

**MINUTES**  
**DEL NORTE LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR MEETING: NOVEMBER 12 2015, 11 a.m.**

Present: Commissioner Blake Inscore, City, Alternate  
Commissioner Chris Howard, County  
Commissioner Gerry Hemmingsen, County  
Commissioner Rick Holley, City  
Commissioner David Finigan, County, Vice-Chairman

Absent: Commissioner Kathryn Murray, City, Chairman

Also Present: Elizabeth Burrows  
Nicole L. Burshem, P.S. Business Services  
Sebastian Cohen, Caltrans  
Tamera Leighton, Local Transportation Commission  
Bill Lonsdale  
Jenny Saberr  
Michael Saberr  
Kevin Tucker, Alternate Policy Advisory Member, Caltrans District 1

**1. Call Meeting to Order**

Vice-Chairman Finigan called the meeting to order in regular session at 11:00 a.m.

**2. Consider additions, deletions or changes to agenda**

Ms. Leighton recommended that a discussion item regarding emergency status of Last Chance Grade be added to the agenda.

By consensus, the item Last Chance Grade was added to discussion.

**3. Public comment period**

The following person(s) addressed the Commission: None

**4. Adjourn to the Policy Advisory Committee**

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*Items are considered routine in nature and voted on in one motion: Consider public comments or requests to pull matters from the consent agenda for separate action.*

**a) Minutes of October 8, 2015.**

Staff recommendation: By consensus, accept minutes of September 10, 2015.

**b) SAFE Annual Report**

TAC and staff recommendation: By polled vote, accept SAFE Annual Report.  
Discussion was held in regards to the SAFE Annual Report.

**c) Approve contract for Chico Research Foundation for 2016 Economic and Demographic Profile**

Staff recommendation: By polled vote, authorize execution of contract.

Discussion was held in regards to contract for Chico Research Foundation for 2016 Economic and Demographic Profile.

**d) Overall Work Program Amendment 1**

TAC and staff recommendation: By polled vote, recommend DNLTTC adopt resolution for 2015-16 Overall Work Program Amendment 1.

**e) 2016 Regional Transportation Plan contract amendment to include traffic counts**

TAC and staff recommendation: Approve Green DOT Transportation Solutions contract amendment as presented to include traffic counts for a cost of \$16,575.

On a motion by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Hemmingsen, and unanimously carried the Del Norte Local Transportation Commissioner approved the consent agenda items 4. a-e.

**POLICY and ADMINISTRATIVE**

**f) Approve agency funding agreements with County of Del Norte and Yurok Tribe**

Staff recommendation: By polled vote, authorize executive director to execute Local Agency Allocation Agreements with the County of Del Norte and the Yurok Tribe. Ms. Leighton reported that these funding agreements are coming forward at the request of the State. All the agencies are working to have these processed. Vice-Chairman Finigan reported this covers all the funding for the Transportation Commission.

On a motion by Commissioner Holley, seconded by Commissioner Howard, and unanimously carried the Del Norte Local Transportation Commissioner approved the agency funding agreements with County of Del Norte and Yurok Tribe.

**g) Discussion items**

- US Highway 197/199 update- Ms. Leighton reported the project is still stalled and that she has been requesting information from Caltrans about how they intend to deliver. Ms. Leighton commented that Caltrans states this is high priority and will be moving forward. Ms. Leighton noted that California Transportation Commission executive director Will Kempton asked Ms. Leighton to keep him updated on the progress of this project. Commissioner Howard commented that the majority of the stall was due to the biological opinion. Commissioner Howard asked in regards to what influence does the State have on the Federal Agency. Ms. Leighton commented that she hasn't seen that anyone has any influence over this project and that NMFS has again rejected Caltrans' submission. Vice Chair Finigan commented he had an opportunity to hear about this and the commitment is there but that it is not specific. Commissioner Hemmingsen commented we made a commitment with our STIP funds and now we are looking at a different funding source. Ms. Leighton responded that because of the lawsuits the funding for the project is no longer whole and that construction cannot begin until this is resolves. She further states that the strategy for the environmental groups suing Caltrans and NMFS on the project has always seemed to be to run us out of time and thus money because of timely use of funds mandates. Commissioner Hemmingsen asked what happens to the funds. Ms. Leighton commented the

funds go back to the State Highway Account – the top of the flow chart -- and work there way through. Commissioner Hemmingsen asked if here was a legislature fix. Ms. Leighton commented there is no legislative fix. Ms. Leighton commented that Caltrans highway 199 197 money just had the funds released in the project and that is how hesitant they were to fund this project. Commissioner Howard asked if there was an issue with the biological opinion for Second Bridge. Ms. Leighton commented the project is moving forward without challenge even though that bridge is newer and is not on the State Highway System.

- Highway 101 Last Chance Grade.- Ms. Leighton commented over the weekend there was a question about what happens if a state of emergency is declared for Last Chance Grade. Ms. Leighton commented Caltrans is putting together written information and posting it in the FAQ area on there website. Vice Chairman Finigan asked what the difference is between Last Chance Grade process and Confusion Hill process. Public Advisory Member Tucker commented what happened on Confusion Hill was that it was deemed an emergency because the highway was fully closed for many days. Public Advisory Member Tucker commented to think of it kind of like insurance. If you live in a flood plain you can't go to the insurance company and get money up front to do improvements. Public Advisory Member Tucker commented that only if the road fails can it be an emergency and that Last Chance Grade has remained opened except for a few short periods lasting less than 24 hours. Ms. Leighton commented according to Sebastian Cohen the criteria are that it has to be sudden and expensive to allow the State to get the funding for the project. If an emergency were declared now the FHWA would inspect the project, see that there is no sudden and expensive requirement to keep the highway open and that we would lose credibility and nothing would change. Ms. Leighton noted we need Congressman Huffman involved for the success of this project. Vice-Chairman Finigan commented there are extra copies of the handout. Commissioner Holley commented what was so alarming at the stakeholders meeting was the timelines. Vice Chairman Finigan suggested Caltrans should put together a report of what the process was for Confusion Hill and explain to the public why it is different from Last Chance Grade. Mr. Lonsdale commented this handout wasn't available earlier and thanks for adding this item to the agenda. Mr. Lonsdale commented he would be surprised to learn in the case of Confusion Hill bypass route has not been designated and some preliminary engineering work had not been done. Mr. Lonsdale commented all of Confusion Hill project was handled within a good period of time just within a year and made a big difference. There is no reason logically that a bypass route couldn't be designated and some preliminary work can't be done for Last Chance Grade. Ms. Burrows commented the seniors thank all of you for the quality of life through dial a ride and make us a part of the community. Commissioner Hemmingsen asked what is the timeline to designating the route. Vice Chairman Finigan commented that we do not have a timeline we have a commitment to finish. Commissioner Hemmingsen asked if funding is for engineering or environmental. Ms. Leighton commented the funding is in place for the collaborative stakeholder process and that this is being supported primary by the Transportation Commission. The project initiation documents (PID) will be complete by June 2016. After the PID, there are four

phases that need to be done: environmental, design, right of way, and construction. The next step after finishing the document will be environmental process. Commissioner Hemmingsen commented the question was because environment is done first but for this we are doing geotechnical before the environmental. Vice Chairman Finigan commented that the geotechnical work being done now is preliminary and only for determining if a route option is feasible. Sebastian Cohen entered the meeting. He commented that what we did at Confusion Hill is ask the Federal Highways for a special allocation of funding and it took quite a long time to get the funding for Confusion Hill. Mr. Cohen stated that Confusion Hill was closed for many days and on many occasions. Mr. Cohen commented he is willing to give a more in depth presentation of the emergency process.

**5. Commissioner comments and reports.**

The following Commissioner(s) commented on the following: None

**6. Action on the recommendations of the Policy Advisory Committee**

Adjourn as the Policy Advisory Committee, reconvene as the Del Norte Local Transportation Commission, and by polled vote, approve and adopt the actions taken by the Policy Advisory Committee in items listed above.

Vice Chairman Finigan adjourned the meeting as the Policy Advisory Committee at 11:59 a.m. and immediately reconvened as the Del Norte Local Transportation Commission.

On a motion by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Hemmingsen, and unanimously carried on a polled vote, the Del Norte Local Transportation Commission approved and adopted the actions taken above in items 4. a-c as noted above.

**7. Adjourn to the next regularly scheduled meeting on December 10, 2015 at 11 a.m.**

With no further business before the Commission, Chairman Murray adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m., until the next regularly scheduled meeting on December 10, 2015 at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



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Tamera Leighton, Executive Director  
Del Norte Local Transportation Commission