



# Kings County Association of Governments

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Member Agencies: Cities of Avenal, Corcoran, Hanford and Lemoore, County of Kings  
Chair – Ray Lerma ❖ Vice Chair – Dan Chin

## MINUTES

### CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The special meeting of the Kings County Association of Governments was called to order by Ray Lerma, Chairperson, at 3:02 p.m., on August 26, 2009 in the Board of Supervisors Chambers, Administration Building, Kings County Government Center, 1400 W. Lacey Blvd., Hanford, California. Chairperson conducted roll call.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Tony Barba, Dan Chin, Sid Craighead, Mary Hornsby, Ray Lerma, Joe Neves, Jim Perrault

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Rachel Audino, Bruce Abanathie, Seth Eberhard, Victoria Hall, Terri King, Chris Lehn, David Hamilton, County Counsel

VISITORS PRESENT: John Plourde

### UNSCHEDULED APPEARANCES

None

### MINUTES – July 22, 2009

A motion was made and seconded (Barba / Neves) to approve the Minutes of July 22, 2009. Motion carried unanimously, .

### KCAG TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE

#### A. General Transportation Items

##### 1. 2011 Regional Transportation Plan Update

Mr. Abanathie reported we are in the process of updating our Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP is a program orientated long range plan for at least 20 years, which addresses our transportation needs, issues, funding and investments for Kings County. It serves as the foundation for our shorter term project oriented plans, the Federal Transportation Improvement Plan (FTIP) and the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). This RTP is a little different than previous years because of the level of work that is required by recent legislation

and level of scrutiny we are going to be under for these RTP updates. Some of the special interest groups and the Attorney Generals office have taken RTPs to task since the last update, so we are being very careful how we update our RTP. We are in the process of updating information, projects, funding, and modeling to bring our RTP up to date and project it out to the year 2035. We will have a draft for public review in April of 2010 and a final document to be adopted in July of 2010.

2. 2011 RTP Environment Impact Report

Mr. Abanathie reported we are moving forward with the selection of the consultant to prepare the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the 2011 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update. In July we released a "request for proposals" (RFP) to interested consulting firms, for which we received five proposals, and we formed a proposal review committee which consisted of KCAG staff, City of Lemoore staff, and a representative from Caltrans. The review committee scored the proposals based on the criteria included in the RFP and the highest scoring firm was Rincon Consulting Inc. They have experience in EIRs for RTPs and they also did the EIR for the Kings County General Plan update. Their proposal was easy to read, very clear and concise, and met the objectives of the RFP. They also have recent environmental experience with AB 32 and SB 375, which are those critical items for this years update.

Commissioner Barba commented, he thinks that is a good choice to pick a firm from a neighboring county and they know the situation here.

Motion was made and seconded (Barba / Craighead) to approve the selection of Rincon Consulting, Inc. to prepare the 2011 RTP EIR and authorize the Executive Direction to enter into a contract with the firm. Motion carried unanimously.

3. FY 2009-10 Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Goal

Mr. Abanathie stated we just did an update for the FY 2008-09 Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program due to the change in the State's program from Race Neutral to Race Conscious. This DBE Plan takes into account both levels of DBEs and the calculations were done to the Caltrans standard and the goal is 1.62% utilization of the DBE firms for FY 2009-10.

A motion was made and seconded (Barba / Chin) to authorize the Executive Director to sign the DBE Race-Conscious Implementation Agreement and approve the FY 09-10 DBE goal of 1.62%. Motion carried unanimously.

4. High Speed Rail Letters of Support

Mr. Eberhard stated last month staff was asked to prepare a letter of support for Alignment 1A of the California High Speed Rail System. This alignment would see a stop placed east of Hanford. KCAG also received a request from the San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies to sign a letter of support for the inclusion of the Merced to Bakersfield corridor in the application for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding for High Speed Rail. This application would also include a heavy maintenance facility along the corridor.

A motion was made and seconded (Chin / Barba) to sign both letters of support regarding California High Speed Rail by the Chairman. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms King wanted to mention that also incorporated into the KCAG letter of support were comments from the City of Corcoran. She also noted that the next High Speed Rail Authority meeting will be September 3rd and they will not be providing hard copies any more and directed the Commissioners to the link to subscribe to the mailing list.

## **B. Caltrans Reports**

Jim Perrault reported on the SR 198 four lane expressway project, stating that bids were opened on the 5th of August and the contract will be awarded the middle of September. There are some on going questions regarding SMARA permitting, those issues are being resolved and there was a meeting earlier today to discuss it. Other projects are the 12th Ave. interchange project which is in the environmental phase and on track for approval in October. The proposed new ramp in the south-east corner will give access to the undeveloped land and utilize right of way over all. There is a required mandatory design exception for super elevation but no signification issues are anticipated. On the SR 198 and 19th Ave. project, the Caltrans District 6 design squad has been meeting with structures folks in Sacramento trying to decide on a structure type. We are hoping to have a determination on that within a month's time. Staff from the City of Lemoore has been working with the Caltrans landscape architect and the project development team on landscaping and treatment themes. There are a few lane closures on SR 33 from the Kern/Kings County line to just beyond the junction of SR 41, which is asphalt construction work, one way traffic control in that area with potential delays from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. On SR 41 between the railway crossing at Stratford and SR 41 and SR 198 separation there is an asphalt concrete job going on. On SR 41 to Grangeville Blvd. some utility maintenance work with a detour on to Lacey Blvd. There is a striping project going on at SR 198 from the Kings/Fresno County line for about 2 miles, which is a 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. closure. Lastly a report on Safe Routes to School, the cycle A projects were announced a few weeks back. Within District 6 we were able to award 15 projects; Kings County received funding for one project at Garden Side Elementary School in the community of Home Garden for \$628,000. There is currently a call for projects out for Highway Safety Improvement Program funds. The applications compete on a safety index and applications are due on October 8th.

Commissioner Barba commented on the new stop sign on the west bound off ramp at 13th Ave. and SR 198. He said it was very confusing due to the yield signs as well. Mr. Perrault said that he would check into the problem.

## **C. Correspondence**

Ms. King reported on the handouts provided. There is a San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies' Director's letter regarding Prop. 84 planning funds. The letter is in regards to the funds that are going to be available to the Strategic Growth Council who is in charge of distributing \$12 million to different agencies. The MPOs are looking at how the funds are going to be distributed. There was a memo from Sacramento COG which offered a suggestion on how they should be distributed and the Valley COG Director's agreed. It shows within the valley itself the three northern counties would receive \$1 million the four central counties would get \$1 million and Kern would get \$500,000 and this would be for model upgrades to implement green house gas emissions analysis for SB 375 impact.

Another item handed out was a letter from the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley and the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council regarding one of the ARRA programs called the TIGER program (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Program). Projects were submitted to the State and they reviewed those and came out with a list of project recommendations. The Valley submitted a project for SR 99 for the segment in Merced County, however that project was not included in the recommended statewide list. There is a concern by the Valley agencies in how the funding was distributed, as it is supposed to go to economically distressed areas. There is a letter to the Caltrans Director expressing our concerns about how the funding was distributed and they didn't seem to consider the economic disadvantaged areas. This letter was sent hoping we could get some projects included in the final list. Mr. Perrault stated to clarify the State is making a recommendation but ultimately the decision maker is the Federal US DOT back in Washington. Applications are due September 15th and the Governor and Secretary are going to send a letter supporting the projects that went through this selection process. There were 25 projects and any projects that didn't make that list are still able to send in an application directly to the USDOT, with the selection to be sometime in October. Mr. Perrault asked who signed the letter. Ms. King replied it is co-signed by the California Partnership of the San Joaquin Valley and San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council.

#### **D. Staff Comments**

Ms. King mentioned the bids were open for the SR 198 Expressway project and Flat Iron West was the apparent low bidder, which was \$20 million under the estimate. Everything is going as planned and on schedule. There was a meeting this afternoon with Assemblyman Gilmore's office, County, KCAG staff, Lakeside Irrigation District and Kings County Water District, the Caltrans Project Manager, the contractor and other individuals regarding the barrow needed for the project. So at this point the Irrigation Districts are working through the CEQA process and are trying to get an exemption to the SMARA permit, but that is not a given. So they are going to apply for the SMARA permit to prevent any delays.

#### **E. Commissioner Comments**

None

### **KCAG COMMISSION**

#### **A. General Commission Items**

1. Reaffirm all Actions Taken by TPC on August 26, 2009

A motion was made and seconded (Neves / Chin) to reaffirm all actions taken by the Transportation Policy Committee on August 26, 2009. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Areawide Planning Review No. 09-08 - City of Avenal  
Economic Development Administration: Economic Development Assistance Program

Mr. Eberhard reported the City of Avenal is applying for a \$1,952,000 grant for Public Works and Economic Development Program providing \$488,000 from State funds. We have received comments from Kings County Environmental Health Services and the City of Hanford public works stating that the project does not duplicate or conflict with any of their programs.

A motion was made and seconded (Barba / Chin) to include and ratify Commission's comments and those of staff and other reviewers regarding Planning Review No. 09-08. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Areawide Planning Review No. 09-09 - City of Hanford Housing and Urban Development: CSBG Program

Mr. Eberhard reported the City of Hanford is applying for a \$762,207 grant for local housing and physical environment upgrades. We have received comments from the City of Corcoran, City of Hanford and Kings County Public health stating that this project does not duplicate or conflict with any of their existing programs.

A motion was made and seconded (Barba / Chin) to include and ratify Commission's comments and those of staff and other reviewers regarding Planning Review No. 09-09. Motion carried unanimously.

4. FY 2009-10 Overall Work Program Amendment No. 1

Ms. King reported in May of 2009 we adopted FY 2009-10 Overall Work Program (OWP) and budget. Last month we adopted a budget amendment to include funding for consulting services for two work products. The two items we needed to include were the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Regional Transportation Plan and the Triennial Performance Audits. Work Element 50201 has been revised with changes to the tasks for the EIR. It was budgeted for \$100,000, \$80,000 coming from federal planning funds and \$20,000 in Local Transportation Funds (LTF) matching funds. The second project was the Triennial Performance Audits for the transit operators and KCAG budgeted for \$35,000 to be funded with LTF. Work Element 50401 has been revised to include tasks for the audits.

A motion was made and seconded (Craighead / Barba) to approve Amendment No. 1 of the FY 2009/10 OWP to include tasks and funding for the Triennial Performance Audits and the RTP Environmental Impact Report. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Education Reimbursement Program and Employee Assistance Program Continuation

Ms. King stated after separation from the County, KCAG still maintained policy and employee benefits with the county. Due to budgeting conditions this year the County has made some changes in the employee programs. These include the education reimbursement program for all employees and the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for some employees. At this time the EAP was for management employees. Since we don't use general fund money and we don't have current funding issues at this time, KCAG would like to continue those programs. The SEIU did agree to a reduction in the EAP from 6 sessions to 3 visits, but we would be able to offer KCAG staff the 6 sessions. The education reimbursement program would provide funding for staff to further their education and expertise in planning and ability to move forward.

Commissioner Lerma asked how much money is set aside for these programs. Ms. King replied that the cost for the EAP program is very small with the charge being approximately \$2.00 per employee per month. The education reimbursement program is limited to a set amount of \$1,000 for higher degrees and \$500 for lower. Commissioner Barba asked if anyone was taking advantage of this program. Ms. King stated there is one employee going to school but not eligible due to them still being on probation. Ms. Hornsby asked if there is a retention agreement. Ms. King

stated not at this time. Commission Lerma asked about the retention rate of employees who had taken advantage of this program. Ms. King stated one employee had completed a degree using the education reimbursement program and is currently employed with KCAG.

A motion was made and seconded (Neves / Chin) to authorize the continuation of funding for the Education Reimbursement Program and the Employee Assistance Program for all KCAG employees. Motion carried unanimously.

6. 2009 Legislative Update - August

Ms. Lehn reported that since the State Senate and Assembly have just returned from summer recess there is not much to report. Concerning SB 716, we are expecting amendments. This would specifically impact the urban counties, as a rural county if this bill is passed into law we would have to consider specific farmworker vanpool as an eligible use of remaining Local Transportation Funds. The second bill is SB 406 Land Use, Environmental Quality. This bill authorizes either a \$1.00 or \$2.00 fee to motor vehicle registration fee every year. Currently this is locally controlled county by county, and there are specific guidelines on how that money would be allocated. There are many who feel because this bill is spurred on by SB 375, which is a State mandated program, any funding sources should also be statewide.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**A. Correspondence**

None

**B. Staff Comments**

Ms. King stated the San Joaquin Valley annual Fall Policy Conference will be held in Fresno October 1st and 2nd. It was decided that Commissioners Barba and Craighead would be attending. We have received preliminary notice that we have received the Joint Land Use Study grant for Lemoore NAS. The Regional Blueprint awards would also be announced at the Fall Policy Conference. Two applications were submitted for Kings County for the community plans and the Ag Preservation project. The Housing Element has gone through the public review period and now will be submitted the Department of Housing and Community Development for their review. The San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agency Directors are meeting this Friday. Next months meeting agenda will include our agreement from the State for state funding for planning purposes, the Blueprint MOU, Kern conformity document for the RTP.

**C. Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Chin indicated that he traveled to Washington DC to meet with the lobbyist Lynn Hamilton, hired by the City of Hanford as well as Feinstein and Boxer offices as well as Congressman Costa. Congressman Costa has submitted on behalf of the City of Hanford an earmark to the reauthorization of the transportation bill of \$5 million for SR 198 and 12th Ave. interchange. He also addressed the visit to Senator Feinstein's office who seemed very receptive to regional projects.

Commissioner Craighead mentioned the work on SR 269 for the improved entrance to the land fill. In the San Joaquin Valley Housing Trust board meeting there is a committee set up of Fresno, Tulare, and Merced on redevelopment of downtowns for small rural cities. Someone from Corcoran is on this committee and we are looking at getting someone from Avenal included.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the Kings County Association of Governments Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 3:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

KINGS COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Terri King, Executive Director