

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Approved MINUTES
Monday, May 1, 2023

Primary Location:

County Administration Center, Board of Supervisors Chambers
Room 1070, 501 Low Gap Road, Ukiah

Teleconference Locations:

Fort Bragg City Hall, 416 N. Franklin St., Fort Bragg
Point Arena City Hall, 451 School St., Point Arena
Caltrans District 1, 1656 Union St., Eureka

General Public Teleconference by Zoom

ADDITIONAL MEDIA:

[Mendocino County Video](#) or find
[YouTube link at http://www.mendocinocog.org](http://www.mendocinocog.org) under Meetings

The Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) meets as the Board of Directors of:
Mendocino Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) and
Mendocino County Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE)

1. Call to Order and Roll Call. The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. with Directors present: John Haschak, Greta Kanne, and Josephina Duenas in Ukiah; Jeff Hansen in Point Arena; Bernie Norvell and Dan Gjerde in Fort Bragg; and Saskia Burnett (Caltrans/PAC) in Eureka. Chair Gjerde presiding. Director Michael Carter was excused for medical reasons, observing remotely from a location not noticed on the posted agenda, and not voting.

Staff present in Ukiah: Nephele Barrett, Executive Director; Janet Orth, Deputy Director & CFO; Loretta Ellard, Deputy Planner; Alexis Pedrotti, Program Manager; and Jody Lowblad, Administrative Assistant.

Staff present by Zoom: James Sookne, Program Manager; Michael Villa, Project Coordinator; Charlene Parker, Administrative/Planning Associate; and Jesus Rodriguez, Administrative Assistant.

2. Assembly Bill 2449 Notifications and Considerations. This item is to receive and address requests from Board members to participate in the meeting from a non-posted location, subject to conditions set forth in AB 2449. There were no such requests.

3. Convene as RTPA

4. Recess as RTPA – Reconvene as Policy Advisory Committee

5 - 6. Consent Calendar. The Chair invited public comment and board discussion; none was heard. Upon motion by Kanne, second by Haschak, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (6 Ayes – Haschak, Kanne, Hansen, Norvell, Duenas, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 1 Abstaining – Burnett/PAC; 1 Absent – Carter): IT IS ORDERED that consent items are approved.

5. Approval of April 3, 2023 Minutes – as written

6. Acceptance of 2021/22 Fiscal Audit of Mendocino Transit Authority – MTA received a clean audit report.

7. Public Expression. Dave Shpak of Gualala complimented Caltrans District 1, Caren Coonrod and the team working on the Gualala Downtown Streetscape Project for their time, care and support of Gualala Municipal Advisory Council (GMAC) committee input. This has helped to visualize various ideas as the Active Transportation Program (ATP) grant was formalized. Last week GMAC passed an advisory resolution regarding project design. He looked forward to continuing the work and appreciated MCOG's long-time support.

8. Fiscal Year 2023/24 RTPA Budget Presentation & Workshop – MCOG Staff – No Action.

Ms. Orth gave a slide presentation of highlights. Estimated revenues from all local, state and federal sources total \$15.9 million in the draft budget. The County Auditor-Controller's new estimate of local sales tax revenues is trending downward from the record Fiscal Year 2022/23 estimate of \$5.1 million to \$4.9 million. Fuel taxes are rising as post-pandemic travel resumes, helping to backfill the downturn of sales tax revenues. Available funds are still quite high, for a healthy budget proposal. Details covered in her written staff report and the presentation included the following.

- a. Report of Revenues Fiscal Year to Date 2022/23. Local Transportation Fund (LTF) sales tax receipts from July 2022 through February 2023 total \$3,029,622, for a shortfall of \$395,300 (7.7%) compared to the total budget estimate of \$5,137,383. The revised County Auditor's estimate predicts a shortfall of \$185,956 at fiscal year end.
- b. Executive Committee Recommendations of February 24, 2023 – Revenues & Allocations. The Executive Committee unanimously recommended a draft budget that allocates LTF funds for Reserves, MCOG Administration (\$559,626), 2% Bicycle & Pedestrian (86,846), Planning (141,479), and the remainder available for Transit (\$4,353,031), consistent with established priorities for Local Transportation Funds. The LTF Reserve for transit again is tripled to 15 percent (\$735,000) in this proposal.
- c. Technical Advisory Committee Recommendation of February 15, 2023 – Draft Planning Overall Work Program. Ms. Pedrotti reported that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) had reviewed and recommended the Draft Transportation Planning Overall Work Program (OWP); a total of \$659,364 was proposed from all funding sources for the Planning program. This amount is expected to rise to \$1 million or more as unexpended 2022/23 funds to carry over are identified for multi-year projects. The amount of LTF funds is on target at 3%.
Ms. Pedrotti gave an overview of the process to solicit proposals from member agencies, the mandated work elements performed by Planning staff, and the resulting proposed OWP. She summarized the major work elements and funding available for them. The TAC's recommended draft document has been posted for review and comment as seen on MCOG's April agenda; Caltrans has made minor comments. The final document will be presented for adoption on June 5 along with the budget.
- d. Transit Productivity Committee (TPC) Recommendations – Mendocino Transit Authority's Annual Transit Claim and Unmet Transit Needs – pending meeting of May 3, 2023. Staff had made an initial analysis for TPC review of the annual transit claim from Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA), and advised that one or both of the highest priority Unmet Transit Needs could be found "reasonable to meet," according to MTA's analysis of the needs list. A meeting of the TPC was scheduled for May 3, to recommend a finding of whether any Unmet Transit Needs are reasonable to meet, to advise on MTA's claim, and review annual performance data. LTF funds available for MTA and Senior Centers shows a decrease of 6.5% (\$304,075) from last year, while estimated at more than \$4 million for a third successive year. (Average annual increases over six years have been approximately five percent, pending an update.) Total

available funding estimated from LTF (sales tax) and State Transit Assistance (fuel taxes) combined is \$6,502,064, a decrease of 0.3% (\$23,596).

Other funding sources were highlighted, as well as those that are programmed but do not flow through MCOG's cash accounts. Questions and discussion included:

- How is the projected 2022/23 shortfall being covered? (Haschak) Reviewing the calculation, it would be partly from next year's fund estimate and partly from a 2021/22 surplus after flowing through MCOG's LTF Reserve according to policy. If the shortfall is any more than the estimated \$185,956, it would reduce the bottom line of revenues available for allocation in 2023/24. (Orth)
- What is the budgeted cost of MTA's feasibility study for the Ukiah Transit Center? (Haschak) This is currently underway so the amount to be carried over is pending; the total amount programmed in 2022/23 was \$150,000, mostly allocated for the consultant. (Pedrotti)
- Are the Surface Transportation Block Grant funds allowed to be used to match federal grants? (Gjerde) Yes, since MCOG annually exchanges this \$800,000 or so for State funds. They are the most flexible, discretionary funds available. (Orth, Barrett)
- How will the new year's STBG funds be used? (Haschak) \$100,000 comes off the top for MCOG's Partnership Funding Program for regional projects, \$90,000 funds a Local Assistance staff position, and the remainder is distributed by formula to the members agencies. Discussion of balance in the fund and how claims are typically made. (Orth, Barrett)

The Chair invited public comments; none were made. No action was taken; for information only.

9. Recess as Policy Advisory Committee – Reconvene as RTPA – Ratify Action of Policy Advisory Committee. Upon motion by Duenas, second by Haschak, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*6 Ayes – Haschak, Kanne, Hansen, Norvell, Duenas, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent - Carter*): IT IS ORDERED that the actions taken by the Policy Advisory Committee are ratified by the MCOG Board of Directors.

10. Reports - Information

- a. Caltrans District 1 – Projects Update and Information. Chair Gjerde noted written reports provided in the agenda packet, a comprehensive list of projects in Mendocino and Lake Counties. Ms. Barrett added that an invitation will be emailed to the Council members to comment on Caltrans' ten-year plan.
- b. Mendocino Transit Authority. General Manager Jacob King reported. Director Nuevas asked about the size of vehicles necessary for services. Mr. King referred to regulations requiring ADA standards for all passengers. Director Gjerde noted next MTA board meeting will include an agenda item to address this issue. Ridership tends to be higher during some hours of the day than others. Ms. Barrett noted the Short Range Transit Development Plan update now getting underway will address all services, including efficiency, cost, ridership, and related matters.
- c. Great Redwood Trail Agency. Director Haschak reported on the meeting of April 20, when an overview was received of recent community meetings in Fortuna and Willits. City of Willits is building a local trail that is to become part of the Great Redwood Trail. Attendance at the events was up to 100 in Fortuna and about 75 in Willits. There was concern for impacts especially in areas away from public view in the wilderness, so there was a commitment from GRTA and Master Plan consultant Alta to continue outreach to property owners on the Eel River portion of trail. First responders had concerns about potential incidents on the trail. Also an eminent domain case with the federal Surface Transportation Board and California Public

Utilities Commission (CPUC) to take over a Willits property along State Route 20 resulted in a ruling against Mendocino Railway's Skunk Train.

- d. MCOG Staff - Summary of Meetings. Ms. Barrett referred to the written report. Ms. Orth highlighted the California Transportation Commission's Town Hall meeting of April 12-13 hosted by the North State Super Region and Shasta Regional Transportation Agency in Anderson, where she gave a presentation of the North State ZEV Working Group's efforts over the past two years, along with other presenters and stakeholders. A tour of projects in the Redding area showed off a complete streets highway corridor in progress, construction work revitalizing downtown including "Shasta Living Streets" projects, and restoring and repurposing of historic buildings, and other plans for the region. Commissioners were impressed with the Super Region's collaborative efforts among the 16 rural counties.
- e. MCOG Administration Staff
 - i. *Covelo SR 162 Corridor Multi-Purpose Trail Project*. Ms. Barrett reported recently executing a contract with the construction company and kick-off of preconstruction. Currently biological surveys were underway, so work could start as soon as this week, depending on results of the surveys.
 - ii. *Miscellaneous*. None.
 - iii. *Next Meeting Date*. Monday, June 5, 2023 – Adoption of Budget and Transportation Planning Program.
- f. MCOG Planning Staff
 - i. *Feasibility Study - Mendocino Transit Authority's Ukiah Transit Center*. Deputy Planner Ellard reported surveys and public outreach events by the consultant LSC Transportation. The project is going well, still in public outreach with an online survey on the website. Next will be scoring criteria and site selection. Cost is about \$135,000 for consultant's portion of the Work Element 3 budget. The project concludes in November with a final report.
 - iii. *MCOG Public Outreach with ChargePoint for Rural Electric Vehicle Charging Grant*. Ms. Ellard noted the work was completed and final report in the Information packet.
 - iv. *Miscellaneous*. MCOG is participating with MTA on its Short Range Transit Development Plan, which kicked off in March. Also MCOG is sponsoring a Traffic Control and Flagger training in June at Ukiah Valley Conference Center, from MCOG's Planning budget.
- g. MCOG Directors. Director Haschak was in Covelo twice in the past week, seeing enthusiasm for the new trail, and asked when it might be completed. Ms. Barrett reported it depends on biological and cultural resources found in the clearing process, and could take one or two construction seasons, she hoped by end of first season. Bridge installation is anticipated to be installed in late October or early November. The ground was still quite wet in the area.
- h. California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) Delegates. Director Haschak announced Legislative Advocacy Day, June 6 in Sacramento and suggested Director Norvell attend as the appointed Alternate Delegate. He reported California Transit Association released a budget proposal of \$5 billion to restore the Transit & Intercity Rail Capital Program that was cut from the Governor's budget, which they hope to see in the May revise. Ms. Barrett confirmed her staff would be sure Director Norvell received the information.

11. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 2:52 p.m.

Submitted: NEPHELE BARRETT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
By Janet Orth, Deputy Director & CFO