



## Eastern Sierra Council of Governments (ESCOG) - Joint Power Authority (JPA)

### Minutes of Regular Meeting

August 13, 2021, 8:30 a.m.

437 Old Mammoth Road, Suite Z, Mammoth Lakes

Members Present: Chair Karen Schwartz, Vice Chair John Wentworth, Board Member Stacy Corless, Board Member Bob Gardner, Board Member Jeff Griffiths, Board Member Dan Totheroh, Board Member Jim Ellis

Members Absent: Board Member Lynda Salcido

---

#### 1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Karen Schwartz called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m. in the Council Chamber, 437 Old Mammoth Road, Mammoth Lakes. Members of the Board joined the meeting via videoconference.

#### 2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Karen Schwartz led the flag salute.

#### 3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Quantified Ventures (QV) Associate Director Laura Drescher said that QV had been working with the Inyo National Forest (INF) regarding funding and financing for campgrounds and reported that QV would complete their business plan next month. Ms. Drescher also reported that they had submitted an application for a second round of funding available from the Innovative Finance for National Forests (IFNF) program through collaboration with the National Forest Foundation, the Forest Service and the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, Inc. for a future phase of the project. She said that if awarded the second funding, they would look forward to implementing the business plan and engaging with the ESCOG.

4. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Moved by Board Member Jeff Griffiths  
Seconded by Vice Chair John Wentworth

Approve the Consent Agenda.

For (6): Chair Karen Schwartz, Vice Chair John Wentworth, Board Member Stacy Corless, Board Member Bob Gardner, Board Member Jeff Griffiths, and Board Member Jim Ellis

Abstain (1): Board Member Dan Totheroh

Absent (1): Board Member Lynda Salcido

Carried (6 to 0)

4.1 **Approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 11, 2021.**

5. **POLICY MATTERS**

5.1 **Receive a presentation from Mr. John Urdi, Executive Director - Mammoth Lakes Tourism and Ms. Ashely Helms, Deputy Director, Airports – Inyo County regarding the Bishop Regional Airport**

Inyo County Deputy Director, Airports Ashely Helms outlined the information in the ESCOG Bishop Regional Airport (BIH) PowerPoint presentation.

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

Mammoth Lakes Tourism (MLT) Executive Director John Urdi outlined the information in the ESCOG Air Service Update PowerPoint presentation.

Town of Mammoth Lakes Special Projects/Airport Manager Grady Dutton gave an update on the regional air service plan.

There was discussion between Mr. Urdi, Ms. Helms, Mr. Dutton and members of the Board.

5.2 **Receive an update on the CalFire Wildfire Coordinator Grant**

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

Inyo County Emergency Services Manager Kelley Williams gave an update on the CalFire Wildfire Coordinator Grant application.

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

**5.3 Consideration of A Resolution of the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments Designating Authority to Negotiate and Execute an Agreement with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to Receive Grant Funds in the Amount of \$3,384,239**

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

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

Moved by Vice Chair John Wentworth

Seconded by Board Member Dan Tothoroh

Adopt a Resolution of the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments Designating Authority to Negotiate and Execute an Agreement with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to Receive Grant Funds in the Amount of \$3,384,239 for the Eastern Sierra Pace and Scale Accelerator.

For (7): Chair Karen Schwartz, Vice Chair John Wentworth, Board Member Stacy Corless, Board Member Bob Gardner, Board Member Jeff Griffiths, Board Member Dan Tothoroh, and Board Member Jim Ellis

Absent (1): Board Member Lynda Salcido

Carried (7 to 0)

**5.4 Consideration to submit correspondence to the 2020 California Redistricting Commission regarding redistricting for Inyo County and Mono County**

Administrative Services Contractor Elaine Kabala outlined the information in the staff report and discussed corrections to the staff report. Ms. Kabala announced that there would be a redistricting meeting on August 20th.

A public comment was received via email from California Redistricting Commissioner Jane Anderson and read into the record stating that numbers reported must now be formatted into usable numbers and have the prison population reallocated to their previous addresses for representation. Ms. Anderson reported that the official California census database would be ready in the third week of September and reminded member agencies to submit their Communities of Interest (COI) at WeDrawtheLinesCA.org or at the August 20th COI Public Input Meeting.

Legal Counsel Grace Chuchla spoke about the process of calculating census numbers and when the final data would be available to the public.

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

Moved by Board Member Jeff Griffiths

Seconded by Vice Chair John Wentworth

Approval to submit correspondence to the 2020 California Redistricting Commission regarding redistricting for Inyo County and Mono County.

For (7): Chair Karen Schwartz, Vice Chair John Wentworth, Board Member Stacy Corless, Board Member Bob Gardner, Board Member Jeff Griffiths, Board Member Dan Tothoroh, and Board Member Jim Ellis

Absent (1): Board Member Lynda Salcido

Carried (7 to 0)

**5.5 Discussion and direction on the Fall 2021 Regional Housing Strategy Roundtable**

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 from the Board to work with the stakeholders listed in the staff report to organize a half day Regional Housing Strategy Roundtable in the fall.

**5.6 Consideration of the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreational Partnership Memorandum of Understanding**

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

Board Member John Wentworth recommended revising the language in the first sentence of section 2.12 of the draft memorandum as follows: The ESCOG will endeavor, upon approval and/or direction by its Board and the Boards of its four member agencies, and with consideration of its available capacity, to leverage its position as a regional entity to pursue funding opportunities that may not be accessible to other PARTIES whose jurisdiction is limited to one specific national park, national forest, county, city, town, etc.

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

Moved by Vice Chair John Wentworth

Seconded by Board Member Bob Gardner

Approve the revised language defining responsibilities of the ESCOG in Section 2.12 of the Draft Memorandum of Understanding for Establishment and Participation in the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership as discussed.

For (7): Chair Karen Schwartz, Vice Chair John Wentworth, Board Member Stacy Corless, Board Member Bob Gardner, Board Member Jeff Griffiths, Board Member Dan Tothoroh, and Board Member Jim Ellis

Absent (1): Board Member Lynda Salcido

Carried (7 to 0)

**5.7 Receive an update on the Sustainable Recreation Tourism Initiative**

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

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

**5.8 Update on COVID-19**

Board Member Jeff Griffiths gave an update on Inyo County's COVID cases and vaccination rates. Mr. Griffiths reported that Inyo County currently did not have a mandatory mask mandate in place and said that they had gone back to virtual meetings.

Board Member Bob Gardner gave an update on Mono County's COVID cases and vaccination rates. Mr. Gardner reported that Mono County did have an indoor mask mandate for everyone regardless of vaccination status and said that the County was pushing vaccinations. He said that there was a lab error last week that had recorded several false positives which required people to get retested.

Board Member Stacy Corless reported that cases were on the rise across the entire County.

Chair Karen Schwartz said that she hoped the COVID vaccine would receive FDA approval soon and hoped that the approval would encourage more people to get vaccinated.

There was discussion among members of the Board.

Discussion and direction regarding returning to in-person ESCOG meetings

**6. BOARD MEMBER/AGENCY REPORTS**

Board Member Jeff Griffiths announced that Inyo County staff had moved into the new Consolidated Office Building. Mr. Griffiths said that the County was mourning the loss of Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Clint Quilter and that they were looking for ways to honor him. He reported that Assistant CAO Leslie Chapman had been named as interim CAO.

Board Member Dan Totheroh reported that he had attended an affordable housing meeting yesterday and said that representatives from the Mexican Consulate were scheduled to visit Inyo and Mono Counties.

Board Member Bob Gardner announced that Mono County staff had moved into the new County Building in Mammoth and said that the public reopening had been pushed out due to COVID.

Board Member Stacy Corless reported that the Mono County Board of Supervisors had held a facilitated strategic planning workshop and said that they were still receiving updates on the Mountain View fire recovery efforts. She said that many community members were still struggling as a result of fire.

Board Member Jim Ellis thanked Administrative Services Contractor Elaine Kabala for coordinating yesterday's meeting with the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GoBiz) Regional Business Development Specialist Derek Kirk and said he thought it was very productive. Mr. Ellis gave a housing update for the City of Bishop as well as an update on the Caltrans crosswalks project. He reported that the Line Street Bridge by the canal would be part of the airport component and was being rebuilt to about twice its current size.

Board Member John Wentworth gave an update on housing in Mammoth Lakes, announced that the Town Council had approved a trial agreement with Bird Scooters, and said that recreation numbers in Mammoth were similar to last summer. Mr. Wentworth gave his thoughts on yesterday's GoBiz meeting with Derek Kirk.

Town of Mammoth Lakes Town Manager Dan Holler gave an update on Caltrans safety improvement grants for crosswalk signalization on Highway 203, updated bus stops, and Multi-Use Paths (MUPs). Mr. Holler also spoke about tree harvesting in the fall.

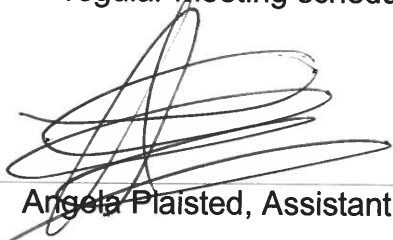
There was discussion among members of the Board.

7. **REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no requests for future agenda items.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned in memory of Clint Quilter at 11:00 a.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled to be held on October 8, 2021.



Angela Plaisted, Assistant Clerk