



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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**Friday, February 12, 2021
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 may be submitted to the TOML Assistant Clerk at clerk@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 760-965-3615. 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 8:32 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Stacy Corless led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

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

4. Public Comment

There were no comments given at this time.

5. Consent Agenda

a. Approve the Minutes of the December 11, 2020 meeting of the ESCOG JPA.

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 minutes of the December 11, 2020 meeting.

6. Call for Selection of Chair and Vice Chair

Chair Stacy Corless reported that per the bylaws it was time to select a new Chair and Vice Chair for 2021.

Board Member Jeff Griffiths nominated Vice Chair Karen Schwartz for the role of Chair.

Board Member Lynda Salcido nominated Board Member John Wentworth as Vice Chair.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

ACTION: It was moved by Board Member Jeff Griffiths, seconded by Board Member John Wentworth, and carried by an 8-0 roll call vote to appoint Vice Chair Karen Schwartz as the Chair of the ESCOG.

ACTION: It was moved by Board Member Lynda Salcido, seconded by Board Member Jim Ellis, and carried by an 8-0 roll call vote to appoint Board Member John Wentworth as the Vice Chair of the ESCOG.

7. Consideration of a Letter to California State Senate Budget Subcommittee 2 and Assembly Budget Subcommittee 3 Requesting Increased Funding for Wildfire and Forest Resiliency

Board Member Stacy Corless reported that she had received a request from the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) for the ESCOG to support the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Expenditure Plan (Expenditure Plan) that Governor Gavin Newsom had included in his January budget proposal.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

ACTION: It was moved by Board Member Stacy Corless, seconded by Board Member Dan Tothoroh, and carried by an 8-0 roll call vote to approve submission of letters of support to the State Senate Budget Subcommittee 2 and the State Assembly Budget Committee 3 Requesting Increased Funding for Wildfire and Forest Resiliency.

8. Consideration of A Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments Authorizing and Approving a Grant Application for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Proposition 1 Restoration Grant

Administrative Services Contractor Elaine Kabala outlined the information in the staff report.

Chair Karen Schwartz voiced concerns with regard to the ESCOG having the necessary staff to manage the grant if it was awarded.

There was discussion between Ms. Kabala, Legal Counsel Grace Chuchla, Plumas Corporation Project Manager Janet Hatfield and members of the Board.

ACTION: It was moved by Board Member John Wentworth, seconded by Board Member Lynda Salcido, and carried by an 8-0 roll call vote to adopt the Resolution as submitted pursuant to the submission of a grant application to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for funds consistent with the Ecosystem Management Program of the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments.

9. Consideration of Cal Fire-funded Wildfire Mitigation County Coordinator ESCOG Position

Administrative Services Contractor Elaine Kabala outlined the information in the staff report.

Inyo-Mono Regional Water Management Program Project Development Specialist Rick Kattelman spoke about the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Project and discussed the possibility of hiring a Cal-Fire funded Wildfire Mitigation County Coordinator to be housed within the ESCOG. Mr. Kattelman discussed the advantage of potentially housing one position for Mono County and one for Inyo County within the ESCOG.

Inyo County Emergency Services Manager Kelly Williams said that the position would be a great opportunity to collaborate as we move into the wildfire season. Ms. Williams reported that her Fire Safe Council Representative had mentioned that she felt many counties would not apply since they already had enough support. She voiced concern that if the application was submitted by the ESCOG, they may only consider awarding one position because they would look at it as a region rather than awarding one position for Inyo County and another for Mono County.

Mr. Kattlemann said he did not think the ESCOG would be able to apply for the positions and said that each County should apply separately when the positions were posted, and if awarded they would work together through the ESCOG.

Ms. William said that the position could be a contract position rather than a staff position and would pay \$100K over a two-year period.

There was discussion between Mr. Kattlemann, Ms. Williams, Ms. Kabala and members of the Board.

10. Consideration of Contract Amendment #1 for Administrative Services with Elaine Kabala

Administrative Services Contractor Elaine Kabala outlined the information in the staff report.

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

ACTION: It was moved by Board Member Jeff Griffiths, seconded by Board Member Dan Totheroh, and carried by an 8-0 roll call vote to approve Amendment Number 1 to the Agreement Between the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments and Elaine Kabala for the Provision of Administrative Services.

11. Update on the Sustainable Recreation Tourism Initiative (SRTI) and the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership's (ESSRP) activities and related activities – Receive a presentation from Councilmember John Wentworth

Vice Chair John Wentworth outlined the information in the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership (ESSRP) PowerPoint.

Board Member Stacy Corless spoke about the Mono County Collaborative Planning Team (CPT) and discussed the possibility of the ESCOG working with them on regional planning efforts.

Inyo County Emergency Services Manager Kelly Williams spoke about the importance of the dissemination of information, possibly through a Public Information Officer (PIO) for each entity or a Joint Information System (JIS) to work on collaborative messaging for the region.

There was discussion between Mr. Wentworth, Ms. Williams and members of the Board.

12. COVID / Vaccinations Update – Receive Updates from Mono County and Inyo County Supervisors

Board Member Lynda Salcido reported that she would stay on as a consultant and Deputy Branch Manager with Mono County Public Health (MCPH). Ms. Salcido gave an update on vaccination distribution efforts in Mono County and spoke about the County's vaccination portal. She reported that positive COVID cases in Mono County had declined and reported that testing was currently available four days per week. She said that she hoped we would be able to move into the Red Tier soon and spoke about Contact Tracing efforts and said that the number of people getting tested throughout the County had dropped. She reported that Verily testing was going to be replaced with the OptumServe system at the end of February. Ms. Salcido reported that the County's vaccine clinics had been very busy, discussed what phase in the vaccination process the County was in and said that many partners had stepped up to assist with the clinics including Mammoth Hospital, Mammoth Lakes Tourism (MLT) and Sandra DiDomizio with Green Fox Events. She gave an update on the Town of Mammoth Lakes (TOML) and Mono County's Lodging Orders and current dining restrictions.

TOML Town Manager Dan Holler reported that the TOML lodging order allowed for 70% occupancy with a 24-hour gap between rentals. Mr. Holler gave an update on the Business Assistance Grants and discussed continued Rental Assistance efforts.

Administrative Services Contractor Elaine Kabala reported that she had attended a webinar with Housing and Community Development (HCD) on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act applications and said that there was new Federal funding that would be going to the State for emergency rental assistance programs. Ms. Kabala directed the Board to the [HousingIsKey.com](https://www.housingiskey.com) website for additional information.

Board Member Jeff Griffiths reported that Inyo County put their CARES money into business support which allowed them to give out \$800K worth of grants to small businesses that had been affected by COVID. Mr. Griffiths said that they had utilized \$100K in general funds to support non-profits in their community and reported that they may have a benefactor willing to match the \$100K to provide additional support for local non-profits. He said that COVID cases and positivity rates had continued to decline in Inyo County and reported that COVID mitigation compliance had become more challenging. He discussed vaccination distribution efforts and the challenges that Inyo County was facing in getting doses timely in comparison to Mono County. Mr. Griffiths reported that he was on the COVID Rural Working group through California State Association of Counties (CSAC) which met every Friday morning and said that the group continued to advocate for more vaccines for rural counties.

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

13. Board Member/Agency Reports

Vice Chair John Wentworth spoke about mobility issues and planning in Mammoth Lakes. Mr. Wentworth discussed the Limelight Hotel presentation that the Town Council had received from the Little Nell Group regarding a development agreement with a potential revenue sharing opportunity with them. He said that Alterra was looking to do some redevelopment at the Main Lodge. Mr. Wentworth reported that regional commercial air service would be coming to Bishop. He announced that the Town Council had approved Phase 1 of The Parcel and gave an update on the new road that would be built leading down to the Red's Meadow Valley, discussed new leadership in the Devil's Postpile National Monument, and a land exchange that had been completed at the Base Lodge around Mammoth Mountain.

Board Member Stacy Corless reported that she and Board Member Bob Gardner had been working on a Justice Equity Diversity Inclusion project and invited other agencies to participate.

Board Member Bob Gardner discussed the issue of grazing on Conway Ranch and reported that the County had approved a lease to allow a small number of cattle on the property.

Board Member Jeff Griffiths reported that Inyo County was nearing completion of their consolidated office building and expected occupants to move in by the April 1st deadline. Mr. Griffiths gave an update on the Bishop Airport and said he expected flights to start in late summer or early fall. He reported that Inyo and Mono Counties were both up for Medi-Cal partner reauthorization and were considering the Inland Empire Health Plan (IEHP) as the new partner to administer the program. He reported that the State had put out the Master Plan on aging and encouraged everyone to check it out on the website.

Board Member Stacy Corless left the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

Board Member Jim Ellis reported that the City of Bishop had completed their second reading of their nuisance ordinance and had discussed an empty building ordinance at their last Council Meeting. Mr. Ellis said that construction had begun on Phase One of the Northern Sierra Water Line project. He said that the Council had a discussion regarding cross walk safety and reported that they would work with Caltrans through the Local Transportation Committee (LTC) for assistance resolving the safety issues.

Chair Karen Schwartz announced that the City of Bishop was recruiting for a new Police Chief. Ms. Schwartz acknowledged the Tri-County Fairgrounds for a prestigious award they had received for the innovative summer programming they had provided during the midst of the pandemic with a drive through entertainment program.

Legal Counsel Grace Chuchla discussed Form 700 procedures for the ESCOG Board Members and gave an update on the ESCOG's Conflict of Interest Code approval process with the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC).

There was discussion between Ms. Chuchla, Ms. Kabala and members of the Board.

14. Request for future agenda items

15. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:46 a.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled to be held on April 9, 2021 at 8:30 a.m.