

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

September 15, 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, Barbara Thompson; Transportation Planning Manager, Mary Gilbert; Transportation Planner, Veronica Lezama; Secretary, Monica Gomez

OTHERS PRESENT:

Brandy Rider, Caltrans District 5

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair De La Cruz called the meeting to order at 2:00 P.M.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

B. CERTIFICATE OF POSTING

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

C. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

D. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Rheinheimer/Gilbert

Ms. Gilbert reported that Santa Barbara County Association of Governments will be hosting a California Transportation Commission Town Hall Meeting October 12 and October 13 in partnership with the US 101 Central Coast Coalition. Ms. Gilbert mentioned that Board members are welcome and may let staff know if they are interested in attending.

Ms. Gilbert announced that San Benito COG, Community Vision San Benito and the Economic Development Corporation of San Benito County will be conducting a Household Travel Commuter Survey later this month. Participation will help the group create a vision of San Benito County's future, establish transportation and road infrastructure priorities, and promote the diverse workforce and brainpower located in our county to potential employers.

Ms. Gilbert introduced COG's newly hired Intern, Virginia Murillo, who was hired through funding from an FTA Section 5304 Grant. Ms. Murillo was welcomed by the Board.

Director Botelho inquired if there was an update on the San Juan Highway Bike Lane Project.

Ms. Gilbert mentioned that staff had just received an update. Staff is working on closing the Right of

Way this afternoon and the deadline to award the contract is October 31st.

E. CALTRANS DISTRICT 5 REPORT – Krumholz

Brandy Rider reported on behalf of Director Krumholz.

Ms. Rider provided an update on the Highway 156 Environmental Document and noted that the Supplemental Document was certified and is available on the Caltrans website.

Ms. Rider provided a brief update on the State Budget and stated that the State Budget did pass on time and it is very similar to what they had last year.

F. BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORTS:

Director Botelho stated that he attended the AMBAG meeting last night. He provided a short presentation at the meeting on the Highway 156 Project which was well received.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **APPROVE** Council of Governments Draft Meeting Minutes Dated August 18, 2011 – Gomez
2. **RECEIVE** Minutes from Council of Governments Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Dated August 4, 2011 – Gomez
3. **APPROVE** Council of Governments Transaction Report (Financial Claims) Dated August 2011 – Postigo
4. **RECEIVE** Construction Projects Report – Caltrans District 5
5. **RECEIVE** Update on Adoption of the San Benito County Regional Transportation Plan and Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments' Metropolitan Transportation Plan – Gilbert
6. **2011 Rideshare Month Promotion** – Lezama
 - a. **RECEIVE** Report on the 2011 Rideshare Month Promotion.
 - b. **APPROVE** the Rideshare Month Agreement with the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG).

Upon a motion duly made by Director Gomez, and seconded by Director Botelho, the Director's approved Items 1-6, from the Consent Agenda, with an abstention from Director Emerson on Item 1.

Chair De La Cruz stated for the record that the COG Board received Joe Thompson's public comment correspondence dated July 26, 2011 through August 20, 2011. The correspondence was entered into the public record.

REGULAR AGENDA

TRANSPORTATION ITEMS:

7. **ADOPT** Proclamation No. 11-02 Declaring October 5, 2011 as Walk to School/Work Day in San Benito County – Lezama

Ms. Lezama stated that this year will mark the first annual Walk to School/Work Day in San Benito County. Walk to School/Work Day will be on Wednesday, October 5, 2011.

Upon a motion duly made by Director Botelho, and seconded by Director Emerson, the Directors approved Item 7.

8. **RECEIVE** Report on the 2012 State Transportation Improvement Program Fund Estimate – Gilbert

Ms. Gilbert stated that the San Benito County's share of the 2012 STIP has very limited new programming capacity due to an advance of funding in the 2008 STIP. The only new capacity for the 2012 cycle lies with Federal Transportation Enhancement funds. The total amount of Transportation Enhancement funds available is \$285,000.

There was brief discussion regarding the use of the available STIP funds.

9. Metropolitan Transportation Planning in the Monterey Bay Area - Gilbert

- a. RECEIVE** Update Regarding Possible Restructuring of Metropolitan Planning Organization in the Monterey Bay Area
- b. DISCUSS** Potential Designation of the Council of Governments as a Rural Regional Transportation Planning Agency and **DIRECT STAFF** as Necessary

Ms. Gilbert reported that if COG separated from AMBAG, it would not be eligible to receive the Metropolitan Planning Funds; however, the direct allocation of Rural Planning Assistance funds from Caltrans to COG would increase by \$29,000. These funds would likely be used to pay for COG's contribution to the maintenance of the Regional Travel Demand model which is currently provided by AMBAG. In the three counties combined, the annual net savings of funding would be approximately \$275,000 in state funds and \$173,700 in member dues for a total of approximately \$471,200.

Director Botelho provided an update from the meeting he attended. There was discussion about the implications for COG should the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments cease to be the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Director Botelho stated that Monterey County is the key decision maker in this situation because he does not believe San Benito County or Salinas will implode as much as Monterey County. He noted that this item should be presented to the County Board and City Board, to allow them to vote in favor or against separating from AMBAG.

Director Gomez concurred with Director Botelho. He noted that he is confident that COG staff is more than capable of overseeing the programs.

Ms. Gilbert provided a Power-Point presentation on the Regional Transportation Planning Agency with MPO vs. Rural Regional Transportation Planning Agency.

There was discussion about the Regional Travel Demand Model and whether or not it can still be done jointly.

Ms. Gilbert noted that staff would work with Santa Cruz and Monterey MPO's to develop a single county model. A proposed scenario would be for one of COG's counterparts to maintain the model on behalf of all three counties through a Memorandum of Understanding.

Director Emerson inquired if it is feasible to have a private entity do the modeling on our behalf.

Ms. Gilbert stated that there is a federal mandate that the metropolitan planning organization maintain the model.

Ms. Gilbert mentioned that the TAMC and RTC Boards have expressed interest in assuming these duties and also requested a joint meeting of Executive Committee members of the RTPAs and AMBAG.

Chair De La Cruz appointed Director Botelho and Director Gomez to represent COG at the joint meeting.

The joint meeting will take place sometime in the first week of October. Staff will be contacting Directors Botelho and Gomez to coordinate the meeting date/time.

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

Ms. Gilbert introduced Brandy Rider from Caltrans, who provided an update.

Ms. Rider stated that the Environmental Document has been certified and they must now move forward with the legal process because the decision needs to be done concurrently with this process. Caltrans does not have a current recommendation; however once they have compiled all of the information they will be able to move forward with a recommendation.

Director Botelho stated that he was displeased with Caltrans report and wants to see a timeline, as well as receive some guidance for the project. He added that he was bothered that Richard Krumholz was not present.

There was discussion about the projects timeline and Caltrans next steps.

Ms. Rider stated that there is a timeline for the project; however, they must acquire the most up to date accident data to provide an accurate timeline for the project. She noted that Caltrans continued goal is to work with the group and continue to move forward.

Director Botelho stated that the San Juan Bautista group is filing additional legal action and the longer it takes in court; less money will be available to move the school. He added that Caltrans has to start meeting some goals.

11. RECEIVE Report on Request for a Crosswalk at Westside Boulevard and Central Avenue – Gilbert

Ms. Gilbert stated that at the August 2011 COG meeting the Chair directed staff to prepare a report regarding the potential for a crosswalk to be located at Westside Boulevard and Central Avenue in Hollister. Staff consulted the City of Hollister Engineering department to request that a crosswalk at this location be considered. City engineering staff noted that the location would have to be warranted by the number of pedestrian crossings and traffic volumes on the street.

Ms. Gilbert mentioned that it was noted at the August meeting that the construction of the West Gateway Palms apartments at Westside Boulevard and Fourth Street may increase pedestrian traffic in the area. It may be more likely that the location will have the pedestrian volumes to warrant a crosswalk once the apartment construction is complete. At this time the City has limited resources for conducting this type of engineering review, but will report back to COG when the review is complete.

Chair De La Cruz stated that the location and traffic should warrant a signalized intersection, not a crosswalk.

There was discussion about the number of units at the apartment complex.

Director Gomez stated that the intersection would have to be funded through Traffic Impact Fees because there is no other way for the City to pay for the project.

Chair De La Cruz agreed with Director Gomez' comment and directed staff to work with the City to add the signalized intersection at Westside Boulevard and Central Avenue project to the Traffic Impact Fee list of projects.

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

ADJOURN TO COG MEETING OCTOBER 20, 2011.