

**AMADOR COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
MINUTES**

March 7, 2019 – 9:16 a.m.

The Amador County Transportation Commission (ACTC) met at the Amador County Transportation Commission Offices, 117 Valley View Way, Sutter Creek, California on the above date, and the following proceedings were had, to wit:

Present on Roll Call:

Brian Oneto, Chairman
Dominic Atlan, Vice Chairman
Richard Forster
Jon Colburn
John Plasse

Absent

Keith Sweet (out of town)

Also Present:

John Gedney, ACTC Executive Director
Nancy Champlin, ACTC Administrative Secretary
Felicia Bridges, ACTC/AT Intern
Patricia Maggie Amarant, AT General Manager
Gregoria Ponce, Chief, Office of Rural Planning, Caltrans District 10

AGENDA:

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Forster, seconded by Commissioner Plasse, and carried to approve the Agenda as presented.

Ayes: Oneto, Atlan, Forster, Plasse, Colburn
Noes: None
Absent: Sweet

PUBLIC MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA: Chairman Oneto referenced an article regarding California water regulators ordering Caltrans to drastically step up trash cleanup on the roadways or face up to \$25,000 a day in fines. He noted this may have a huge impact on the money Caltrans has available for road maintenance.

Commissioner Forster stated that the casino is projecting April 29th as a “soft opening” and that the County wants to make sure that Caltrans will either have temporary or permanent improvements at the SR 88/Buena Vista Road intersection. Mr. Gedney noted that a letter from Caltrans District 10 Interim Director McElhinney was received this morning and distributed. It does reference that cooperative agreements with Buena Vista for the improvements at this intersection have been signed. Ms. Ponce (Caltrans) commented that Caltrans Project Management is in communication with the Tribe now that the cooperative agreement is executed and the Tribe is aware of their requirements.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Minutes of February 7, 2019: Commissioner Forster submitted a couple of minor changes.

Local Transportation Fund (LTF) Administrative Savings Account: Commissioner Plasse stated this account seems to be a holding account or carry-over of the LTF funds for ACTC. Mr. Gedney noted that these funds are not excess funds. They are administrative savings from the ACTC budget that were identified in the audit. His suggestion is to isolate these funds (\$63,825) to a LTF administrative account separate from the LTF operating account as a recognition of ACTC administrative savings from the prior year.

The commission provides their allocation instructions (funding for ACTC budget, 2% for the Pedestrian/Bicycle account, Amador Transit operating costs, and excess amount to streets and roads) against the auditor's estimate (\$1.04 million last year). Commissioner Plasse commented that he understands the suggestion, but would like to have the funds rolled into the following year's claim against LTF. Chairman Oneto asked how the funds in the new savings account would be used. Mr. Gedney replied that the funds are available for planning or transportation purposes and would also be available for an ad hoc request. Vice Chairman Atlan asked if the amount could remain a line item instead of a separate account. Mr. Gedney replied there are several separate banking trust funds for the various funding sources and it could be added to those. The Chairman held the item over to the next meeting.

Public Correspondence: Rail Crossings on State Highways in Amador County: Mr. Gedney reviewed his staff report. He stated this was public correspondence that was received by ACTC staff. Vice Chairman Atlan asked if the correspondent has documentation on the relinquishment regarding the rail crossings. He stated there is confusion regarding the dates of abandonment of the railroads and which parts. He added it would be helpful to get all possible documentation.

Mr. Gary Reinoehl, resident of Amador County, board member of the Historical Society, and member of the Amador Central Railroad Management Committee, read a letter for the record (see attached) from Grant Vogel, Roadmaster of the Amador Central Railroad. A general discussion ensued regarding the railroad crossings and responsibilities.

Ms. Ponce (Caltrans) stated that the railroad sections that were removed by Caltrans were formally relinquished. The sections of roadway under discussion today are not under Caltrans maintenance at this time. Caltrans is going through right-of-way surveys and agreements to see what agreements they do have with regard to those sections. Chairman Oneto asked who owns and maintains the trestle located near post mile 7 on SR 88. Ms. Ponce stated she would look into it and provide feedback.

Mike Blake (Amador County citizen) stated he works for Caltrans, but is not representing them. He and his family drive over the railroad crossings daily and is concerned about their condition. In the email he sent to the Supervisors and ACTC, he clarified that his opinion of the term 'Abandoned' means lack of maintenance and care. (Mr. Blake provided photographs of the crossings.) He stated it appears no substantial maintenance has been provided to those tracks since Sierra Pacific Industries closed the mill in 1997. In his view, there is a benefit to having the rail line, but causes impacts to safety. School buses and hazmat trucks are required to stop at active railroad tracks, with the most dangerous crossing being at SR 88 near Sunnybrook.

The commission suggested ACTC staff write a letter to Caltrans to ask about the responsibility of maintenance at the crossings.

Motion: It was moved by Vice Chairman Atlan, seconded by Commissioner Plasse, and carried to approve the Consent Agenda as discussed.

Ayes: Oneto, Atlan, Forster, Plasse, Colburn
Noes: None
Absent: Sweet

REGULAR AGENDA:

Caltrans Proposed State Route 16 Relinquishment: Mr. Gedney reviewed his staff report. Mr. Gedney presented a PowerPoint presentation with assistance from Commissioner Colburn. The PowerPoint will be revised and information updated for a future meeting.

State Route 88/104 Intersection Project Initiation Document (PID): Mr. Gedney reviewed his staff report. Commissioner Forster asked about the project being described as a signalization/roundabout project and if Caltrans is considering installing a roundabout at the upper Jackson Valley Road intersection. Mr. Gedney replied that there is a Caltrans requirement that any intersection project on the State highway system must consider a roundabout alternative even though the alternative may be eliminated due to constraints. The commissioners agreed to leave the current PID in place until Caltrans verifies they will sponsor this project.

Plymouth Active Transportation Program (ATP) Project: Mr. Gedney reviewed his staff report. He introduced Plymouth Interim City Manager, Nanci Lima. Commissioners agreed the Safe Routes to School Project is an important project. Chairman Oneto asked if the issue over the lane width had been resolved. Mr. Gedney replied that it was discussed at the staff level with the County and the twelve foot lanes in the County portion will be kept.

Commissioner Plasse asked about the balance in the Pedestrian/Bicycle Account, the Call-for-Projects policy, and the retention amount. Mr. Gedney replied that there is approximately \$360,000 in the account with obligations of about \$50,000. The retention amount is around \$250,000. Commissioner Plasse voiced concern about grants that have been awarded to different entities, who have then, at times, approached ACTC when a need arises for additional funding due to over design or other issues with the project. The additional funds being requested could potentially be used for other projects. He would like the funds for the Plymouth ATP project to come entirely out of the Pedestrian/Bicycle Account.

Commissioner Forster asked about the next installment for the Pedestrian/Bicycle Account. Mr. Gedney replied that 2% is allocated from the LTF which is approximately \$18,000 annually.

Ms. Lima noted that the City of Plymouth is working with the Conservation Corp. so that the project can be done at a reduced cost.

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Forster, seconded by Vice Chairman Atlan, and carried to approve staff recommendation of a contribution from the Pedestrian/Bicycle and/or Regional Surface Transportation Program fund in the amount up to \$125,000, and request the City of Plymouth to provide ongoing updates to the ACTC Executive Director.

Ayes: Oneto, Atlan, Forster, Colburn

Noes: Plasse

Absent: Sweet

2020 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update: Mr. Gedney reviewed his staff report. Commissioner Plasse and Commissioner Colburn commented that the population projection numbers have not been accurate. Commissioner Plasse referenced a statement "The RTP's are developed to provide a clear vision of the regional transportation goals, objectives, and strategies. This vision must be realistic and within fiscal constraints." He commented that the long list of projects in table 5 needs to be more realistic and within fiscal constraints. He has previously recommended that State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funding be available for rehabilitation and reconstruction projects of local roadways. Chairman Oneto and Vice Chairman Atlan agreed that work needs to be done on local roads before new roads or Caltrans roads are programmed for funding.

Commissioner Forster's comments on the RTP included: in REGIONAL IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY, it should state somewhere that any proposed highway relinquishments by Caltrans will be opposed and that Amador County will not accept any relinquishment, specifically SR 16; somewhere in one or more of the next three sections (GOALS, POLICIES, AND OBJECTIVES, MULTI-MODAL SYSTEM, and REGIONAL ROADWAYS), there needs to be a reference to the safety of the traveling public during the construction phase of a project and it may need to include areas impacted outside of where the improvements are being constructed; in LOCAL STREETS AND ROADS, it may need to clarify the role of oversight of the Pavement Management System; in GOODS MOVEMENT, the policies should reflect that ACTC needs to work more closely with the Caltrans Districts that affect Amador County, or state if ACTC opposes certain decisions by Caltrans, such as District 3's relinquishment of a portion of SR 16; in TRANSPORTATION FUNDING, Policy 10(O), it should reference safety in respect to the broader picture of the negative impacts on adjacent intersections by the improvement of one intersection or one area during construction; in MULTI-MODAL SYSTEM, item H, there no longer is an Amador County Business Council and the reference to an organization should be vague; in REGIONAL ROADWAYS, on page 98 there is reference to a PAC. Mr. Gedney advised that PAC refers to a Policy Advisory Committee which is no longer used. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will be referenced instead.

Mr. Reinoehl (private citizen) agreed that there is not enough funding for the roads. He does not believe that Caltrans is responsible for the impacts of local development on their roadways and we do need to understand that we sometimes have to invest in State highways. He added the pavement quality has gone down on local roads since the last study and gave Shakeridge Road as an example. In REGIONAL ROADWAY, Policy 2-F, since there is now a binding Regional Traffic Mitigation Fee Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), references to "should" will be changed to "shall".

Mr. Gedney noted the feedback received today and will develop an overall schedule for the next 12-16 months. The policies will be reviewed in depth in addition to review of existing conditions and projections for future demand through the various local jurisdictions' land use plans. There will be

numerous opportunities for input from the commissioners, public, and TAC. This will be an ongoing item at the ACTC meetings.

Claims: Commissioner Plasse asked about the \$76,447.32 to Amador Transit on the revised list. Mr. Gedney replied that it is the monthly Local Transportation Fund (LTF) allocation.

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Plasse, seconded by Commissioner Forster, and carried to approve the revised claims.

Ayes: Oneto, Atlan, Forster, Plasse, Colburn
Noes: None
Absent: Sweet

ACTC Commissioner Reports: Chairman Oneto reported that Shakeridge Road is having issues in the area that was previously repaired and also in new areas. He stated one lane may be open in the near future. During the summer, additional major work will be performed.

Commissioner Forster stated negotiations are still going on with Buena Vista casino. The Tribe has decided to go with Cal Fire over Jackson Valley Fire Protection District at an approximate additional cost of \$2.5 million. Since March of 2018, the County has been asking for information from the casino to justify going down to one pod for their wastewater redundant system. The system has been built without a recycling system for their water. This was a requirement in the Intergovernmental Services Agreement. This issue may end up with the County and the casino before an arbitrator.

ACTC Report: Mr. Gedney introduced Ms. Felicia Bridges (AT/ACTC Intern) stating she has been working for almost a year assisting AT and ACTC. He stated she has been doing a great job. Ms. Bridges stated she started May 2018 with ACTC and is currently enrolled in online courses through University of Phoenix. Commissioner Colburn asked about the length of the Internship program. Mr. Gedney replied the current grant expires in February 2020. A grant application has been submitted to Caltrans to continue the program.

Caltrans Report by Gregoria Ponce:

- A field review for SR 49/Sutter lone Road will be scheduled once weather permits.
- She will reaffirm and restate the Commission's interest and concerns regarding traffic management plans, temporary construction impacts, and having interim measures in place with regards to construction on SR 88 and the three (3) intersections.
- A letter from District 10 Interim Director Dan McElhinney was provided which described that the SR 88/ Liberty Road improvements would include an interim roundabout at that intersection before the Buena Vista casino opening and until the formal construction of the Caltrans roundabout. A temporary roundabout will control traffic, reduce speed, and facilitate and move traffic. Caltrans is working with the Tribe to have the interim roundabout in place at the same time as the work on the other two (2) intersections along SR 88 is being done.
- Regarding defensible space, Caltrans has a funded construction contract covering areas in Alpine, Amador, and Calaveras Counties to clean and trim back vegetation. PG&E and other entities are also removing vegetation in their right-of-ways and coordinating with Caltrans. This is ongoing. Chairman Oneto asked if Caltrans can do fuel reduction with trees that are leaning and not wait until they have fallen. Ms. Ponce will look at the existing contract, but

thinks that it may not be just for fallen trees, but trees along their right-of-way adjacent to the roadway and to someone else's right-of-way line.

- Commissioner Forster asked if it had been determined if Caltrans is responsible for certain sections of paving during roadway improvements such as SR 124/Willow Creek Road. Ms. Ponce replied that Caltrans owns right-of-way up to a certain extent onto local roadways and conformity work is performed. Surveys are being pulled to find out the distance of Caltrans responsibility.
- The Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment will be available later in the spring for review and comment.
- Caltrans is reviewing crosswalks located in lone at Preston St/SR 124 (2) existing crosswalks were identified on Preston and across SR 124). A Traffic Safety study has been initiated for improvement opportunities. Vice Chairman Atlan is also concerned with the crosswalk at Main St/SR 124 (4-way stop). He is interested in finding out if a flashing light (HAWK system) could be installed. Caltrans will look at the intersection as a whole and will consider a number of options for improvement.
- The methodology for traffic safety analysis was provided to Commissioner Forster.
- Regarding the railroad item, Caltrans is looking at right-of-way maps and any current agreements.
- The ownership and maintenance responsibility of the trestle at SR 88/104 at roughly post mile 7.0 will be researched.
- On Monday, March 4, there was a slip out on SR 26 which mainly affected the communities of West Point and Wilseyville. SR 26 in Amador County was affected at post mile 1.5. Work is underway.
- Commissioner Plasse asked about the repair analysis on SR 104, west of Michigan Bar Road intersection. Ms. Ponce replied that there will be maintenance work once weather permits.

Future Agenda Items:

- Local Transportation Fund Administrative Savings Account
- Rail Crossings on State Highways including relinquishment documents
- State Route 16 proposed relinquishment
- 2020 Regional Transportation Plan Update

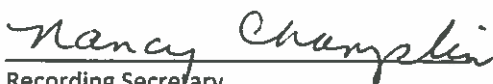
Adjournment:

At 12:17 p.m. the Chairman adjourned the meeting until 9:00 a.m. Thursday, April 4, 2019, at the Amador County Transportation Commission Offices, 117 Valley View Way, Sutter Creek, California.



Brian Oneto, Chairman
Amador County Transportation Commission

ATTEST:



Recording Secretary

(Note: Copies of referenced documents are available at the ACTC office.)

My name is Gary Reinoehl, Amador county resident, board member of the Amador County Historical Society and member of the Amador Central Railroad Management Committee. I am here today to read the following for Grant Vogel, Roadmaster of the Amador Central Railroad.

The Amador Central Railroad (AMC) really appreciates being alerted to this concern by one of our local residents. I would like to provide you with accurate information about the Amador Central Railroad (AMC). I am afraid that Mike Blake, a CalTrans employee, has not given you all the facts in his correspondence. The owners of the AMC started reading negative comments several years ago from Mike Blake on the Amador Politics page on FaceBook and trying to stop postings of inaccuracies were not effective.

The existing 10 miles of the Amador Central Railroad (from Lone to Hwy 88 at Ridge Road) is owned by the Amador County Historical Society and the RRC Historical Society. They have owned the railroad since 2010 and have been maintaining the rails, railbed, and been actively using the rails for tourist rides from March through November. The lower 10 miles of the AMC is an active rail line, not abandoned. The Federal Railroad Administration has designated the Amador Central Railroad as a class one non insular tourist railroad.

The section of rails from Hwy 88 near Ridge Road to the Martell rail yard were removed by Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) prior to selling the lower 10 miles of rail. The upper 3 miles of railroad was formally abandoned through the Surface Transportation Board. The crossings that were removed on Hwy 88 near Ridge Road and on Hwy 49 near Depot Road were part of the abandoned section of the railroad. CalTrans removed the rails from those two sections of highway.

The Amador Central Railroad has filled holes at the crossings on Hwy 88, 104, and 124. During winter weather new holes appear and the owners make every attempt to ensure the crossings are safe. Crossings are regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). CPUC General Order 72B (GO 72B) clearly states, "It shall normally be the responsibility of each railroad corporation to maintain the crossing area between lines two (2) feet outside of the rails of each track." The effective date of this Order is June 12, 1973. The order also states (Section XII) that the order is not retroactive. The construction of the Amador Central Railroad was completed in 1905. The crossings at that time were local roadways. State Highways 88, 104 and 124 postdate the construction of the railroad, so the requirements of General Order 72B do not apply to the Amador Central Railroad.

As Roadmaster, I am very familiar with the rules that govern the railroad, both FRA and CPUC. I have a working relationship with the local CalTrans maintenance office. I and the manager of the CalTrans lone maintenance yard agreed that if there was a problem with the crossings, he would call me. This has worked in the past, but we have not heard from the manager regarding any current problems or complaints (other than a stuck signal on Hwy 124 caused by a PGE work crew).

Last year I met with a crew from CalTrans who were laying out the repaving dates and areas to be done and they agreed to go ahead and pave both sides of the rails and in between them as well since the equipment and all would be on location. This was reinforced by recent information from Mr. Marvin Kennix, a CPUC Inspector of crossings, who showed me GO 72B. After reading about those terrible crossings again, I wrote to CalTrans and the City of Lone on two occasions informing them of the requirements of GO 72B.

On several occasions on 88, 124, and 104, the AMC has patched holes ourselves. We are still happy (with help and during daylight hours) to do since CalTrans apparently is not repairing these spots when asked. This is an active non insular tourist railroad overseen by the FRA and CPUC. Its only problem is age and no maintenance until RRCHS and ACHS bought it from SPI in 2010. I think all are aware of the railroads historic significance and what it has contributed to the county over the past 114 years.

Respectfully,
Grant Vogel, Roadmaster
Amador Central Railroad and President of RRC Historical Society