

# MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Approved MINUTES  
Monday, February 7, 2011  
Ukiah City Council Chambers

ADDITIONAL AUDIOCONFERENCE LOCATION:  
Caltrans District 1, 1656 Union St., Eureka

**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 1:34 p.m. with Directors Robertson (PAC), Sinnott, Rodin, Stranske, Pinches, Smith, Ranochak and Gjerde present. Cheryl Willis of Caltrans District 1 joined the meeting by audioconference.

Staff present: Phil Dow, Executive Director; Janet Orth, Deputy Director for Administration; Loretta Ellard, Assistant Executive Director; Nephele Barrett, Senior Planner; and Alexis Pedrotti, SAFE Coordinator.

**2. Election of Officers – Chair and Vice Chair.** Ms. Orth opened the floor to nominations for the office of Chair. Director Stranske nominated Director Sinnott. Staff answered questions concerning past MCOG chairpersons and their terms of office. Director Rodin nominated Director Gjerde. The two nominees stated their qualifications for the office.

A motion was made by Director Stranske, seconded by Director Pinches, to elect Director Sinnott, and defeated on roll call vote (*3 Ayes – Sinnott, Stranske, and Pinches; 4 Noes – Rodin, Smith, Ranochak, and Gjerde; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent*).

**Upon motion** by Rodin, second by Smith, and carried on roll call vote: (*6 Ayes – Sinnott, Rodin, Pinches, Smith, Ranochak, and Gjerde; 1 No - Stranske; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent*): **IT IS ORDERED that Director Gjerde is re-elected Chair.**

Nominations were opened for the office of Vice Chair. Director Rodin nominated Director Sinnott. Director Pinches was asked whether he would like to continue serving, and he demurred. There were no further nominations.

**Upon motion** by Stranske, second by Rodin, and carried unanimously on roll call vote: (*7 Ayes – Sinnott, Rodin, Stranske, Pinches, Smith, Ranochak, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent*): **IT IS ORDERED that Director Sinnott is elected Vice Chair.**

Chair Gjerde presided over the remainder of the meeting.

### **3. Convene as SAFE**

**4. Executive Committee Recommendation of January 26, 2011: Adoption of SAFE Five-Year Strategic & Financial Plan, 2011-2016.** Mr. Dow introduced the proposed SAFE plan for the call box program. Staff's draft plan was recommended by the committee as written. He explained status of the program and strategies for installation of further call boxes. He then answered questions, including spacing of call boxes, locations for new boxes, and annual funding levels. Ms. Pedrotti answered a question about "bagged" call boxes and how these were resolved.

**A motion was made** by Director Rodin, seconded by Director Stranske, to approve the plan.  
**Discussion on the motion:**

- Was a new map of proposed routes added? Yes, attached on the last page as Appendix A-3.
- Director Smith asked about proposed sites and schedule for installations on Route 1. Staff discussed cell phone signal levels and offered to look again at a segment in question.
- Staff noted that call boxes are being removed in urban areas, while this plan adds more, and the reasons for this. In future, more vehicles may have systems integrated onboard for emergencies, but it would take at least seven years for fleets to turn over.
- Call boxes are expected to operate for at least 20 years.

**The motion carried** unanimously on roll call vote: (7 Ayes – Sinnott, Rodin, Stranske, Pinches, Smith, Ranochak, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that the 2011 SAFE Five-Year Strategic & Financial Plan is adopted.

**5. Recess as SAFE - Reconvene as RTPA**

**6. Recess as RTPA - Reconvene as Policy Advisory Committee.**

**Public Expression.** None.

**7 - 10. Regular Calendar.**

**7. Presentation of Wine Country Interregional Partnership (IRP), Phase 3, Travel Demand Model.** Mr. Dow acknowledged delay in completing this project and bringing results to the Council, noting the consultant was not at fault. The model was developed so that the four counties of Mendocino, Lake, Napa, and Sonoma can be analyzed equally to address highway impacts and imbalances of jobs, housing and transportation. He then introduced Mr. Don Hubbard, PE, AICP, of Parsons Brinckerhoff, who gave a slide presentation. Among the points covered were:

- Accuracy testings done on the model (within 3% margin of error)
- Trip origins and destinations
- The model's ability to show results of predictions that could be made, a powerful feature
- Ability to compare land-use scenarios and compute greenhouse gas reductions
- Uses for local and regional studies

The model, paid for by Caltrans, is free to member agencies, and technical support is available. Mr. Hubbard answered questions, including:

- Usefulness for mass transit planning versus car trips
- Results of projections and problems identified in the study region, found when queries are entered in the model.

Mr. Hubbard distributed his business card, and the Chair thanked him. No action was taken.

**8. Consideration of Westport Municipal Advisory Council Issues Concerning State Route 1.** Mr. Dow introduced the issue and communications initiated by WMAC (refer to meeting materials). Mr. Thad Van Bueren, Chairperson, WMAC, spoke to the group's request. He understands Caltrans' role and responsibility in the matter. A Caltrans Community Based Transportation Planning grant has been awarded for a trail plan on the coast. Bicycle safety is a concern. They are interested in feasible, low-cost solutions to the problems identified. He reviewed the list of concerns identified by the public at WMAC meetings in 2008 and 2009, including passing lanes, pullouts,

signage, speed limits, and pedestrian safety facilities in the village of Westport. He asked about the pavement management program and schedule.

Mr. Dow responded as to Route Concept Reports for each state highway. There are no current plans for expansion of State Route 1.

Mr. Robert Scott, Alternate Director, WMAC, added comments about history of the area, how saw mills were first accommodated, then tourism. Later Highway 1 was designated a bicycle route, attracting non-motorized transportation. WMAC is building a body of evidence to make its case for improvements. There is a need to build capabilities of the highway where traffic exists.

Board discussion included:

- Educational value of this issue for MCOG; advice to WMAC to be prepared when funding opportunities arise and to work through MCOG's planning process; concept of citizens working to advance issues. There may be opportunities for a citizens group to educate about highway safety as a parallel effort. (Smith)
- Safety issues as Caltrans' primary job, as opposed to studies projecting future conditions that may or may not materialize. (Pinches)
- Caltrans awareness of WMAC concerns; District 1's response with suggestions. (Robertson)
- View that Caltrans is responsive to safety concerns. Limitations of some highway locations affect local conditions. (Sinnott)
- Devices available for bicycle and pedestrian crossing safety. (Rodin) District 1 has these; is making further efforts and progress on improvements; also identifying areas where the public does not want widening or improvements made. (Robertson)
- Suggestions for ways to present issues and approach Caltrans further. (Gjerde)
- Survey by WMAC indicating that most bicycle traffic in town is southbound; suggestion of option to start with bicycle lane on one side of highway. (Dow)
- Suggestion that MCOG write a letter to District 1; trend toward more crosswalks. (Smith)
- Reductions in heavy truck traffic on Route 1 from Branscomb Road as a result of fewer timber harvest plans. (Pinches) Increased truck traffic on the south coast. (Sinnott)

Staff was asked to provide the Council with a copy of previous correspondence from Caltrans District 1 in response to these concerns. Director Robertson (PAC) noted that Caltrans' responses were substantially consistent with MCOG's. No action was taken.

## **9. Approval of Executive Committee Recommendations of January 26, 2011.**

- a. Dow & Associates Contract Extension for Staffing – Fiscal Years 2011/12 through 2013/14. Ms. Orth summarized the report that the committee unanimously recommended approval of the contract proposal as written, for three years.

**A motion was made** by Director Pinches, seconded by Director Sinnott, to approve the proposed extension as recommended by the Executive Committee.

**Discussion on the motion** included the Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funds proposed to provide for a new "local assistance" staff position as agreed from the Council's strategic planning workshop last August; the existing MCOG policy formula for allocation of its RSTP funds; which agencies would benefit from funding of this position and which would pay proportionately; amount and prospects for continuance of these federal funds; and MCOG's regional role and responsibilities.

**The motion carried** unanimously on roll call vote: (8 Ayes – Robertson/PAC, Sinnott, Rodin, Stranske, Pinches, Smith, Ranochak, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that Dow & Associates’ proposal for comprehensive staffing, Fiscal Years 2011/12 through 2013/14 is approved and the Chair is authorized to execute the contract extension.

- b. MCOG Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Format. Vice Chair Sinnott reported the committee’s unanimous recommendation to continue the current meeting minutes format and some of the reasons for this decision. A brief discussion followed. No action was taken.
- c. Draft 2011 Board Calendar and Educational Options. Chair Gjerde reported that the committee unanimously recommended revising the Board Calendar to schedule a “SACOG and Davis Transportation Workshop and Best Practices Tour” for October 2011. He proposed tentative dates of October 20-22 and described a potential itinerary and budget. A new housing development on campus produces as much energy onsite as it will consume. The City of Davis is a leader in bicycle facilities. SACOG has been working on its regional blueprint planning for years and planners would share their experiences. He asked the Council members to respond to staff within a week or so as to their available dates in October.

He then described the international Walk21 Conference in Vancouver, October 3-5, 2011. Discussion followed. Vice Chair Sinnott supported such educational trips as valuable, noting the success of last year’s Bay Area transportation tour and thanking the Chair for organizing it. Director Smith suggested that staff bring back options for consideration as to how many members could attend at various levels of available budget support. Chair Gjerde and staff will provide more information at the March meeting.

No action was taken.

## 10. Appointments to Standing Committees.

- a. Executive Committee. According to MCOG’s bylaws, the Chair and Vice Chair were appointed to this committee by default. A third member is to reflect a city-county balance on the committee. Upon motion by Smith, second by Rodin, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (8 Ayes – Robertson/PAC, Sinnott, Rodin, Stranske, Pinches, Smith, Ranochak, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that the Council appoints **Chair Gjerde, Vice Chair Sinnott, and Director Pinches** to the Executive Committee.
- b. Transit Productivity Committee. **Chair Gjerde** reappointed himself **and Vice Chair Sinnott**.
- c. California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG). Upon motion by Gjerde, second by Rodin, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (8 Ayes – Robertson/PAC, Sinnott, Rodin, Stranske, Pinches, Smith, Ranochak, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that the Council appoints **Vice Chair Sinnott as the Delegate and Chair Gjerde as the Alternate**.
- d. Optional Appointment to North State Super Region. Vice Chair Sinnott and Mr. Dow described this new association of 16 regional agencies, which MCOG has joined. To date only staff representatives have attended the meetings, it would be a good idea to assign one or more elected delegates for readiness, although it has yet to be determined whether voting delegates will be required. A discussion ensued as to frequency (no more often than

quarterly) and locations of the meetings. The association has met in Chico and Redding, and expressed interest in holding a meeting on the North Coast.

Upon motion by Rodin, second by Stranske, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (8 Ayes – Robertson/PAC, Sinnott, Rodin, Stranske, Pinches, Smith, Ranochak, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that the Council appoints **Vice Chair Sinnott as the Delegate and Director Pinches as the Alternate.**

**11 - 13. Consent Calendar.** Upon motion by Ranochak, second by Pinches, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (8 Ayes – Robertson (PAC), Sinnott, Rodin, Stranske, Pinches, Smith, Ranochak, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that consent items are approved:

**11. Approval of December 6, 2010 Minutes – as written**

**12. Approval of Technical Advisory Committee Recommendations of January 26, 2011:**

**Second Amendment to Fiscal Year 2010/11 Planning Overall Work Program (OWP) – Existing funds for Work Elements 1, 6, 7, 13 are reprogrammed to avoid forfeit of any “use or lose” funding; existing funds for Work Elements 11, 15, 17-2, 18, 20, and 24 are exchanged between staff and consultants’ time. With no new fiscal impact, the total OWP remains at \$1,461,302.**

**13. Adoption of Resolution Approving Mendocino Transit Authority's Grant Application for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 Non-Urbanized Program - Annual Regional Apportionment for Transit Operating Assistance**

**Resolution No. M2011-01**

Approving the Programming of FTA Section 5311  
Non-Urbanized Program Funds for  
Mendocino Transit Authority Operating Assistance  
(Reso. #M2011-01 is incorporated herein by reference)

**14. Recess as Policy Advisory Committee - Reconvene as RTPA - Ratify Action of Policy Advisory Committee.**

Upon motion by Pinches, second by Smith, and carried unanimously on roll call vote (Sinnott, Rodin, Stranske, Pinches, Smith, Ranochak, and Gjerde; 0 Noes; 0 Abstaining; 0 Absent): IT IS ORDERED that the actions taken by the Policy Advisory Committee are ratified by the MCOG Board of Directors.

**15. Reports - Information**

- a. Mendocino Transit Authority. Bruce Richard, General Manager, provided an update on the Mobility Management program, starting in March with a volunteer driver program in Round Valley, followed by Laytonville. He requested a timed item on the April or May MCOG agenda to provide more information.
- b. North Coast Railroad Authority. Director Stranske reported on a recent meeting of the League of California Cities he attended, where a presentation was made. Service to Willits is expected to be running within three years. NCRA also is upgrading the tracks to accommodate SMART passenger service from the ferry terminal north to Cloverdale in the near future.
- c. MCOG Administration & Planning Staff
  1. *Summary of Meetings.* Dow referred to his written staff report.

2. *Confusion Hill Feasibility Study*. Mr. Nash Gonzalez, Director of County of Mendocino Planning & Building Services, reported. Caltrans is decommissioning the former highway route through the area, now that a bypass and bridge have been built. This feasibility report was drafted presenting various alternatives. Comments were received from the project review team, including County representatives. A final draft is underway. A preferred alternative project has yet to be selected. A final report will be prepared for MCOG's review and acceptance, likely in April. Public outreach will occur during environmental review of identified alternatives. He then answered questions, and comments followed. Ms. Ellard noted this study is funded by MCOG.
  3. *Schedule for 2010 Regional Transportation Plan*. Ms. Barrett reported status and reviewed steps taken to date. Environmental review will likely be in the form of a supplement to the programmatic Environment Impact Report, with a relatively long public review period, comparable to a full EIR. The RTP and its Supplemental EIR could be ready for MCOG's adoption by August. Mr. Dow added comments about cost of environmental process; \$23,600 is budgeted. Staff answered questions. A "programmatic EIR" is required to study cumulative effects of various projects in the plan, which is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and it is in MCOG's interests to do so.
  4. *Vision Mendocino 2030 Blueprint Plan*. Ms. Barrett handed out a report of results and discussed highlights. The online survey is still open for one more week at [www.visionmendocino2030.org](http://www.visionmendocino2030.org)
  5. *State Propositions 22 and 26 – Legislation to Address "Gas Tax Swap."* Ms. Ellard reported a simplified summary of the material in the meeting packet. Various statewide organizations have joined in calling for a legislative bill to address the results of the propositions, which would negatively impact transportation funding.
  6. *Miscellaneous*. Ms. Ellard answered a question about the Rails With Trails grant-funded planning project.
- d. MCOG Directors. There were no reports.
  - e. California Association of Councils of Governments (CALCOG) Delegates. A new Executive Director has been hired by CALCOG and is now serving.

**16. Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

Submitted: PHILLIP J. DOW, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Janet Orth, Deputy Director for Administration