [aplaisted@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov](mailto: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). NOTE: Comments for all agenda items are limited to a speaking time of three minutes.

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Stacy Corless called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Corless.

**3. Roll Call**

Chair Stacy Corless, Vice Chair Karen Schwartz and Board Members Bob Gardner, Lynda Salcido, John Wentworth, Dan Totheroh and Jim Ellis were present via videoconference. Board Member Jeff Griffiths joined the meeting at 8:36 a.m.

- 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.

A public comment was received via email from MLTPA Project Specialist Chelsea Taylor regarding the Sustainable Recreation Tourism Initiative which had been awarded to the Town of Mammoth Lakes on behalf of the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership.

**5. Approve the Minutes of the July 1, 2020 special meeting of the ESCOG JPA.**

**ACTION:** It was moved by Board Member Lynda Salcido, seconded by Board Member Dan Totheroh, and carried by an 8-0 roll call vote to approve the minutes of the July 1, 2020 special meeting of the ESCOG.

**6. Discussion and approval of Clerical Services Agreement between the ESCOG and the Town of Mammoth Lakes.**

Town of Mammoth Lakes (TOML) Town Manager Dan Holler outlined the information in the Clerical Services Agreement between the ESCOG and TOML and recommended approval of the agreement.

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

ACTION: It was moved by Board Member Bob Gardner, seconded by Board Member Jeff Griffiths, and carried by an 8-0 roll call vote to approve the Clerical Services Agreement between the ESCOG and the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

**7. Discussion and approval of the Fiscal Services Agreement between the ESCOG and the County of Mono.**

TOML Town Manager Dan Holler outlined the information in the Fiscal Services Agreement and said that the agreement was strictly for basic services and would not cover the costs of grant work and that any additional services would be addressed on a case by case basis. Mr. Holler reported that he had not received a response regarding the agreement from County Legal Counsel at this time.

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

ACTION: It was moved by Board Member Jeff Griffiths, seconded by Board Member Jim Ellis, and carried by an 8-0 roll call vote to approve the Fiscal Services Agreement between the ESCOG and the County of Mono as amended to have the agreement signed by Vice Chair Karen Schwartz on behalf of the ESCOG since Chair Stacy Corless would sign it on behalf of Mono County.

**8. Update on Liability Insurance and Request for Quote.**

TOML Town Manager Dan Holler discussed the insurance requirements for the ESCOG and reported that a Request for Quote (RFQ) had been submitted to Alliant and said that the quote would be presented at a future meeting for consideration. Mr. Holler estimated that the cost would be approximately \$5000. He said that Inyo County Counsel staff had assisted with coordinating the insurance efforts through the Inyo County Risk Manager.

There was discussion between Mr. Holler, Inyo County Counsel Marshall Rudolph and members of the Board.

**9. Discussion regarding Executive Director recruitment for the ESCOG JPA. Request for Qualifications and Contract for Services.**

Board Member Lynda Salcido left the meeting at 9:48 a.m.

TOML Town Manager Dan Holler discussed options for hiring an Executive Director for the ESCOG and said the position could be filled by an individual or a firm. Mr. Holler outlined the information in the sample Agreement and sample RFQ and reported that the Proposed Budget was \$25,000, approximately \$4,000 per month for 6 months. He also spoke about the hiring process.

Board Member John Wentworth discussed the information in the RFQ and spoke about the qualifications and experience that the members of the Board desired in an Executive Director and recommended those details be added to the RFQ.

Inyo County Counsel Marshall Rudolph outlined the information in the sample Agreement. Mr. Rudolph explained the legal requirements for hiring an Executive Director as an independent contractor.

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

CONSENSUS: There was consensus by the Board to direct the subcommittee to make revisions to the Request for Qualifications as discussed.

**10. Presentation from Inyo-Mono Regional Water Management Group Project Development Specialist Rick Kattelman regarding the Eastern Sierra Water Association and Regional Fire and Forest Capacity Program's funding opportunity from California Fire Safe Council for a County/Regional-level Fire Prevention Position.**

This item was taken out of order.

Chair Stacy Corless introduced Inyo-Mono Regional Water Management Group Project Development Specialist Rick Kattelman and Program Director Holly Alpert.

Mr. Kattelman gave an update on the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program funding opportunity from the California Fire Safe Council (CFSC) for a County/Regional-level Fire Prevention Position. He outlined the information in the CFSC Grants – County Wildfire Mitigation Coordinators document. He said that he felt the ESCOG would be an ideal home for one or more of the coordinator positions. Mr. Kattelman offered resources to assist the ESCOG if the Board was interested in housing one or more coordinator.

Chair Corless said that she represented Mono County on the Board of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) and said that she had let them know that the region needed more wildfire mitigation capacity. She asked the members of the Board if they had an interest in pursuing this opportunity.

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

CONSENSUS: There was consensus among the Board for the ESCOG to potentially house one or more County/Regional level Fire Prevention positions.

Chair Corless announced that Plumas Corporation Project Manager Janet Hatfield would give a presentation on September 18th regarding a 55,000 acre fuels reduction project proposed on Inyo National Forest lands in and around Mammoth Lakes, and in Mono and Madera Counties. She said that the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) next meeting was scheduled to be held on September 10th.

**11. Update on the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership (ESSRP) including Partnership Meetings on July 6 and August 3 and reviews future opportunities for ESCOG engagement and update on the status of the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Coordinator and Mono County.**

Board Member John Wentworth outlined the information in the meeting notes from the July 6, 2020 and August 3, 2020 ESSRP Meetings. Mr. Wentworth reported that Governor Newsom and President Trump had recently announced that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) titled the Agreement for Shared Stewardship of California's Forests and Rangelands had been developed, and discussed the details of the MOU. He said that Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Coordinator Matt Paruolo's position may be moved to Mono County and reported that the Town was in negotiations with Mammoth Lakes Recreation (MLR) with regard to restructuring. Mr. Wentworth gave an update on the Visitor Connection Group and announced that their next meeting would be held on August 20<sup>th</sup>.

Board Member Lynda Salcido returned to the meeting at 10:14 a.m.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

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

Board Member John Wentworth gave an update on the Sustainable Recreation and Tourism Initiative Grant and reported that the initiative had gone digital. Mr. Wentworth encouraged the members of the Board to have their constituents submit projects for consideration. He emphasized the importance of the messaging and spoke about climate change.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

**13. Introductions and Brief Presentation from the Innovative Financing for National Forest (IFNF) grant program: "Inyo National Forest Campgrounds: Business Plan".**

- a. **Jeff Lerner - US Endowment for Forestry and Communities**
- b. **Jonas Epstein - USFS National Partnership Office**
- c. **Spencer Plumb, PHD - National Forest Foundation**
- d. **Laura Drescher - Senior Associate, Environment Quantified Ventures**
- e. **John "Pancho" Smith - Acting Forest Supervisor Inyo National Forest**

This item was taken out of order.

Supervisor Stacy Corless left the meeting at 9:13 a.m.

Board Member John Wentworth introduced Quantified Ventures (QV) Senior Associate Laura Drescher.

U.S Endowment for Forestry and Communities Senior Advisor/Consultant Jeff Lerner introduced himself. Mr. Lerner outlined the information in the Innovative Finance for National Forests Grant Program and Inyo National Forest Campground Business Plan PowerPoint.

National Forest Foundation (NFF) Conservation Finance Program Manager Spencer Plumb introduced himself and spoke about the purpose of NFF. Mr. Plumb spoke about the IFNF program.

QV Director Seth Brown introduced himself and described the services that QV provided and the industries that they partnered with.

Ms. Drescher discussed the scope of the program and spoke about potential financing strategies.

There was discussion between Mr. Lerner, Mr. Plumb, QV staff and members of the Board.

**14. Discussion regarding Grant Opportunities, including USDA Rural Development Rural Business Development Grants (RBDG).**

Board Member John Wentworth reported that there were economic development resources available for rural communities through the RBDG.

Inyo County Chief Administrative Officer Clint Quilter announced that Inyo County had applied for, and he thought received, a \$50,000 RBDG and reported that the funds would be allocated toward the Small Business Development Center that the County had been putting money away for over the past few years.

**15. Board Member/Agency Reports**

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

Inyo County Chief Administrative Officer Clint Quilter gave an update on the Bishop Eastern Sierra Regional Airport (BIH) Air Service. Mr. Quilter said that he appreciated the assistance he had received from TOML Public Works Director Grady Dutton and TOML Town Manager Dan Holler with regard to initiating commercial flights in Bishop.

Board Member John Wentworth reported that TOML had a received a CARES Act Grant which would be used for infrastructure improvements and updates at the Mammoth Yosemite Airport.

**b. Update on housing initiatives**

Board Member Jeff Griffiths gave an update on the Silver Peaks project in Bishop and discussed the Project Home Key program.

Board Member Jim Ellis reported that new home construction had started at the old nursery site in Bishop and discussed the conversion of an old office building into housing.

Mr. Wentworth announced that the Town had been awarded a sizeable grant to be used for The Parcel and gave an update on The Parcel project.

Board Member Bob Gardner gave an update on the Tioga Inn project and reported that there were some small housing projects in the works in June Lake.

Mr. Quilter announced that Inyo County had received a \$75,000 Technical Assistance Grant from No Place Like Home (NPLH). He reported that \$50,000 had been allocated to the Silver Peaks project and said that the County entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Mammoth Lakes Housing (MLH) for development of a home rehabilitation program with the remaining \$25,000.

**c. Other**

Mr. Wentworth gave an update on visitation in Mammoth, reported on the Trail Host Program, and spoke about joint efforts with Mammoth Resorts in preparation for winter. He said that he hoped there would be a Community Meeting in October to advise the community about what to expect in Town this winter due to the effects of COVID-19. He said there would be a coordinated message between Mammoth Lakes Tourism (MLT) and the Town. Mr. Wentworth said that he wanted to avoid a situation with winter recreation having a capacity of only 15,000 people but ending up with 25,000 to 40,000 people in Town. Mr. Wentworth reported that Dr. Boo had reached out to County Health Officers in other ski areas to gather ideas on managing winter recreation and visitation.

Board Member Lynda Salcido reported that she had been working with Mono County Public Health and discussed the health and economic concerns related to COVID and visitations in the region.

Town Manager Dan Holler discussed the Town's outreach efforts in the community including the setup of a temporary ticket booth from the ski area by the Visitor Center to provide information to visitors and placement of portable restrooms in Town on Old Mammoth Road and Main Street. He reported that the trolley system for the Lakes Basin had very busy and announced that service would be extended through at least Labor Day. He discussed the Town's coordination with law enforcement agencies including the Forest Service and County and reported an increase in citations. Mr. Holler spoke about winter bussing capacity as a result of COVID social distancing requirements.

Mr. Gardner reported that the Chamber of Commerces and non-profits in Mono County had stepped up to help provide dumpsters, portable restrooms and an information desk for visitors.

Vice Chair Karen Schwartz reported that the City of Bishop had an increase in COVID-19 cases and anticipated Inyo County being added to the monitoring list. Ms. Schwartz spoke about housing issues and solutions for the homeless population. She said that the City of Bishop kicked off their Caltrans Grant, had community meetings regarding rezoning of downtown Bishop from commercial zones to residential zones, and discussed increasing pedestrians and bicycle use.

Mr. Griffiths reported that South Lake Road was being redone and said that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) had looked at a management plan for Alabama Hills to assist with dispersed camping issues. He reported on the COVID-19 outbreak at the Bishop Care Center and reported that there had been three fatalities and several positive cases at the facility, in addition to an increased spread throughout the community. He acknowledged the efforts of Inyo County Counsel Marshall Rudolph and Deputy County Counsel Grace Chuchla for their enforcement action against one of the road businesses in the County. Mr. Griffiths said that overall Inyo County was in compliance with COVID guidelines and said that he was proud of his community.

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

#### **16. Request for future agenda items**

There were no requests for future agenda items.

Mr. Holler discussed the process going forward with regard to creating future agendas.

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

#### **17. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:51 a.m. to the next regular meeting on October 16, 2020 at 8:30 a.m.