



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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Friday, April 9, 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

Mono County Supervisor Bob
Gardner

Town of Mammoth Lakes Councilmember
Lynda Salcido

Town of Mammoth Lakes Councilmember John
Wentworth – Vice Chair

Inyo County Supervisor
Jeff Griffiths

Inyo County Supervisor
Dan Totheroh

City of Bishop Councilmember
Jim Ellis

City of Bishop Councilmember
Karen Schwartz - 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).

1. Call to Order

Chair Karen Schwartz called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Vice Chair John Wentworth led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

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

4. Public Comment

A comment was received via email from Mammoth Lakes Housing (MLH) Executive Director Patricia Robertson which discussed MLH's success over the last year. The email also included the MLH 2020 Annual Report.

A comment was received via email from Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Coordinator Matt Paruolo discussing his recent activities and those of the Sustainable Recreation Tourism Initiative (SRTI) and the Visitor Connection Working Group.

Both comments were read in their entirety and have been uploaded to the ESCOG's website.

5. Consent Agenda

- a. Approve the minutes of the February 12, 2021 meeting of the ESCOG JPA.

ACTION: It was moved by Board Member Bob Gardner, seconded by Vice Chair John Wentworth, with Board Member Lynda Salcido absent, and carried by a 7-0 roll call vote to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2021 meeting.

6. Discuss and Provide Direction to Staff Regarding ESCOG Serving as the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Lead Agency for Regional Ecosystem Management or Sustainable Recreation Projects – Administrative Services Contractor Elaine Kabala

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

Legal Counsel Grace Chuchla discussed the legal liability of the ESCOG if it were to serve as the lead agency for regional ecosystem management sustainable recreation projects.

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

Staff was given direction from the Board to move forward with the ESCOG serving as the lead agency when the opportunity presents itself.

7. Receive Presentation from the California Citizens Redistricting Commission Regarding the State-Level Redistricting Process – ESCOG Legal Counsel Grace Chuchla

Legal Counsel Grace Chuchla discussed the California Citizens Redistricting Commission State-Level Redistricting Process.

California Citizens Redistricting Commission Commissioners Linda Atukagawa and Jane Andersen outlined the information in the California Redistricting Basics PowerPoint presentation.

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

8. Receive a Presentation from Quantified Ventures regarding Innovative Financing for National Forest Business Planning for Campgrounds – Administrative Services Contractor Elaine Kabala

Quantified Ventures (QV) Associate Director Laura Drescher outlined the information in the QV Inyo National Forest Campgrounds Project PowerPoint presentation.

Board Members from each member agency requested that Ms. Drescher give this presentation to their Board or Council.

Inyo County County Administrative Officer Clint Quilter requested a copy of QV's business plan and cost for their project in Ohio.

There was discussion between Ms. Drescher, QV Director Seth Brown and members of the Board.

9. Discuss and Provide Direction to Staff Regarding the Drafting of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the ESCOG and Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership (ESSRP) to establish the desired and appropriate relationship between the ESSRP and the ESCOG – ESCOG Legal Counsel Grace Chuchla

Legal Counsel Grace Chuchla discussed the desire of the ESCOG to create a formal relationship with the ESSRP through the use of an MOU or contract.

Vice Chair John Wentworth reported that the ESSRP would need to draft a new MOU that binds the members of the ESSRP prior to creating an MOU between the ESSRP and the ESCOG. Mr. Wentworth said that the ESSRP's Sustainable Recreation Tourism Initiative (SRTI) Grant would end by the end of the year.

Board Member Stacy Corless suggested that the ESSRP become a formal advisory Board to the ESCOG.

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

CONSENSUS: There was consensus from the Board to move forward with the creation of an MOU with the ESSRP.

10. Discuss and Provide Direction to Staff Regarding ESCOG Representation in the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership (ESSRP) / Sustainable Recreation Tourism Initiative (SRTI) Portfolio Identification Process – Administrative Service Contractor 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.

Staff was given direction by the Board for Ms. Kabala to serve as the ESCOG's representative to the ESSRP for the project identification process and for the ESCOG to sponsor some of the ESSRP/SRTI recreation projects.

11. Discuss and Provide Direction to Staff Regarding ESCOG Sponsorship of Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership (ESSRP) / Sustainable Recreation Tourism Initiative (SRTI) Projects – Administrative Service Contractor Elaine Kabala

This item was combined with Item #10.

12. Receive an Update on Funding Opportunities – Administrative Service Contractor Elaine Kabala

Administrative Service Contractor Elaine Kabala reported that there had been a request to make this topic a standing item as grant opportunities that would fall under the ESCOG's purview arose.

13. Consider Approval of a Letter of Support for Project(s) to be Submitted by the Town of Mammoth Lakes (TOML) to Congressman Jay Obernolte for Congressional Appropriation –

Town of Mammoth Lakes Airport and Special Projects Manager Grady Dutton presented the Town's request for a letter of support from the ESCOG for its Airport Fire Fighting and Rescue (ARFF) Plan for the construction of a maintenance facility and snow storage shed at the Mammoth Yosemite (MMH) Airport.

TOML Town Manager Dan Holler outlined the information in the staff report. Mr. Holler discussed a potential letter of support from the ESCOG for the Whitmore Park Community Project.

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

No action was taken on this item.

14. Board Member/Agency Reports

Board Member Jeff Griffiths reported that the projects Inyo County had considered submitting for Congressional Appropriation were the Olancho Cartago Four Lane Project and the Small Business Development Center which would be a regional office for Inyo and Mono Counties. Mr. Griffith discussed the upcoming Mexican Consulate visit in Bishop and said that he and Board Member Stacy Corless had been working with ESSRP on tribal outreach. He announced that Inyo County Clerk Recorder Kammi Foote had resigned from her position to take a job out of state and announced that the Wild Iris Resiliency Symposium would take place on April 29th. He said that he had attended meetings with the Wounded Warrior Center, Veterans Services and Inyo Mono Advocates for Community Action (IMACA) and gave an update regarding Wounded Warriors and Veterans Housing Center Complex, and reported that Gordon Green had been appointed as Veterans Services Officer for Inyo and Mono Counties. He gave an update on the Inyo County Child Support Program and announced that Amy Weurdig had been appointed as the new Child Support Director. Mr. Griffiths said that the Inyo County Sheriff's Department would move its communications system to a digital Ultra High Frequency (UHF) Program, reported that commercial air service at Bishop Airport (BHI) was preparing California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents, and gave an update regarding solid waste management. He reported that Inyo County had looked at housing and zoning, and vacant lands to increase affordable housing and said he would like to have a housing summit for the region. Mr. Griffiths gave a COVID update and spoke about a non-profit grant program Inyo County had created to support local non-profit organizations that had been affected by COVID and announced that they had received a \$100,000 matching grant from Metabolic Studio to bring the total funds available to award to \$200,000.

Board Member Bob Gardner reported that he had recently attended a virtual Yosemite Gateway Partners (YGP) meeting and said that Yosemite National Park (YNP) would start up their reservation system again on May 21st, and would continue with the pass-through program that allowed local residents to drive through. Mr. Gardner gave an update on the dispersed camping initiative, discussed issues with horses in the Mono Basin, and announced that there was a call scheduled today with residents regarding All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) and Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) issues in the Mono Basin. He reported that there would be a briefing with Southern California Edison (SCE) regarding tree trimming, recommissioning their dam system at Rush Creek and street lighting issues, and spoke about taking a regional approach to radio communications and dispatching.

Board Member Stacy Corless discussed the YNP reservation system and said that the number of reservations issued this year would be much higher than last year and said that the pass-through program for gateway residents would also be available to non-residents for a fee. Ms. Corless discussed wildfire prevention and forest management and announced that Governor Gavin Newsom and the legislature had reached a deal on a grant for an early action funding system and reconfiguration of the Forest Management Task Force and said that Counties would be given a seat at the leadership table and that she would represent Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC). She said that the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program was working on a regional effort to apply for Cal Fire funding and reported that Mono County was working on a Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Program and had hired Consultant Dr. Rita Cameron Wedding to assist with development of the program. She invited the member agencies to reach out to her or Board Member Gardner if they were interested in participating in the program.

Board Member John Wentworth gave an update on a recent Integrated Climate Adaption and Resiliency Program (ICARP) Technical Advisory Council (TAC) meeting he had attended, encouraged members of the Board to attend the California Natural Resources Agency's (CNRA) listening session scheduled to be held on April 28th, and said that he had would attend the first of four TOML Town Council Strategic Priority Setting Sessions today Mr. Wentworth gave an update on The Parcel, spoke in favor of Mr. Griffiths' suggestion to create a regional housing summit, gave a Local Transportation (LTC) update and reported that the TOML Town Council had approved funding for visitor mitigation.

Board Member Jim Ellis announced that the City of Bishop would hold an informal Earth Day event in partnership with the Sierra Trash Eliminators (STE) at 9:00 a.m. on April 24th and said that Tobacco Free Eastern Sierra would hold an Earth Day 2021 Virtual Summit on April 20th.

Chair Karen Schwartz reported that the City of Bishop would increase their Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and said that their Fire Chief Joe Dell had spoken to the community about their lack of response to 911 calls. Chair Schwartz said that Chief Dell had previously responded to calls he had heard from dispatch and had performed CPR on more than one occasion, saving multiple lives. She reported that the City would be working with Symons Ambulance Service as a backup responder for emergencies. Ms. Schwartz announced that they were recruiting for new a Chief of Police, and said that the 1% sales tax increase had taken effect on April 1st and gave an update on how the funds generated from the increase would be allocated. She discussed Caltrans crosswalk improvements.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

15. Request for future agenda items

CEQA follow-up
State Level Redistricting
ESSRP/SRTI update

16. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled to be held on June 11, 2021 at 8:30 a.m.