

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 8, 2010

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the **CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE** held Friday, January 8, 2010, at the Merced County Association of Governments conference room located at 369 W. 18th Street, Merced, California, was called to order by Chairman Tom Grave at 8:32 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dennis Coté, Engineering
Kyle Ford, Citizen-at-Large
Mary Ford-Azevedo, Small Business
Tom Grave, Education
Aaron Hill for Scott Neal, Goods Movement
Lorrae Iencarelli, Citizen-at-Large
Richard Jantz, Economic Development

MEMBERS ABSENT

Adam Cox, Student
Hicham Eltal, Merced Irrigation District
Dan Hultgren, Real Estate
Diana Westmoreland Pedrozo, Agriculture
Melissa Kelly-Ortega, Citizen at Large
Vacant, Construction
Vacant, Citizen-at-Large
Vacant, Citizen-at-Large
Vacant, Finance

OTHERS PRESENT

Lori Flanders, MCAG
Marjie Kirn, MCAG
Ty Phimmasone, MCAG
Richard Finney
Dean Wilson

1. Introductions

So noted.

2. Oral Communication

Dean Wilson commented that today's report would be his last report as the Valley Air District Citizens Advisory Committee representative.

Marjie Kirn explained that the Air District would not allow outside video conferencing to be used to view the meetings. She further explained that if the CAC did not have an

interested representative, she would direct the appointment of the position back to the Mayors of each jurisdiction.

Tom Grave inquired to the follow-up items listed in the CAC Highlights from their December meeting. He asked if Richard was prepared to provide a report regarding property tax returns. Richard requested the item be moved to February.

3. Minutes of the December 4, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting

Mary Ford-Azevedo made a motion to approve the minutes as amended of the December 4, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee meeting.

Seconded by Kyle Ford.

Dennis Coté and Ron Price abstained due to their absence at the December 4, 2009 meeting.

MOTION CARRIED.

4. California High-Speed Rail Authority Working Group Between Merced and Sacramento

Jesse Brown provided a brief history of the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, which has convened a group of local and regional agencies from the Counties of Merced, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, and Sacramento to study the feasibility of commuter rail service between the regions.

Jesse Brown explained that after the passage of the High Speed Rail Bond, the California High Speed Rail Authority entered into an MOU to partner on the development of the Altamont Regional Corridor and the Merced to Sacramento Corridor. He also commented that the Rail Commission recommended that the Merced to Sacramento working group become a partner in the development of the Merced to Sacramento Corridor, which could be shared to include both High Speed Rail and commuter services. He asked for the CAC's recommendation to the Governing Board to show a unified voice and active involvement through an MOU.

Dennis Cote suggested that the first item of business for this partnership include a fiscal impact study to determine if the High Speed Rail is worthwhile.

Tom Grave commented that no mass transit program operates without some sort of subsidy and that the proposed ticket costs have already doubled since discussions first began.

Jesse Brown asked if the CAC would be interested in having a representative from the High Speed Rail speak at a future meeting. He also directed the committee to an Open House for the High Speed Rail taking place on January 21, 2010 at the Merced Senior Center from 3 –7 p.m.

Richard Jantz made a motion to recommend the MCAG Governing Board approve the MOU between the listed parties as stated in the MOU.

Seconded by Dennis Coté.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Support for the California High-Speed Rail Heavy Maintenance Facility Site at Castle and Authority to Submit Proposal

Jesse Brown explained that the California High Speed Rail Authority requested communities interested in “housing” a maintenance facility for the High Speed Rail, submit an expression of interest by January 15, 2010.

Jesse Brown commented that the Cities of Atwater, Merced, and the County have each adopted (or will be soon) resolutions of support for the development of a rail maintenance facility at either Castle or privately held land southwest of the State Route 99 Mission Interchange. Also included in the resolutions, was development of a Downtown Merced high-speed rail station. Jesse Brown explained that the High Speed Rail Authority has estimated 1200-1500 jobs will generate from the maintenance facility.

Aaron Hill inquired as to whom the 1500 employees will work for.

Jesse Brown commented that he believes the private sector, not the government.

Aaron Hill commented that the County should not lose site of private businesses already operating at the Castle site.

Jesse Brown commented that the County has discussed the impact and will do everything within its power to minimize any effects.

Dennis Coté made a motion to recommend the MCAG Governing Board adopt Resolution No. 2010/01-21-01 to support the High Speed Rail Maintenance Facility for Merced County and the High-Speed Rail Station in the City of Merced.

Seconded by Ron Price.

Ayes: Dennis Coté, Kyle Ford, Mary Ford-Azevedo, Tom Grave, Lorrae Iencarelli, Richard Jantz.

Noes: Aaron Hill.

MOTION CARRIED.

6. 2010 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) Draft

Marjie Kirn explained that every two years Regional Transportation Planning Agencies are required to create a local planning document which programs Regional Improvement Program (RIP) dollars. She further explained that the last several years have been dismal, with no new money to program and that the state has requested regions to postpone projects by 30% to outer years.

Marjie Kirn explained that staff's recommendation is to leave the funding as is (not move to an outer year) for the two projects on the books. Projects include:

- Bradley Overhead Replacement Project – bridge replacement and widening
- Highway 59 – Widening to 4 lanes

She informed the group that a meeting is being held on January 14, 2010 with the City of Merced and Caltrans to determine if the Highway 59 project can be phased to utilize the funding in a more productive way.

Dennis Coté made a motion to recommend the MCAG Governing Board adopt the 2010 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) programming priorities as detailed in the 2010 RTIP Programming – Merced County spreadsheet by Resolution No. 2010/01-21-02 for submittal to the California Transportation Commission in the 2010 TRIP no later than February 12, 2010.

Seconded by Ron Price.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

7. California High-Speed Rail – Project-Level Environmental Work

Ty Phimmason provided an overview of the recent Technical Working Group meetings for the High Speed Rail. Highlights included several alignments being withdrawn as well as a summary of the 2009 Business Plan Report.

8. Merced County Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (MCSAFE) Program

Marjie Kirn provided an overview of the Merced County Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (MCSAFE) Program. She explained that usage of this program is very minimal and requested the CAC's recommendation regarding the programs future.

Richard Jantz commented that Stanislaus County discussed installing call boxes in the past, but due to politics, the program was never implemented. He believes that times have changed and that the technology may be unnecessary today.

Dennis Cote commented that the alternative technologies listed in the staff report are a great alternative to discontinuing the program. He recommended a MCSAFE committee be established. He also commented that he would be interested in serving on the committee.

Richard Finney commented that the program seems unnecessary due to everyone owning a cell phone. He further commented that he couldn't see the logic in spending more money to install more boxes.

Kyle Ford commented that cell phone towers typically follow traffic patterns.

Larrae Incarelli thanked Marjie for catching the minimal use of this program for review.

Dean Wilson commented that if the call boxes were linked with smart technology, it might become more of a benefit.

Mary Ford-Azevedo made a motion to recommend the MCAG Governing Board establish a MCSAFE subcommittee to evaluate and recommend possible service enhancements to the Merced County SAFE program and that Dennis Coté represents the CAC on this committee.

Seconded by Kyle Ford.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

9. Status of Regional Road Projects for Merced County

Ty Phimmasonne provided an overview of ongoing regional projects. He also directed the CAC to our website to view the ongoing status of regional projects, which is updated quarterly.

10. TRIP Report

So noted.

11. Legislative Update

Candice provided an overview of current legislative activities. She also invited the CAC to attend the One Voice Sacramento trip taking place on February 17-18, 2010. She asked the committee to let her know if they are interested in participating as soon as possible.

Due to time constraints, Tom Grave skipped to Item 14.

14. Oral Report – Air District – CAC Report

Dean Wilson asked that the committee continue to receive updates regarding the Air District via their website.

Highlights from his report include:

- Trip Reduction Program has passed – 5 years until implementation. Program is designed to help employers teach employees what transportation options may be available to them. Includes encouragement of on site accommodations such as:
 - On site showers for bicycle riders
 - Cafeterias
 - Modifying schedules for car pooling and public transit opportunities
- There may be fines for those employers that ignore the program
- Legislative platform includes ensuring no duplication in AB82
- SB 705 – Air District and State Legislature are bumping heads due to no other alternatives to burning
- Air District hopes to increase incentives from \$100 to \$200 million due to the high demand
- May have an increase in the diesel fuel tax to help businesses pay for diesel engine upgrades

- Wood stove and lawn mower change out program are coming up for 2010. Interested parties apply for a certificate through the Air District
- Curriculum is available for schools on how to keep the air clean

12. Oral Report – ARRA Project Status

Marjie Kirn commented that all the jurisdictions submitted their projects to headquarters on time.

13. Information/Discussion Only

b. CAC Highlights – December 4, 2009

The committee directed staff to update CAC follow up items included with the highlights. Updates include:

- CAC Bylaws, Term limits - February
 - Property tax return percentage – Richard Jantz, February
- c. Sign up sheet for CAC representative for the MCAG Governing Board meeting – 2010

Dennis Cote signed up as the alternate for January. Richard Jantz informed Tom Grave he could not attend the February meeting as listed. Tom Grave agreed to cover the February Governing Board meeting.

d. MCAG Governing Board minutes December 17, 2009

So noted.

14. Oral Report – CAC Goals Report

Upcoming presentations:

- Tighter bonding for development – Dennis Cote, February.
- Market the Blueprint – How do we do it? Richard Jantz recommended the discussion start with how the CAC can promote it. Possibly schedule for March 2010.
- Tom Grave and Marjie Kirn will discuss future agenda topics.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS OF THE CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED BY CHAIRMAN TOM GRAVE AT 10:28 A.M.