

**SAN BENITO COUNTY
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
REGULAR MEETING**

October 20, 2011, 2:00 P.M.

FINAL MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chair De La Cruz, Director Boch, Director Botelho, Director Emerson, and Director Gomez

STAFF PRESENT:

Deputy County Counsel, Shirley Murphy; Transportation Planning Manager, Mary Gilbert; Transportation Planner, Veronica Lezama; Secretary, Monica Gomez

OTHERS PRESENT:

Aileen Loe, Caltrans District 5

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair De La Cruz called the meeting to order at 2:03 P.M.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

B. CERTIFICATE OF POSTING

Upon a motion duly made by Director Gomez, and seconded by Director Botelho, the Directors unanimously approved the Certificate of Posting.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

Chair De La Cruz stated for the record that the COG Board received Joe Thompson's public comment correspondence dated September 28, 2011 through October 18, 2011. The correspondence was entered into the public record.

D. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Rheinheimer/Gilbert

Ms. Gilbert noted that October is Rideshare Month in San Benito County. There was a Walk to School /Walk to Work day on October 5th. Marguerite Maze School had the most participation and won 2 hours of activities hosted by the local YMCA. The San Benito County Public Health Department had the most participation and won a free lunch for their department.

Ms. Gilbert attended the Mobility Partnership meeting last week on the State Route 152 Trade Corridor. They will be going to Sacramento next week to provide a presentation to the California Transportation Commission on all of the work that has been done to date.

Director Gomez asked if there was an update on the Highway 25 Bypass Route transfer.

Ms. Gilbert stated that staff is expecting a draft of the route transfer report from Caltrans this month. The City of Hollister will have an opportunity to review the report and determine if they want to accept the

conditions of the transfer.

Ms. Gilbert reported that the San Juan Highway Bike Lanes project bids have been opened and a contract is scheduled to be awarded next week.

E. CALTRANS DISTRICT 5 REPORT – Krumholz

Aileen Loe reported on behalf of Director Krumholz.

Ms. Loe stated that the California Transportation Commission (CTC) made a visit to the Santa Barbara area for a Town Hall meeting with a focus on the Highway 101 Corridor. Ms. Loe noted that it was a constructive meeting as there were representatives from all five counties at the meeting who demonstrated a need for the area collectively. Ms. Loe expressed appreciation to Director Botelho for being in attendance.

With regard to Caltrans Construction Projects Report, Ms. Loe stated that the Highway 156 Lighting project will be completed in December.

F. BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORTS:

Director Botelho stated that he attended the CTC meeting in Santa Barbara last week and provided a brief report about the meeting.

Director Botelho stated that the Board of Supervisors passed a resolution supporting the City of San Juan Bautista for designation signage on Highway 101 and hopes Caltrans follows up in short order.

Director Emerson commented on an issue he brought up in the past about a problem with the median barrier on Airline Highway. Caltrans did follow up and put in reflectors however, it didn't address the concerns he had mentioned. The issues are when driving northbound on Airline Highway and turn left into Safeway gas, the curb being struck is on the east side and the far barrier. The second place is turning left from Tres Pinos not able to see the barrier and turning too early where the left wheel is striking the eastside barrier. You can see tire marks at both areas. Director Emerson asked to please look into the issue and report back.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **APPROVE** Council of Governments Draft Meeting Minutes Dated September 15, 2011 – Gomez
2. **APPROVE** Council of Governments Draft Special Meeting Minutes Dated September 15, 2011 – Gomez
3. **APPROVE** Council of Governments Transaction Report (Financial Claims) Dated September 2011 – Postigo
4. **RECEIVE** Construction Projects Report – Caltrans District 5
5. **ADOPT** Resolution 11-11, Allocating Transportation Development Act Funds for Fiscal Year 2010/2011 – Postigo
6. **APPROVE** Letters of Support for the Fairview Trade Corridor Rehabilitation Project in San Benito County and US 101 San Juan Road Interchange Project in Monterey County for TIGER Discretionary Grant Funding Through the U.S. Department of Transportation – Lezama

Ms. Gilbert asked to pull Item 6 from the Consent Agenda.

Upon a motion duly made by Director Botelho, and seconded by Director Emerson, the Directors approved Items 1-5, from the Consent Agenda.

Item 6

Ms. Gilbert noted that there are two corrections to Attachment 1 of Item 6 as follows:

The Subject Line of the letter should read: “Support **\$2,200,000** Million TIGER Discretionary Grant for San Benito County Projects.”

The first sentence of the letter should read: “The Council of San Benito County Governments offers its support to the San Benito County Department of Public Works’ application for a **\$2,200,000** TIGER Discretionary Grant toward construction of the \$2,400,000 Fairview Trade Corridor Rehabilitation Project.”

Upon a motion duly made by Director Emerson, and seconded by Director Boch, the Directors unanimously approved Item 6 as corrected.

REGULAR AGENDA

TRANSPORTATION ITEMS:

7. RECEIVE Update Regarding Possible Restructuring of Metropolitan Planning Organization in the Monterey Bay Area – Gilbert

Ms. Gilbert reported that a joint meeting of Executive Committees from AMBAG, TAMC, Santa Cruz RTC, and delegates from San Benito COG was held on October 6 in Marina. The group discussed issues and concerns with the current structure and operation of AMBAG and discussed opportunities for improved performance of the organization.

Ms. Gilbert stated that due to the lack of support from the AMBAG Board and member jurisdictions to pursue any change in MPO structure, it is not recommended that COG pursue further exploration of this issue at this time. Staff will work with AMBAG regarding an update to the Memorandum of Understanding and bring the item to the COG Board for input to ensure that all concerns are appropriately addressed.

Director Botelho stated that there needs to be better review and coordination to ensure that work is not duplicated. He stated that he hopes the AMBAG study covers what is needed for the County’s General Plan revision.

Director Gomez stated that he attended the Executive Committee meeting; unfortunately, the representative from the City of Hollister did not attend so they were not able to provide their vote on the City of Hollister’s behalf. He noted that he had many concerns and hopes that AMBAG follows through with their 12 month plan to see what type of improvements are made. He mentioned that the review of AMBAG should continue annually to see how effective they are.

There was no further discussion.

8. RECEIVE Update on Request for Pedestrian Improvements at Westside Boulevard and Central Avenue in Hollister – Lezama

Ms. Lezama provided an update on the request for pedestrian improvements at Westside Boulevard and Central Avenue in Hollister. Staff has consulted with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) and the City of Hollister Engineering department to request that a signal at this location be considered.

Ms. Lezama reported that the City is willing to coordinate the services necessary to investigate the warrants required for a signalized installation. The BPAC suggested safety improvements such as extending the school zone, thereby enabling yellow crosswalks with possible in-ground flashing lights similar to the crosswalk at San Benito High School. The BPAC also recommended that staff consider conducting bicycle and pedestrian counts to determine the appropriate traffic calming measure at the intersection. The BPAC did not recommend a signalized intersection at this location and the City of Hollister staff supported the Committee’s recommendation, but indicated that the City’s engineering staff

must also review sight distance, traffic speed, and traffic volumes prior to accommodating any improvements. The City noted that they currently do not have alternative funding sources to pursue the request for either a signalization or crosswalk improvements.

Director Gomez stated that he supported the improvements, especially the lighted crosswalk suggestion. He mentioned that the City recently approved self help homes in that side of town that would bring in impact fees because of the net growth on that side of town.

Ms. Lezama stated that staff would coordinate with the City to identify funding for this type of project.

The Board directed staff to coordinate with the City on completing the traffic counts.

9. RECEIVE Response from Caltrans on Proposed Modifications to State Route 156 Improvement Project (Verbal Report) – Gilbert

Ms. Gilbert stated that Caltrans legal counsel has directed Caltrans staff not to discuss the proposed modifications at this time because of a pending legal lawsuit that has been filed that includes these items.

Director Botelho inquired if Caltrans will not work on the design features of the road as long as the legal suit is in place.

Ms. Gilbert stated that she believed Caltrans can continue to look into the modifications but they cannot make any final decisions.

Director Botelho stated that it should be made clear that we are partners in this project and should be a part of the dialogue.

Ms. Gilbert stated that Caltrans has indicated that they want to work together on the project; however they have to address the legal issue before they can report back to the Board.

Director Gomez stated that it doesn't make sense to hold up the project on either side because people's lives are at stake and it is unfortunate that nobody is benefiting from it. Director Gomez asked if staff had any information on the timeline of the litigation.

Deputy County Counsel, Shirley Murphy stated that because COG hadn't been a part of the litigation, staff had not followed the case; however, she stated that she would look into it and report back to the Board.

Board members stated that it would be helpful to have information on the item to be able to answer questions from their constituents when asked.

Upon a motion made by Director Gomez, and seconded by Director Emerson, the Directors voted to adjourn the COG meeting.

ADJOURN TO COG MEETING NOVEMBER 17, 2011.