

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

**March 19, 2015, 3:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Chair Muenzer, Vice-Chair Boch, Director Botelho, Director Velazquez, Director Gomez  
Ex Officio: Aileen Loe, Caltrans District 5

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Deputy County Counsel, Shirley Murphy; Interim Executive Director, Mary Gilbert; Transportation Planner, Veronica Lezama; Secretary, Monica Gomez

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Maura Twomney, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Muenzer called the meeting to order at 3:02 P.M.

**A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**B. CERTIFICATE OF POSTING**

*Upon a motion duly made by Director Velazquez, and seconded by Director Boch, the Directors acknowledged the Certificate of Posting. Vote: 4/0 motion passes.*

**C. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Chair Muenzer stated for the record that the COG Board received Joe Thompson's public comment correspondence dated March 13, 2015. The correspondence was entered into the public record.

**D. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Gilbert**

Ms. Gilbert reported that she was able to attend a couple activities in Sacramento over the last couple weeks. One was the Central Coast Coalition, which Director Botelho attended as well. She stated that she would let him report out on that. This week she attended the California Association of Councils of Governments monthly executive director meeting. She stated that there was extensive discussion about legislation.

Ms. Gilbert reminded the COG Board about the information that she forwarded regarding an upcoming Regional Leadership Forum hosted by the California Association of Councils of Governments. The forum will be held in Monterey April 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> and COG Board delegates are invited to attend. She asked that they let her know if they wish to attend.

Ms. Gilbert announced that as part of the Safe Routes to School Bike program COG staff used some of the funding available to purchase bike helmets. She stated that Veronica Lezama of COG staff is

partnering up with the California Highway Patrol and other volunteers from the Safe Kids Coalition to provide bike helmet fittings for children at the schools.

Chair Muenzer moved Item F. up on the agenda to allow time for Caltrans representative to arrive.

**F. BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORTS:**

Director Botelho reported on the naming of the frontage road at the new interchange at Highway 101 at San Juan Road near the Big Red Barn. He stated that the San Benito County Board of Supervisors and their counterparts in Monterey County differ on what the road should be named. He stated that the Board of Supervisors voted to name the section of the roadway that begins in San Benito County "Red Barn Road," whereas Monterey County has decided to name it "Harry Ellingwood Road" for the section that falls within that county. He stated that the San Benito County Board of Supervisors has decided not to go through the effort of changing the name and has left it to Monterey County to deal with it or accept San Benito County's position.

Director Botelho reported on the Central Coast Coalition meeting that he attended in Sacramento along with Ms. Gilbert. He stated that the AMBAG and TAMC Director also attended, as well as representatives from other surrounding Counties. They lobbied for additional funding and more local control of the funding for maintenance of streets and roads for each of their respective jurisdictions.

He stated that they listened to discussion about what the State has in mind to supplement the shortfall of gasoline tax. One of the ideas that is being discussed is the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) tax, which is a policy of charging motorists based on how many miles they have traveled. It has been proposed in various states in the United States and elsewhere as an infrastructure funding mechanism to replace, or supplement the fuel tax. He stated that the assembly is putting together a technical advisory committee to study how this will come together. The committee will be making a recommendation to the legislature in 2018.

Overall, he stated that he left the meeting with the belief that they are well aware of the condition of our unincorporated County roads and City roads and that they need to provide us with additional revenue to address the issue.

Director Gomez mentioned that he would have to leave by 4:00 p.m. due to another meeting that he needs to attend.

**E. CALTRANS DISTRICT 5 REPORT: Gubbins**

Aileen Loe reported on behalf of Caltrans District 5 Director.

Ms. Loe provided a handout on the California Transportation Plan (2040 CTP). She stated that the document is out for public review until April 17<sup>th</sup>. She will be providing a more extensive review at AMBAG's Board meeting on April 8<sup>th</sup>. She stated that Caltrans will host a series of workshops throughout the state to gather public input on the CTP. The closest workshops will be held in Sacramento, Oakland, and Fresno.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

1. **RECEIVE** Council of Governments Correspondence - Gilbert
2. **APPROVE** Council of Governments Draft Special Meeting Minutes Dated February 17, 2015 – Gomez
3. **APPROVE** Council of Governments Draft Meeting Minutes Dated February 19, 2015 – Gomez
4. **RECEIVE** Construction Projects Report – Caltrans District 5

5. **EXTEND** Appointment of Mary Gilbert as COG Interim Executive Director to July 31, 2015 Contingent on Final Action by San Benito County Board of Supervisors – Gilbert
6. **Fiscal Year 2015/2016 Draft Overall Work Program – Lezama**
  - a. **RECEIVE** the Fiscal Year 2015/2016 Draft Overall Work Program, Which Includes Planning Activities to be Performed by the Council of Governments; and
  - b. **AUTHORIZE** Submittal of Fiscal Year 2015/2016 Draft Overall Work Program to the California Department of Transportation for Comment.

There was no public comment.

*Upon a motion duly made by Director Botelho and seconded by Director Boch, the Directors approved Items 1-6 from the Consent Agenda, with an abstention on Item 2 and 3 by Director Velazquez and an abstention on Item 3 by Director Botelho. Vote: 3/0/2 motion passes.*

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

### **TRANSPORTATION ITEMS:**

7. **DISCUSS** Passenger Rail Transportation in San Benito County – Gilbert

Ms. Gilbert reported that passenger rail transportation has been considered in San Benito County in the past due to the Hollister Branch Rail line connecting in Santa Clara County. She stated that the last detailed feasibility study of the Hollister Branch Line was completed in June 2000 and projected operations costs were beyond the available and estimated funding.

She mentioned several factors that should be considered in the pursuit of implementing rail service, including:

- Funding for operations and capital
- Coordination with the rail line owner
- Coordination with Caltrain and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
- Ridership projections and operational feasibility

Ms. Gilbert asked for direction from the Board on next steps for consideration of planning for rail service in San Benito County.

There was discussion about looking into completing a bus service cost analysis that expands to San Jose and Mountain View. There was also discussion about whether there is a demand for service to those areas.

Ms. Gilbert stated that expanding the bus service would be more affordable and allows for more flexibility. She stated that staff could have an analysis done as part of the Long Range Transit Plan.

The Board mentioned that staff may be able to go after Cap-and-Trade money to help with the service expansion. They also stated that it would be a good idea to look into a possible partnership with VTA in putting together a bus route that may benefit them as well.

Ms. Gilbert stated that staff would bring back more information about some longer distance bus service options and a preliminary look at funding availability options.

There was no public comment on this item.

8. **RECEIVE** Update on COG Staff Work Plan for Highway 25 Development – Gilbert

Ms. Gilbert reported that Caltrans has continued work to complete the Environmental Impact Report for the project. The engineer is completing the analysis for the ultimate 4-lane widening project corridor. Staff has continued coordination with stakeholders and regional and local partners on the project. Most importantly, staff is hearing the feedback and understanding the need to identify a fundable phaseable project for San Benito County to expand highway operations between Hollister and Highway 101. Staff will be looking at possibly an engineering analysis to look at a smaller scale project that COG could potentially fund. Also, EMC Research will begin the public opinion polling of registered voters in San Benito County next week.

There was no public comment or discussion on this item.

**9. RECEIVE and COMMENT on the Draft 2015 Title VI Program and Language Assistance Plan (LAP) for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Individuals – Lezama**

Ms. Lezama reported that in accordance with FTA regulations, COG is required to update the Title VI policy and Language Assistance Plan (LAP) for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Individuals Plan documents every three years. The basis for this plan is to ensure that the level and quality of transportation service is provided without regard to race, color, national origin, in accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The second component of the plan identifies ways in which COG accommodates those in our community that are limited English proficiency individuals by ensuring that a lot of the documents that COG produces are made available in Spanish and that interpreters are available at public hearings.

There was no public comment or discussion on this item.

Staff will bring the final 2015 Title VI Program and Language Assistance Plan (LAP) for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals will be provided to the COG Board at a future meeting for adoption.

*Upon a motion duly made by Director Gomez, and seconded by Director Botelho, the Directors unanimously adjourned the COG meeting at 3:31 p.m. Vote:5/0 motion passes.*

**ADJOURN TO COG MEETING APRIL 16, 2015.**