

# MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Approved MINUTES  
Monday, June 6, 2022

Teleconference Only  
*Pursuant to Brown Act and Assembly Bill 361*

**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 / Roll Call.** The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. with Directors Jim Brown, Tess Albin-Smith, Greta Kanne, John Haschak, Michael Carter, Tatiana Ahlstrand (Caltrans/PAC), and Dan Gjerde present by Zoom teleconference; Chair Gjerde presiding. Director Scott Ignacio was excused by prearrangement.

Staff present: Nephele Barrett, Executive Director; Janet Orth, Deputy Director & CFO; Loretta Ellard, Deputy Planner; Lisa Davey-Bates, Transportation Planner; Alexis Pedrotti, Program Manager; James Sookne, Program Manager; Danielle Casey, Program Coordinator; and Jody Lowblad, Administrative Assistant.

**Note:** Public comment was invited via email and online comment form; staff monitored for incoming comments throughout the meeting, reporting periodically.

**2. Adoption of Resolution No. M2022-09 Making Continued Findings Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361 to Conduct Public Meetings Remotely for MCOG's Legislative and Advisory Bodies During the COVID-19 State of Emergency.** Upon motion by Brown, second by Haschak, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*6 Ayes – Brown, Albin-Smith, Kanne, Haschak, Carter, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent – Ignacio*): IT IS ORDERED that the following resolution is adopted.

**Resolution No. M2022-09**  
Making Continued Findings Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361  
to Continue Public Meetings Remotely  
for MCOG's Legislative and Advisory Bodies  
During the COVID-19 State of Emergency  
[Reso. #M2022-06 is incorporated herein by reference]

**3. Convene as SAFE – Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies**

- a. Report of Motorist Aid Call Box Program Status. Ms. Pedrotti reported status of Verizon's conversion to 4G service of Mendocino County SAFE call boxes, with 31 of the 97 cellular boxes remaining to be upgraded on State Routes 1 and 128. Over the past four to five years, the contractor, CASE Systems, has worked through technical issues and installed various antennae and boosters to prolong the useful life of the aging call boxes. Parts have been made available at no cost from other SAFE agencies that have dismantled equipment. Call boxes on SR 162 are working well. In some areas such as SR 20, tree growth is impacting the effectiveness of solar panels that power the boxes.

In Board discussion, it was noted that two or three on SR 20 (West) have been bagged as out of service; these are due to redwood canopy that is not allowed to be trimmed. Alternatives to prolonged down time were briefly discussed; most likely those boxes will be removed. No action was taken.

- b. Adoption of FY 2022/23 Mendocino SAFE Budget. Ms. Pedrotti described the proposed SAFE budget, noting the lack of funds available for new equipment. Annual revenues from DMV's \$1 per vehicle registration are sufficient to cover operational costs, while the accumulated fund balance has been depleted by equipment purchases and upgrades to date. The 44 call boxes using satellite technology in remote areas come with expensive monthly fees. Staff is working with CASE to evaluate conversions to cellular service where feasible for cost savings.

In Board discussion, Ms. Barrett added that when FY 2021/22 carryover funds are known, the amount available for capital outlay can be reported. Staff is being careful not to overbudget, as the fiscal year has not yet been closed. There were no public comments on this item.

**Upon motion** by Albin-Smith, second by Carter, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*6 Ayes – Brown, Albin-Smith, Kanne, Haschak, Carter, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent*): IT IS ORDERED that the FY 2022/23 SAFE Program Budget is approved as recommended by staff.

#### 4. Recess as SAFE – Convene as RTPA

#### 5. Recess as RTPA – Reconvene as Policy Advisory Committee

**6 - 9. Consent Calendar.** Executive Director Barrett noted a minor correction to #9 to update MCOG's office mail address in the Addendum document. The Chair invited public comment; no one offered comments. **Upon motion** by Director Kanne, second by Director Albin-Smith, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*7 Ayes – Brown, Albin-Smith, Kanne, Haschak, Carter, Ahlstrand/PAC, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent*): IT IS ORDERED that consent items are approved.

#### 6. Approval of May 2, 2022 Minutes – *as written*

#### 7. Approval of April 13, 2022 Transit Productivity Committee Minutes – *as written*

#### 8. Approval of Amendment to MCOG Bylaws – Miscellaneous Updates – *routine administrative changes since last amended in 2013*

#### 9. Adoption of Addendum to the 2017 Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Covelo State Route 162 Corridor Multi-Purpose Trail – *allows for potential need to modify alignment of bridge over Mill Creek when location of sewer line is confirmed in construction*

**10. Public Expression.** Tom Murphy of Gualala Municipal Advisory Council (GMAC) spoke of the Gualala Downtown Streetscape project, advocating for community preference Alternative #4A, and requested MCOG board action to support that design as consistent with the town plan and local coastal plan. Listen to the community and support existing local ordinances; changes to the alternative being pursued come from a minority; Caltrans is understaffed to address changes timely. This a vital safety and economic project.

Robert Juengling, GMAC, reiterated Mr. Murphy's comments, having worked on this project for many years, requesting that MCOG to push this through for the community.

Ms. Barrett responded that this item will be considered for the August 15 Council agenda.

**11. Technical Advisory Committee Recommendations of May 18, 2022: Adoption of Final Fiscal Year 2022/23 Planning Overall Work Program (OWP).** Ms. Pedrotti presented the final OWP as recommended by the TAC. She noted that, as intended, a Project Reserve of \$150,000 had been moved to a new Work Element 3, MTA Feasibility Study for Ukiah Transit Center. Multi-year funds carried over for certain projects were included, with no changes to funding since the Council's May budget workshop. As proposed, the FY 2022/23 Final Overall Work Program

includes 14 work elements and totals \$1,046,598. For comparison, the Final (Amended) 2021/22 Overall Work Program contains 15 work elements and totals \$1,265,561. Questions and public comment were invited; none were received.

**Upon motion** by Director Brown, second by Haschak, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes – Brown, Albin-Smith, Kanne, Haschak, Carter, Ahlstrand/PAC, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent – Ignacio): IT IS ORDERED that the Overall Work Program budget for Fiscal Year 2022/23 is adopted as recommended by the Technical Advisory Committee and staff, and the Executive Director or designee is authorized to sign certifications and the OWP Agreement and to forward to Caltrans as required.

**12. Fiscal Year 2022/23 RTPA and COG Budget.** Ms. Orth referred to her staff report, summarizing final notes and changes since the May draft budget workshop. Approximately \$4 million was added, mainly as funds carried forward for construction of the Covelo Trail project. Total revenues come to \$14,657,892, and total proposed allocations \$14,289,360. She reviewed relevant details of the final budget proposal, as recommended by the Executive Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, Transit Productivity Committee, Social Services Transportation Advisory Council and staff.

**Upon motion** by Director Brown, second by Director Carter, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes – Brown, Albin-Smith, Kanne, Haschak, Carter, Ahlstrand/PAC, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that the following five resolutions are adopted as recommended by staff and committees:

- a. Adoption of Resolution #M2022-10 Allocating Fiscal Year 2022/23 Funds and 2021/22 Carryover Funds for Administration, Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities, Planning, and Reserves

**Resolution No. M2022-10**

Allocating Fiscal Year 2022/23 Funds and 2021/22 Carryover Funds for Administration, Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities, Planning and Reserves  
(Reso. #M2022-10 is incorporated herein by reference)

Local Transportation Fund (LTF)		
Temporary Reserves	29,135	
MCOG Administration & Other Direct Costs	509,379	
2% Bicycle & Pedestrian	92,560	
Planning Program – new funds	315,488	
LTF carryover – Planning program	68,580	
Total LTF		1,015,142
Surface Trans. Block Grant Program – Admin.		93,096
ATP Infrastructure Grants – Admin.		2,672,000
PPM Funds - Planning		204,750
RPA Funds - Planning		294,000
State Highway Account - Planning		163,780
<b>Total Allocations</b>		<b>4,442,768</b>

- b. Adoption of Resolution #M2022-11 Finding That There Are Unmet Transit Needs That Are Reasonable To Meet for Fiscal Year 2022/23

**Resolution No. M2022-11**

Finding That There Are Unmet Transit Needs That Are Reasonable To Meet for Fiscal Year 2022/23  
(Reso. #M2022-11 is incorporated herein by reference)

- c. Adoption of Resolution #M2022-12 Allocating Fiscal Year 2022/23 Local Transportation Funds, State Transit Assistance, and FY 2021/22 Carryover Capital Reserve Funds to Mendocino Transit Authority

**Resolution No. M2022-12**

Allocating Fiscal Year 2022/23 LTF, STA, and 2021/22 Carryover Capital Reserve Funds to Mendocino Transit Authority

(Reso. #M2022-12 is incorporated herein by reference)

Local Transportation Fund (LTF)		
MTA Operations	3,428,087	
Unmet Transit Needs	300,000	
Senior Center Operations	729,019	
Transit Planning	200,000	
Total LTF		4,657,106
State Transit Assistance (STA)		
MTA Operations	967,375	
MTA & Senior Center Capital	200,000	
Capital Reserve Fund	0	
Total STA		1,167,375
Capital Reserve Program		
Current Year - MTA	0	
Current Year – Senior Centers	0	
Long Term – MTA and Seniors	701,179	
Total Capital Reserve		701,179
<b>Total Transit Allocations</b>		<b>6,625,660</b>

- d. Adoption of Resolution #M2022-13 Allocating Surface Transportation Block Grant Program Funds for Fiscal Year 2022/23 MCOG Partnership Funding Program, Local Assistance, and Distribution By Formula To Member Agencies

**Resolution No. M2022-13**

Allocating STBG Funds for Fiscal Year 2022/23 MCOG Partnership Funding Program, Local Assistance, and Distribution by Formula To Member Agencies

(Reso. #M2022-13 is incorporated herein by reference)

MCOG Partnership Funding Program		100,000
Local Assistance – Project Delivery		90,000
Formula Distribution to Members		
Mendocino County DOT	134,106	
City of Ukiah	180,478	
City of Fort Bragg	120,501	
City of Willits	113,101	
City of Point Arena	74,753	
Total Formula Distributions		622,939
<b>Total RSTP Allocations</b>		<b>812,939</b>

- e. Adoption of Resolution #M2022-14 Allocating Fiscal Year 2021/22 Carryover Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) Program Grant Funds for FY 2022/23

**Resolution No. M2022-14**

Allocating Fiscal Year 2021/22 Carryover Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) Program Grant Funds for FY 2022/23

(Reso. #M2022-14 is incorporated herein by reference)

MCOG Grant Administration & Management		26,325
Formula Distribution to Members		
County of Mendocino	177,228	
City of Ukiah	69,536	
City of Fort Bragg	46,410	
City of Willits	35,365	
City of Point Arena	0	
Total Formula Distributions		328,539
<b>Total REAP Allocations</b>		<b>354,864</b>

**13. Transit Productivity Committee Recommendations of April 13, 2022.** Ms. Orth referred to her staff report, summarizing the committee’s work in addition to the budget issues covered above.

- a. Approval of Transit Performance Standards with Adjusted Passengers per Hour. This was the remaining standard due for update. The adjustment had been delayed, as performance during the pandemic was not typical; now it was considered time to act, with the suggestion to revisit the standards after the next Short Range Transit Development Plan is completed. Based on pre-pandemic records, it was recommended to update Passengers per Hour to 73% of the existing adopted standard for three service types. The other standards did not require any action, as Farebox Ratio was set at 10% consistent with state law, and the cost standards received formula updates by MCOG’s adopted policy, provided in the board packet.
- b. Acceptance of Annual Transit Performance Review. No productivity recommendations were recommended as a result of this review; details provided in the TPC meeting minutes.

The Chair invited public comments; none were heard. **Upon motion** by Haschak, second by Kanne, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes – *Brown, Albin-Smith, Kanne, Haschak, Carter, Ahlstrand/PAC, and Gjerde*; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that a) the Transit Productivity Committee’s recommendation to update MCOG’s transit performance standards for Passengers per Hour on three service types is approved, and b) the committee’s report of the Annual Transit Performance Review through December 31, 2021 is accepted as provided in the board agenda packet materials and summarized as follows.

Passengers per Hour	Existing	Adjusted
Short Distance Bus Routes	14.0	10.2
Senior Centers	3.0	2.2
Dial-A-Ride	4.5	3.3

Service Type	2021	3-Yr Average
Dial-A-Ride (DAR) maintained the same 3-yr average	1 of 4	2 of 4
Short Distance Bus Routes maintained the same 3-yr average	1 of 4	2 of 4
Long Distance Routes dropped by 1 (Pass/Hr) in 2021, dropped by 1 (Pass/Hr) in 3-year average	1 of 4	3 of 4
Senior Centers data is incomplete and reported as available	1 of 4	2 of 4

**14. Regional Energy Network (REN) and Climate Protection Agency Update and Possible Direction on Senate Bill 852 (Dodd) – Climate Resilience Districts: Formation: Funding Mechanisms.** Ms. Barrett reported status of the proposed RuralREN business plan, now before the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and possibly scheduled for an October agenda. It is unknown at this stage whether the plan will be bundled into a single item together with other decisions for next year. If approved, MCOG would participate as a subcontractor to Redwood Coast Energy Authority while seeking to become full members of the RuralREN, according to a Memorandum of Understanding approved by MCOG’s Board last February. A multi-county Rural Hard to Reach working group has developed the proposal over several years;

while a Mendocino County agency participated initially, the group is now developing a bylaws amendment to allow MCOG to join formally.

Ms. Barrett next reported research, as directed by the Council, into the potential for establishing a Climate Protection Agency. Senate Bill 852 (Dodd) has been introduced that would authorize specified public entities to form districts for the purpose of financing eligible projects that address impacts of climate change. Staff did not offer a recommendation on the bill. Several issues were noted, which could be considered by MCOG's Climate Ad Hoc committee if the bill becomes law.

Board discussion summarized:

- Continue to monitor the bill in order to potentially position MCOG for future funding.
- If not a good fit for MCOG, other agencies might benefit from the opportunity, such as the County, one or more cities, or a combination; staff will explore options.
- The bill passed the Senate and was referred to Assembly Natural Resources committee, so next action may be expected this summer.

There was no public comment on this item. No action was taken.

### **15. Consideration of Possible Action to Oppose Assembly Bill 2237 (Friedman) – Transportation Planning: Regional Transportation Improvement Plan: Sustainable Communities Strategies: Climate Goals.**

Ms. Barrett reported that this bill, while well intentioned, would not be good for rural areas, and concerns also have been raised by urban stakeholders. CALCOG's position is "oppose unless amended." Others in opposition include the North State Super Region and statewide city and county associations. The bill relies on AB 285 report data, which has been criticized and deemed incomplete, to compare expenditures with Regional Transportation Plans. A new ranking process for Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) projects would be required to align with state climate goals. A stipulation that RTIP projects "shall not induce vehicle miles traveled" could potentially make certain operational safety projects and evacuation routes ineligible for funding. The bill would result in a loss of local control as well as a data modeling burden. It could also jeopardize the autonomy of local transportation-dedicated sales tax measures, such as in MCOG's jurisdiction, for which voter approval has relied on certain priorities and expenditure plans. Staff recommended opposition to AB 2237.

In Board comments, Director Haschak reported that CALCOG members had discussed this at length and found the bill problematic; he agreed that opposition is the right course. Ms. Barrett concurred that a CALCOG position is meaningful, since its membership represents such a broad coalition of interests. Chair Gjerde noted the risk of mission creep. There was no public comment.

**Upon motion** by Brown, second by Haschak, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (*7 Ayes – Brown, Albin-Smith, Kanne, Haschak, Carter, Ahlstrand/PAC, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent*): IT IS ORDERED that MCOG opposes AB 2237 (Friedman) and staff is authorized to work with the Chair to send a letter in opposition.

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

### **17. Reports - Information**

- a. Caltrans District 1 – Projects Update and Information. Director Ahlstrand reported on two projects discussed at the May Council meeting. The Calpella bridge replacement project on SR-20 had been awarded to a contractor, to start construction this year for completion in 2025. The realignment project at James Creek on SR-20 West was awarded, for completion in 2023.

She then invited questions. Director Carter asked about a new rest stop opened at US-101 and SR-162 and asked about closure of the old one. Ms. Ahlstrand will research and report back.

- b. Mendocino Transit Authority. MTA Executive Director Jacob King reported on the Far North Transit Symposium hosted by MTA and the CALACT association in Ukiah June 2-3, where several battery-electric and hydrogen-powered busses were demonstrated. Presentations included funding opportunities by state and federal agencies for transition to zero emission vehicles. Ms. Barrett noted the event was well attended and received positive feedback. Also, MTA staff were finalizing budgets for FY 2022/23.
- c. Great Redwood Trail Agency. Director Haschak reported on the first full meeting of the GRTA board; the next meeting was scheduled for June 20. The so-called “coal train” proposal had been discussed, with no details available for release yet.
- d. MCOG Staff - Summary of Meetings. Ms. Barrett referred to the written report. Ms. Orth reported further on the transit symposium, with kudos to MTA and the Davey-Bates consulting team for organizing this educational event. Ms. Davey-Bates noted some of the ZEV busses came from southern California and it was a chance for those companies to learn more about rural areas. The Ukiah Valley Conference Center planned to follow up with publicity.
- e. MCOG Administration Staff
  - i. *23rd Annual CTF Transportation Forum – Sacramento, May 27, 2022*. Ms. Orth had posted an addendum to the agenda packet with her report of the event. The California Transportation Foundation is a leading nonprofit organization whose mission is to “Recognize, Remember, Educate” with awards, scholarships, the forum, mentors, and support of fallen workers’ families. She described highlights of the meeting, which focused on themes of safety, equity, climate change and technology, as well as new funding from the bipartisan infrastructure law and the State budget surplus. The late founder Heinz Heckerroth was honored this year.
  - ii. *Miscellaneous*. None.
  - iii. *Next Meeting Date*. Monday, August 15, 2022.
- f. MCOG Planning Staff
  - i. *Feasibility Study - Mobility Solutions for Rural Communities of Inland Mendocino County*. Ms. Ellard reported this \$200,000 Caltrans-funded grant was underway, led by a consultant selected in the recent procurement process. Non-traditional transit alternatives will be explored to serve Laytonville, Covelo, Brooktrails Potter Valley and Hopland. A technical advisory group will be convened and stakeholder outreach conducted. Board members will be invited and are welcome to participate.
  - ii. *Local Road Safety Plans Update*. Ms. Ellard reported this project was winding down, with the local plans being finalized, for completion by end of June. Projects were identified for the member agencies to apply for grant funding.
  - iii. *Miscellaneous*. Staff was working on an Active Transportation Program (ATP) grant application for the Gualala Downtown Streetscape improvement project, due in June.
- g. MCOG Directors. None.
- h. California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) Delegates. No news to report.

**18. Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

Submitted: NEPHELE BARRETT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Janet Orth, Deputy Director & CFO