

**California  
Rural Counties Task Force**

**March 19, 2021, 12:30 pm**

**Teleconference/Webcast**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**A. Introductions All**

The meeting was called to order at 12:34 p.m.

Chair Woody Deloria thanked members for participating in recent discussions regarding CRRSAA and CAPTI and asked new participants to introduce themselves. New participants were Gary Arnold, the new Planning Branch Chief from District 3, and John Speka with the Lake APC.

**B. Approve Minutes of January 15, 2021 W. Deloria**

The January minutes were approved by consensus.

**C. Information Sharing/Topics of Significance All**

Tamera Leighton commented that she wrote a letter to the CTC regarding funding for CRRSAA. She would like the group to reach agreement on funding floors, and she expressed the need for minimums in her letter.

Debbie Hale noted a new form for RPA funding. She asked that Erin Thompson speak about this.

**D. Rural Planning Assistance E. Thompson**

The item was continued to later in the meeting.

**E. CTC Update Various**

Legislative Update/Federal COVID Relief - Paul Golaszewski noted that the CTC meeting book items would be updated this afternoon. He provided background on CRRSAA and the workshops held by CTC and need to backfill funding for lost revenues. There was agreement that funds should be split 60/40 between State and regions. The state funding will primarily go to the SHOPP. Several scenarios were discussed for distributing the regional funds. After considering different perspectives, CTC staff will recommend the scenario that distributes funds based 50% on STIP and 50% on STBG, with a funding minimum of \$200,000 for very small regions. Teresa Favila explained that the minimum floor would come out of the urbanized area portion. She thanked the RCTF members for participating in the discussions. In response to questions, Teresa explained that they were considering how best to make the funding work in terms of state exchange. Paul explained that guidelines would be adopted at the May CTC meeting for implementation.

Lisa Davey-Bates asked if the urban areas were supportive. Woody confirmed that they are supportive.

Paul explained that staff was recommending positions on three bills: 1) Support SB 339 (Weiner) authorizing another road charge pilot program to test revenue collection; 2) Support AB 604 (Daly) clarifying use of RMRA interest earnings dedicated for SHOPP; 3) Oppose AB 786 making CTC Executive Director a governor appointed

position. The legislator has refused to speak with CTC staff about AB 786. Paul noted that all of other boards appoint their executive director, so this would be unusual. CTC has independent policy making authority per state law passed in 2012. They feel the current process is working well and see no reason to change it.

Other items to monitor include bills sustainable communities strategies and clean freight corridors.

Several RCTF members stated that their agencies would be opposing AB 786. .

Paul noted that the bill was possibly due to the Riverside member's belief that his region hadn't received adequate funding in competitive programs.

Debbie Hale commented on AB 339. She is recommending an oppose position because it requires a virtual option after COVID which must offer translation services for any group identified in Title 6 plan, whether requested or not, including for committee meetings. It would be a major expense and time commitment.

Teresa explained that the Commission will approve share targets as well as targets for PPM. It was noted that STBG can be used for PSR work as well. The option of regions swapping funds with each other was discussed, but CTC staff has concerns.

The group discussed expressing support for the hybrid funding scenario. Tamera noted that she had asked for \$500,000 funding floor and thought that members not present might not agree. Paul clarified that the \$200,000 minimum applied to the STBG and the total would be more. Paul noted that the hybrid approach is better than 100% STBG with unlimited funds to large urban areas.

Mike Woodman said he thought it was a fair compromise, but shouldn't set a precedent for future funding. The formulas should be considered going forward.

Rachel Moriconi said she would be supportive of the compromise because small cities prefer flexibilities of the STBG exchange program. Paul confirmed that the CTC would be adopting guidelines for both portion of the CRRSAA funding.

Nephele Barrett commented that if the RCTF sent a letter in support, it should focus on the funding floor.

Woody said that he would send a letter when he received consensus.

Active Transportation Program - Elika Changizi reviewed the ATP outreach engagement summary noting that 82% of counties that participated in site visits experienced increases in scores compared to last cycle.

Laurie Waters explained that Statewide and Small Urban and Rural components of the ATP would be adopted at the March CTC meeting. She reviewed the total number of successful projects. She discussed the debriefs that staff was conducting with unsuccessful applicants.

Local Partnership Program - Christine Gordon noted that there were two new agencies eligible for formulaic funding—CalTrain and City of Paso Robles. They will be added in the upcoming meeting.

Solutions for Congested Corridors Program - Matthew Yosgott noted that there was only a minor tech amendment for the program on the current CTC agenda. Before the May meeting, they will start releasing dates for the next SB 1 competitive programs workshops which will take place potentially in August or September.

Local Streets and Roads - Alicia Sequiera-Smith noted that they were planning to adopt guidelines at the March or April meeting. They received one comment letter requesting that CAPTI tie in more closely to the program.

She noted that the commission doesn't have the ability to approve or select the projects that are funded by local agencies in this program. Per the new guidelines, submittals for eligibility will be due July 1 in this cycle.

Debbie noted that one of her cities is struggling with Maintenance of Effort. Paul explained that the Commission has proposed a suspension of MOE for 19/20 and adjustments for 20/21 and 20/22 in proportion to taxable sales that were lost by a jurisdiction. The proposal is being considered in the budget trailer bill. No concerns have been expressed so far.

CAPTI - Matthew Yosgott noted that on the March agenda there would be a presentation on the full draft of CAPTI to the commissioners. He invited any agencies or members of the public with questions or comments to participate at the CTC meeting. There will also be an update at the joint CTC/CARB meeting in April.

Ivan encouraged everyone to provide comments to CalSTA, but include the commission as well. Woody and Maura also encouraged comments.

Trade Corridors Enhancement Program - Hannah Walter noted that there were minor revisions on the March CTC agenda. They are continuing to work on the target methodology for Cycle 3.

## **F. Caltrans Update**

## **Various**

Obligation Authority - Sujaya Kalainesan provided an OA update. As of March 14, OA is 29% expended. If RSTP exchange is included, it will go up to about 40%. Last FY at the same time, OA usage was at 66%, but the current level is consistent with the previous year.

The OA best practices committee met in early March. She asked if an RCTF member would like to participate in that group. One question to consider is should the OA pool be opened earlier. Woody said he would let her know who would participate.

The look -head report is posted on the website. Agencies should ask for extensions on project end dates if needed. For federal projects, work beyond that date can't be reimbursed without extension. Inactive projects are below 2%.

State Budget Update - Keith Duncan explained that of the total \$7 billion across all programs, about 44% was allocated through January. Program managers are reaching out to make sure that projects will be coming forward for allocation. Trends this fiscal year mirror last year.

A revenue update will be provided through February. Excise tax is still lower than anticipated, but other revenues are coming in a bit higher than initially expected. There's still about a 1.6% reduction in revenues.

The Transportation Finance package will be released in April. Wall charts will be available in May. The May revise will be released at that time as well. The budget will be enacted in June.

The draft assumptions for the 2022 Fund Estimate will be discussed at the upcoming CTC meeting. The book item will be included in the updates send out today. Federal revenues will be based on FAST Act trends, as there is not yet a new federal bill.

Woody noted that he forwarded an email regarding principals for supporting earmark projects.

ITSP Update - Scott Sauer gave an overview of the outreach efforts to date. Workshop material is currently available on the website. There's a public survey currently available on the website that they will be encouraging people to complete. They're beginning the update of the plan and working with internal divisions to update modal sections. They're working with districts for information on strategic interregional corridors. They're developing a goals and objectives matrix. Goals will be the same as the CTP, and objectives will be the

adjusted to fit the interregional focus. The draft matrix will be available on the website. An update will be given at the March CTC meeting. Scott will be the lead now that Frances Dea-Sanchez is on maternity leave.

#### **D. Rural Planning Assistance**

**D. Thompson**

Erin Thompson was not present for the discussion. Woody noted that about \$88,000 was available for this cycle that the group can consider for a group project. Jeff Schwein had previously suggested funding a work program management tool, but it was not yet ready. Another suggestion was hosting for a VMT screening tool.

Nephele gave an overview of the need to host a VMT tool. Most rural agencies are developing tools for VMT analysis. The tools provided by consultants require web hosting, which many agencies can't provide themselves. Caltrans District 1 had suggested that RCTF agencies might work together to provide combined hosting.

Maura commented that someone would have to lead the effort, including a potential procurement process.

Woody suggested meeting with Dave Robinson to discuss. Most groups have used Fehr & Peers for the VMT analysis studies and tool development. Mike noted that the hosting should also accommodate agencies that didn't use Fehr & Peers.

An alternative option would be to use money to purchase equipment for hosting and have one of the agencies maintain. That would accommodate everyone and not be specific to certain tools or consultants. The server could be used to host other tools as well, such as models.

It was noted that money would come off the top of available funding for the CARL Program, but would be reduced from normal years.

Woody, Nephele, Amber to talk with VMT experts to explore hosting options.

Woody noted that the RPA carryover will be back to the standard 25% this year, so more discretionary funding should be available next year.

#### **H. Miscellaneous**

**All**

Tamera commented that the RPA amount has been the same for many years, although costs have increased. The group discussed the need for increased RPA funding. Amber Collins commented that funds were increased for urban areas through SB 1 due to SCS requirements. Woody said he would initiate that conversation with the state. John Clerici commented that there also needs to be a bigger discussion regarding how to fund things in rural counties and receive meaningful amounts of money for planning and infrastructure.

Mike commented that with everything happening at the State level (CAPTI, ITSP, etc.) it would be good to have a meeting with the chair of RCTF, NSSR, Toks Omishakin and Jim Davis to talk about these issues. Going from the bottom up through state agency staff rural issues aren't being heard. Woody said they would talk off-line to set that up.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:03 p.m.

#### **Chat Panel Discussion:**

From Debbie Hale to Everyone: 12:37 PM

Tamara, I think a floor would be a really good idea.

From Tamera Leighton to Everyone: 12:41 PM

Thanks for taking the minutes, Nephele.

From Tamera Leighton to Everyone: 12:49 PM

Caution: I think that you all may be stuck with me for about five more years. I'm going to see this "floor" become a pattern. In my letter, I asked for \$500,000 as a floor. So, there's work to do in my opinion.

From Me to Everyone: 12:57 PM

I will be taking an oppose position to the Mendocino COG Board as well.

From Lisa to Everyone: 12:59 PM

Lake APC has already submitted a letter of opposition.

(on AB 786)

From Debbie Hale to Everyone: 12:59 PM

AB 339 is the brown act legislation.

From Rachel Moriconi, SCCRTC to Everyone: 01:02 PM

Can't STBG for PID/planning work?

From Debbie Hale to Everyone: 01:03 PM

AB 339 (Lee) - This bill would require all meetings, including gatherings using teleconference technology, to include an opportunity for all persons to attend via a call-in option or an internet-based service option that provides closed captioning services and requires both a call-in and an internet-based service option. The bill would require translation services be provided for the 10 most-spoken languages, other than English, in California, and would require those persons commenting in a language other than English to have double the amount of time as those giving a comment in English, if time restrictions on public comment are utilized. The bill would require the legislative bodies of the local agency to employ a sufficient amount of qualified bilingual persons to provide translation during the meeting in the language of a non-English-speaking person, in jurisdictions which govern a substantial number of non-English-speaking people. This bill would require legislative bodies of local agencies, and state

This bill would require legislative bodies of local agencies, and state bodies to translate agendas and instructions for accessing the meeting into all languages for which 5% of the population in the area governed by the local agency, or state body's jurisdiction, are speakers.

From Gerry LeFrancois Mono County to Everyone: 01:08 PM

Alpine / Sierra Counties would be the smallest distribution levels....my best guess.

From Debbie Hale to Everyone: 01:15 PM

Teresa, what's the paperwork requirement going to be for this funding? We're going to put it into a limited number of projects for efficiency's sake.

From Me to Everyone: 01:22 PM

We did a debrief with CTC staff and found it very helpful.

From Debbie Hale to Everyone: 01:43 PM

Great info and discussion as usual! See you all later.

From Jessica Riske-Gomez - Tehama County RTPA to Everyone: 01:50 PM

Tehama would appreciate a VMT tool