

MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

APPROVED MINUTES

Monday, October 2, 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](http://www.mendocinocog.org) 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, Mike Carter, Josephina Duenas, and Greta Kanne in Ukiah; Dan Gjerde in Fort Bragg; Jeff Hansen in Point Arena; and Tatiana Ahlstrand (Caltrans/PAC) in Eureka. Bernie Norvell was excused. Chair Gjerde presiding.

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

Staff present by Zoom: Alexis Pedrotti, Program Manager; and Michael Villa, Project Coordinator.

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. Discussion/Direction and Possible Action to Approve Engagement of Consultant for Procurement of Comprehensive Staffing to Start Fiscal Year 2024/25. Executive Director Barrett summarized her written staff report. Regional Analysis & Planning Services (RAPS), a non-profit extension of Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), had submitted a proposal for consideration by the Council. In July, prior to the written proposal, the Executive Committee was favorable to the approach, though did not make a recommendation, pending more information to be reported to the full Council. Staff did not make any recommendations, as appropriate, only providing information. Ms. Barrett introduced Maura Twomey and Diane Eidam of RAPS, present on the teleconference, to discuss this item further. Ms. Twomey described her role as Executive Director of AMBAG and RAPS as its nonprofit arm. Ms. Eidam is a consultant who has worked with RAPS for ten or more years.

In Board discussion, Chair Gjerde noted the committee meeting and summarized the last procurement for MCOG staffing in 2014, which required significant County staff time. The County

does not have sufficient staff capacity available to conduct another procurement. He asked RAPS about their experience. Ms. Twomey summarized their credentials and cautioned to be mindful of the inherent conflict of interest issue for MCOG's contracted staff.

Director Haschak asked about costs noted in the staff report. Ms. Barrett explained the corrected figures received from RAPS after the agenda packet was issued, at significantly less cost than anticipated, for a total price of \$3,800.

Director Haschak asked about steps in the process. Ms. Twomey outlined procedures they would take, including development of the Requests for Proposals, evaluation of proposals received with Board input, and potential assistance with contract negotiations.

There was no further discussion and no public comments received.

Upon motion by Haschak, second by Carter, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (6 Ayes – *Haschak, Carter, Kanne, Hansen, Duenas, and Gjerde*; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent – *Norvell*): IT IS ORDERED that the Chair is authorized to sign a contract with Regional Analysis & Planning Services at \$3,800 for procurement of Administrative and Planning staff services with Executive Committee involvement in the process.

4. Convene as Convene as RTPA

5. Recess as RTPA – Reconvene as Policy Advisory Committee

6 - 9. Consent Calendar. Staff reported minor corrections to #6 and #9. Upon motion by Carter, second by Haschak, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes – *Haschak, Carter, Kanne, Hansen, Duenas, Ahlstrand/PAC and Gjerde*; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent – *Norvell*): IT IS ORDERED that consent items are approved as amended.

6. Approval of August 14, 2023 Minutes – *as amended to correct a name spelling, Page 3*

7. Adoption of Resolution Approving the FY 2023/24 Project List for the California State of Good Repair Program – Mendocino Transit Authority – Ukiah Transit Center

Resolution No. M2023-09

Approving the FY 2023/24 Project List for the
California State of Good Repair Program
(Reso. #M2023-09 is incorporated herein by reference)

8. Technical Advisory Committee Recommendation of September 27, 2023: Approval of Second Amendment to Fiscal Year 2023/24 Transportation Planning Overall Work Program (OWP) – *To add a Caltrans grant award of \$190,340 for the Noyo Harbor Multimodal Circulation Plan and to add \$14,690 from Project Reserve to City of Fort Bragg's Central Business District Parking Evaluation project as requested. Total OWP funding increased from \$1,086,672 to \$1,277,011, an increase of \$190,340. The Executive Director is authorized to sign certifications and a revised OWP Agreement as needed and forward to Caltrans as required.*

9. Adoption of Addendum to the 2017 Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Covelo State Route 162 Corridor Multi-Purpose Trail – *as amended to update address of MCOG's office location. This second addendum identifies changes to the project, limited to the area around the Mill Creek bridge crossing and a trail realignment adjacent to Round Valley Indian Reservation Headquarters Cemetery.*

10. Public Expression. Mr. Dave Shpak of Gualala complimented Mendocino County Department of Transportation for recent road work done on several projects in the South Coast area of the county.

11. Public Hearing: Adoption of Resolution Approving Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Grant Program Regional Priority List. Program Manager Sookne discussed the two project proposals submitted under this program to provide transportation services for the elderly and disabled, as described in his written report. MCOG as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency is required to score proposals for traditional capital projects, and not for the expanded program of operating assistance. One application was received for a traditional vehicle acquisition project from Willits Senior Center, as documented in the draft resolution and the list with scoring results. Several other applications were submitted for operations funding, with no action required by the Council.

The Chair opened the public hearing at 1:49 p.m. No one in the board chambers wished to speak, and no comments were heard from the teleconference. The hearing was closed at 1:50 p.m.

In board discussion, Director Haschak asked about scores for the project, which appeared to be relatively low at 77 points for each of two vehicle replacements. Mr. Sookne responded that scoring is entirely objective from data provided, with little flexibility. Ms. Barrett added the scores were not reflective of services provided by the senior center, and that all rural services score lower than others due to fewer rides provided. She said Willits Senior Center was doing an excellent job.

Upon motion by Haschak, second by Kanne, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes – Haschak, Carter, Kanne, Hansen, Duenas, Ahlstrand/PAC and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent – Norvell): IT IS ORDERED that the following resolution is adopted, the Executive Director is authorized to sign the required documentation, and staff is authorized to forward the executed resolution and required documents to Caltrans for further processing.

Resolution No. M2023-10

Approving FTA Section 5310 Grant Program
Regional Application Scoring & Priority List
(Reso. #M2023-10 is incorporated herein by reference)

12. Second Amendment to Fiscal Year 2023/24 RTPA Budget – to reconcile FY 2022/23 Local Transportation Funds (LTF) shortfall and LTF Reserve withdrawals with FY 2023/24 LTF available for allocation. Ms. Orth reviewed her written report and recommendation in detail, characterized as a clean-up amendment for full transparency of dealing with the budget shortfall. She reported the LTF budget of \$5,137,383 less actual revenues of \$4,543,795, for a shortfall of \$593,588 or 11.6 percent. She then presented the Fiscal Year 2023/24 budget summary spreadsheet with two methods of calculating and making transfers between funds, both with the same result of an overallocation to Transit of \$407,632. She recommended the second option, “Method B,” as most consistent with the adopted Reserve policy and would provide a cleaner audit trail. The recommendation assumes the Council would keep the LTF Reserve at 15 percent or \$735,000 (the minimum per policy is five percent). By making amendments one step at a time, starting with this reconciliation, MTA would be advised of the amount available for a revised claim, for a subsequent amendment to resolve the over-allocation. While Fiscal Year 2021/22 ended with a healthy surplus, that revenue went toward covering the 2022/23 shortfall and making whole MTA’s allocation, not flowing forward to 2023/24 as it normally would.

In board discussion, Director Kanne asked for confirmation that MTA received its full allocation of funds for Fiscal Year 2022/23 and this report means less funding for MTA than anticipated in 2023/24. Ms. Orth concurred with that statement.

Jacob King, MTA Executive Director, commented briefly that now the amount of actual funding available is known, MTA will decide how best to manage its budget and work with MCOG staff to submit a revised claim for Fiscal Year 2023/24.

Director Carter moved to approve the staff recommendation, seconded by Duenas.

Discussion on the motion: Director Kanne favored keeping the LTF Reserve at 15 percent for FY 2023/24 as prudent, and appreciated staff's recommendation. **The motion carried** unanimously on roll call vote (7 Ayes – Haschak, Carter, Kanne, Hansen, Duenas, Ahlstrand/PAC and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 1 Absent – Norvell): IT IS ORDERED that staff's reconciliation of Local Transportation Funds (LTF) available for allocation in 2023/24 is approved, using the recommended "Method B" to cover the FY 2022/23 shortfall entirely from LTF Reserve funds, as a second FY 2023/24 Budget Amendment.

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

14. Reports - Information

- a. Caltrans District 1 – Projects Update and Information. Director Ahlstrand reported on recent grant activity, congratulating both MCOG and City of Ukiah for awards to the Noyo Harbor Multimodal Circulation Plan and School Street Multimodal Transportation Study, respectively. There will be a call for FY 2024/25 transportation planning grant applications on October 5, followed by a districtwide workshop and open office hours to assist. \$53.4 million is available for Sustainable Transportation and Climate Adaptation. Clean California local grant awards will be announced this week. The August Dump Days events were a huge success. Free dump vouchers will be available in November at Pumpkin Fest in Ukiah, and in December at Harwood Hall in Laytonville, first-come-first-served until gone. Middletown and Caspar dump days are being planned, and other suggestions are welcome. Littering and graffiti cleanup jobs are providing employment. The Covelo Clean California project will start this year. Completion of the Pudding Creek Bridge project in Fort Bragg is expected by end of month.
- b. Mendocino Transit Authority. Executive Director King reported working with PG&E on installation of an electric vehicle charger, somewhat delayed due to supply chain issues. Otherwise things are going smoothly. MTA will be tightening its budget as discussed.
- c. Great Redwood Trail Agency. Director Haschak reported on a meeting in August to review another round of applications for the Executive Director position. Next meeting October 9.
- d. MCOG Staff - Summary of Meetings. Ms. Barrett referred to the written report.
- e. MCOG Administration Staff
 - i. Covelo SR 162 Corridor Multi-Purpose Trail Project. Ms. Barrett reported construction is progressing with paving, fencing and culvert work over the next couple of weeks. Two locations are paused including the pedestrian bridge over Mill Creek and an area of archeological discovery; tribal monitors are onsite with Caltrans' archeologist, following tribal procedures. This will now be a two-year construction project. The bridge will not be finished, however the rest of trail will be available for public use this winter. The project is mostly complete, including mitigation measures. A small segment at the casino will be on hold pending relocation of a utility guywire. The project is moving along fairly well.
 - ii. RuralREN (Regional Energy Network). Ms. Barrett reported on this new entity comprising mostly non-contiguous counties, of which Mendocino and Lake are subcontractors initially. Administrative roles and procedures, as well as implementation plans for each program are

- being finalized. No reimbursable work can begin until after January 1, 2024, pending California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) actions concerning the budget. Details are being worked out by the partner members over the next couple of months.
- iii. *Senate Bill 125 – Transit & Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) and Zero Emission Transit Capital Program (ZETCP)*. Ms. Barrett reported on this trailer bill in the 2023 State Budget Act. There are two different, related funding streams, adding to the existing TIRCP and creating the ZETCP. Unlike most funds, these will not be reimbursable, but distributed directly to RTPAs by formula. The regional agency is to administer, program and report on those funds, and to determine which projects receive funding allocations. A total of \$11.6 million is expected for Mendocino County over a four-year period. The first year's initial allocation is expected by April 2024, with \$4.8 million of TIRCP and a lesser amount for the ZETCP. There will be significant work responsibilities for MCOG. Staff will meet with MTA staff to develop a proposed allocation plan, due December 31. Draft and final versions are anticipated on MCOG's November and December agendas for Council approval. Projects may include tradition capital, zero emissions capital, and operations. The guidelines call for a regional strategy using all available transit funding. MCOG will be responsible for annual reporting and posting data such as monthly ridership.
- Board questions and discussion followed. It was noted that the slightly higher funding amounts reported were more current than CALCOG's estimates in the agenda packet. The Ukiah Transit Center would be an eligible project, as would micro-transit services identified in MCOG's recent Mobility Solutions study.
- iv. *Miscellaneous*. None.
- v. *Next Meeting Date*. Monday, November 6, 2023.

f. MCOG Planning Staff

- i. *Feasibility Study - Mendocino Transit Authority's Ukiah Transit Center*. Deputy Planner Ellard summarized her written report. Three top sites were presented to MTA's board on August 30 with the preferred site located on North Orchard Avenue, just north of Kohl's. Board members toured all three sites and voted at a special meeting to select the recommended site. The final report for this planning project is due by December.
- ii. *Sustainable Transportation Planning Program and Recent Grant Awards*. Ms. Ellard noted the two grant awards of \$215,000 for a Noyo Harbor Multimodal Circulation Plan and \$258,000 for Ukiah's School Street Multimodal Transportation Study, from this highly competitive program. 161 applications were received and just 90 awarded grants, or 56%.
- iii. *Miscellaneous*. Ms. Ellard reported staff is continuing to work with MTA on its Short Range Transit Development Plan. The consultants will perform technical tasks and stakeholder outreach; a first workshop was held inland and the next is planned for December on the coast. A draft Plan is due in early January.
- g. MCOG Directors. Director Haschak reported the Covelo Municipal Advisory Committee's interest in the new trail and excitement for its completion. Thanks to all involved.
- Director Kanne reported Willits City Council sent a letter to Caltrans formally declining the proposed South Main Street "road diet." Ms. Barrett had spoken at a recent City Council meeting about the need to stay true to planning efforts; however the community is divided on the subject so the City opted not to proceed with the project. Meanwhile, construction of Willits' segment of the Great Redwood Trail is expected to begin next spring.

- h. California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) Delegates. Director Haschak reported much discussion of SB 125, along with other legislation such as Brown Act bills for flexibility of remote public meetings.

15. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 2:37 p.m.

Submitted: NEPHELE BARRETT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Janet Orth, Deputy Director & CFO