

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

A meeting of the Regional Transportation Commission was held on November 21, 2019, at 8:00 a.m. in White Pine County Library Conference Room, 950 Campton Street, Ely, Nevada.

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS WERE PRESENT:

Wayne Cameron, Chairman
Richard Howe, WPC Commission
Jim Alworth, City of Ely

ALSO PRESENT:

Bill Calderwood, WPC Public Works Director
Russ Merritt, City of Ely
BJ Almberg, Basin Engineering
George Chachas
Naomi Harris, Recording Secretary

ABSENT:

Steve Baer, NDOT Representative
Desiree Barnson, Representing Ely Bus

Wayne Cameron called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

***COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (3 Minute Time Limit): -**

George started the meeting out by saying the downtown area wants 4 lanes, not 2. He said there was a snow plow downtown that morning that went from one end of town to the other with no issues. Once you put obstructions out it is going to slow the plows down. If they have that kind of money to waste by hiring additional people, putting out more plows then they can pave the city streets.

He has a major concern on the ingress/egress on Avenue D down by the Holiday Inn. That road does not meet minimum street width requirements, the curb and gutter on the north side should have been installed 5 feet off the travel lane, not 11. You narrowed that street down for no reason. You're causing a huge safety issue there. When it snows a lot of people coming in are not going to see that triangle that was put in there. That was a poor design. That needs to come out and you need to rectify that. If it's not your responsibility, you need to tell the City to do that as well as the State. He's been to the State and they said it's the City. Safety is everybody's responsibility. In addition, there is no ADA access on the north side.

There was a project done on High Street in conjunction with the Tour & Rec Board. Half of that street was paved. He said RTC should have been in on that project. We could have had a nice street where we have the Convention Center and 2 major motel properties. But what we have is a half-baked project. Speaking to Richard Howe, George said he increased the taxes but what did

the people get from it? He said there would be no criticism if they would least address the pertinent issues but that's not happening and that's why he does not want any new taxes.

Carol McKenzie in Lund has yet to address the flagrant disregard for ADA access on the concrete sidewalk she installed last year. Minimum sidewalk width is 4 ft., not 3 ft. and there is no ADA access on either corner. She sat on the Regional Planning Commission for years. She set the rules, now she needs to abide by them. If she does not, she needs to be removed from all public committees.

There is no ADA access on the corners of Avenue C and 11th Street, 13th Street and Avenue M. That was an RTC project that wasn't done properly and it needs to be corrected. The handicapped cannot access the roadway on those corners.

Nothing has been done on 7th Street at the railroad crossing above the old grade school. He said it was a federal project and does not meet ADA. Rip rap was installed from the fence line to the street. You're forcing handicapped people out in the roadway. There is no clear walkway. George cannot do any maintenance along his fence line. They need to address that. If they do not want to address it, they need to tell the Railroad. They just completed a large project where curb and gutter was put in with asphalt. The code strictly says concrete. They are paving, they are doing work on a private street. They can't do that. He asked if any RTC money was used on that project and Wayne Cameron answered no.

Earlier they talked about the median on 15th Street. The street is going to be narrowed once the median goes in. There is no sidewalk where the pedestrians can walk. That needs to be addressed at some point.

George also wanted to remind the Board that they still have not gotten back to him in regards to proper access coming off of Park Avenue, Campton Street, Avenue I, Avenue K and Avenue L. All are accessing Great Basin Blvd. and none of them meet the minimum City codes. There's a new project coming in and they need to do it right. The City of Ely sued George for putting in his sidewalk after they told him how to put it in. That was on 7th Street and Avenue G. He did it to code. You can't have it both ways.

George continued on, saying that Keith Carson has yet to fulfill the RTC agreement he made in regards to the paving of Orson and Ruby Street. They valley gutter does not meet code and he is yet to put in curb and gutter. Now he's putting modular homes in a trailer park. Do we have different rules for different people? He needs to abide by the contract he made with RTC.

DISCUSSION – UPDATES FROM NDOT – none.

DISCUSSION – UPDATES FROM CITY OF ELY – Russ Merritt said the City has been doing a lot of crack sealing. They will continue crack sealing, weather permitting. This time of year, they will be maintaining and cleaning DI's to prevent flooding, sign replacement, and potholing as needed. Other than that, they will be ready to plow when it snows.

Richard Howe asked about the new road on the upper end of Mill Street and if they plan on plowing it. Russ said they will not put a blade on that road. Richard asked how they plan on plowing snow. Russ said he's been talking with the County and plan on using the same type of rubber edge the

County uses for plowing Georgetown Ranch Road. Bill Calderwood said they take a tire, slice it, lay it out across the blade and the rubber edge is what touches the surface of the road. They last almost as long as a cutting edge. The County uses it on Georgetown, 212-N and right on through the Lackawanna area. He said they work great for the County. Richard asked if they bring the blade up 1/4" but Bill stated they put the rubber edge right on the ground. Richard was concerned about ripping the road up. Bill said they believe it is safer to use the rubber edges than a steel blade. Richard asked if all of the treatments have been done on that road. Russ Merritt said they plan on doing a second treatment on that street in the spring. Richard said the main concern is, after doing all of the work they did on that road, that they don't dig it up plowing snow.

DISCUSSION – UPDATES FROM COUNTY – Bill Calderwood said the County did not get the road stabilization put on Mitchell/Oxborrow Roads. They lost hundreds of hours doing a regrind on 16 miles of WP03 and dealing with the flooding in McGill. Mitchell/Oxborrow is on their priority list and will get done next year.

On the budgets handed out, RTC has a line item for equipment under \$5,000. The County purchased some 28" traffic cones out of that line item. When they arrive at the Road Department, they will mark them with RTC so they will be available to both entities. That's why that line item was established.

DISCUSSION – USE OF FUNDS FROM NEW DIESEL TAX – Wayne Cameron asked what equipment is needed to fulfill their duties with the expectations of the additional funds from the diesel tax. He asked if they discussed purchasing a paver. Bill Calderwood said he has not had discussion with the City of Ely in a while but he did not think they were looking at any particular piece of equipment to purchase jointly. They established a line item for equipment rental, which they used this year to rent a roller for both entities to use. He does not know that he would spend the money to purchase a piece of equipment that only runs for a couple hundred hours a year when you can rent one and pay for just the time you use it. He just does not think it's worth it.

BJ AlMBERG said the only discussion he's had with some City staff was purchasing a piece of equipment that they could use to pave their trenches. But maybe leasing or renting equipment as needed is the proper way to do it. He just knows from the City side, one of their big expenses of utility projects is going back and patching and paving those roads. If it's something they could do as a maintenance thing it could be a cost savings for the City. That's the only thing him and Russ discussed.

Bill Calderwood said the County has a small paver that would be great for doing those kinds of patches. He said if the City needs it, the County just needs to get it serviced and ready to roll. He believes the Assistance Agreement they have in place will cover the use of it. He said that is one of those pieces of equipment the County already has that has minimal hours on it and it's available. Just utilize the Assistance Agreement and save some money. Wayne Cameron asked if it was an adjustable paver that could be utilized if needed. Bill Calderwood said yes.

BJ said he's looking at it from the City's standpoint. Instead of having a 2 foot trench, they could have a 6 foot trench and create a better patch for the road. It's hard to do a big patch by hand.

Bill Calderwood said he can confirm that it runs and get it up and going. The only thing, per the Assistance Agreement, is that a County employee would have to run it. But that is not a big thing.

That would be his recommendation instead of purchasing a new one. And if we do a lot of it, maybe look into leasing or renting something down the road.

Wayne Cameron asked if the new tax goes effective January 1, 2020, and does that mean they will have 6 months of funds coming in? Richard Howe said at the August meeting he told the RTC Board that he was going to go to the County Commission immediately to try to get that vote for up to \$.05/gallon of diesel tax, which would be applied to the RTC. Based on the 2015/2016 revenues for diesel at \$.05/gallon, it will generate ± \$405,000 revenue to the RTC budget. One thing the Board should do is prioritize and maybe look at going out to bond. Let's say they get 4-5 roads that are in desperate need. They prioritize them and get the bonding capacity and they go to work on those roads right away, utilizing their 10 year plan out. He thinks the funds will be between \$405,000 - \$750,000, based on the traffic they had coming in the last 4 years. White Pine County is the first county to pass it. They had to have a super majority to pass it and they did. The revenues are going to go to RTC. 10% will go to the State but the State has to utilize the funds within White Pine County boundaries. So you're looking at almost doubling the budget. Say the Board goes out and looks at some kind of 10 year bonding and then identify roads that need repaired then in 10 years, look at the next set of roads on the list. It's going to be good for the City and the County. This Board has done a really good job as far as how the money is being spent. They did Mill Street and they are working well together. So what do they want to use the funds for? He wants to identify some roads that are absolutely necessary and put them on a priority list. Let's show the public where we are using the money. White Pine County jumped on it, where other counties have not. Let's make good use of this diesel tax.

BJ Almborg said he is very supportive of that because we need to do something for our roads. His only concern is the County code for the RTC. It says 324825, proceeds of tax may not be pledged as security or revenue bonds. But that may not apply to how this diesel tax was set up. Maybe through Public Transit we cannot bond but we can bond this additional revenue for the diesel tax that we just talked about. This is a County ordinance and you could potentially change the ordinance if that's the direction you want to take but he just wanted to point that out.

Bill Calderwood said one of the Commissioner's comments was, in general, his philosophy is "no new taxes". His justification was that it seems like the taxes go up and now we get a couple of new trucks. Bill said he agrees with him to a point. He and Martin Troutt had a discussion and thought it would be a good idea to use the dollar amount set aside from the diesel tax and use it for contract services. For example, \$210,000 would slurry seal all of Lund. He thinks it would be nice to take the money and contract it out for services so when it goes back to the Commission, you could clearly show where the money was spent on something substantial, at least for a few years. It's kind of along the same lines except you would not have to bond. You would just do it under contract services and do something annually. A re-pave project you would have to hold back funds for a couple of years.

Richard Howe said they are throwing ideas around, which is a good thing. He believes they need to show the public where they are spending the money. It needs to be up front and it needs to be fair. They imposed this diesel tax for a reason. To improve the roads because that's the number one issue all throughout this county and city. Let's sit down as a Board and let's identify and prioritize which roads need the work. But let's be smart and let's spend this money wisely.

Jim Alworth asked if that fuel tax was for both on-road and off-road fuel. Richard Howe said it is for all diesels but no red fuel. So if you fuel your diesel pick-up it's costing you \$.05/gallon. The mines will have to pay to fuel their diesels but it does not pertain to the ranchers who use red fuel and the folks who use diesel to heat your homes. BJ said he believes the mines use off-road fuel.

Jim Alworth agreed and said it's going to take a long time to fix the roads but before they put paving down they need to put curb and gutter down. BJ said they need to get the water off the streets, as that's what destroys them. Richard Howe asked what would be the sensible way to do East Ely because the roads are so wide. He asked how far in would they do curb and gutter and what does it mean for the property owners. Jim said that's a good question because some of the streets are so wide, wider than the standard. BJ agreed and said he went through the City code and those roads are substantially wider than the standard. There are multiple levels out there for the standard. They took it to the City Council years ago to get some clarification because when a home owner wants to put curb and gutter in, they go to them and ask where to put it. When a home owner puts curb and gutter just 5 feet off of their fence it creates a very large road which is very expensive for the City to maintain and it's very expensive to replace and truly you just created a parking lot on the side for those residents. So he would come back in here and say let's look at doing this. This is a long-term deal but if we were to come in here and do a bond for these roads, his suggestion would be to go back and build them to the City standards, which is substantially less than that.

BJ added another idea to the discussion. The City is trying to get a complete GIS system set up. They are now trying to piggy back on with the County's GIS mapping that is already established. If the County Assessor has already established a parcel map, the City does not want to duplicate that work on their side. They have had discussion with the County and the County is ok with it. The idea is that every department could come and participate a little bit as far as what those costs are to be able to get it established. They don't know what the cost is going to be but the City Road Department is funded through their general fund, which is the tight fund, which makes it difficult to get anything done with the roads. He thought the RTC could possibly put some of this funding towards getting the GIS established for the City of Ely's road department and obviously helping the County's side too. He thinks it's something that will be beneficial in the long term. It could be used to track road work and costs in the future. It would be good to start building a data base of information about the roads and costs. He does not know what the costs are yet. This is just a preliminary discussion/idea at the moment. They might not have something physical to show the public for where the money was spent but at the end of the day if it's something that can help them make wiser decisions and frees up their time, it will truly be a benefit.

Bill Calderwood said the cost would not be that significant for the RTC to assist with the City or County portion. He said that there are so many entities that could assist; the water department, 911, road department. There are a lot of entities that could come together to keep those costs minimal. He visited with the Finance Department and the Assessor's office because he's struggling a little bit with the service that is being provided now. He is going to make a request to ask the current company to do a presentation. He knows there are entities locally who could provide the same service and also some outside the area that have contacted him. He'd like to see some different proposals and maybe do a little bit of this in-house too. After establishing that, he thought they could have a meeting between all of the entities to see what their needs are. But they should at least listen to the presentations.

BJ AlMBERG said he just recently had a meeting with Brad in the Building Department and with the Assessor. That was some of the suggestions coming out of that meeting because Brad at the Building Department has some things that he wants to have in there. They currently use a software that could possibly be imported into the GIS so it's readily available for the Building Department to do what they need to be doing. So he agreed with Bill's statement that every department has a need for this. He looks at it from the Sewer and Water Department side. If they have a water leak out there they could look at this map and pinpoint where the water valves are to turn the water off. If every single time they had a water leak they could reduce the time it takes for them to get that water off by an hour. That makes a big difference in a year's time frame. On days like this when there is snow out there and it is actually covered, they could get right on top of it and find it and not have to kick around in a big huge area. There are definite benefits to it. He realizes it's outside what the RTC would use it for but he's just trying to bring some examples of benefits for the whole community. Bill Calderwood added, as an example, Mt. Wheeler might want to participate to track election districts. One provider is the way to roll in his opinion.

Richard Howe said this diesel tax money sounds like a lot of money and yes it's a big boost. But it's not going to fix everything. People think \$600,000 - \$700,000 can fix every road in White Pine County. Yes they can do more than what they're doing now but that's public perception on how much it costs to fix a road. Bill Calderwood pointed out that Murry Street cost \$600,000 so that will give you an example of how far the money goes. Jim Alworth praised what Russ Merritt and his crew did on the end of Mill Street, starting at Belford. He put the publicity out there in the paper. It was a tangible thing that people could go out and look at, which is a good thing. The process they did has proven to be a good product and there are a lot of City streets that could probably go with that same process. Again, it is a tangible thing people can see and so they know where the funds were spent. Everyone agreed and gave praise to Russ Merritt.

BJ AlMBERG said he thinks they should talk to the DA's office and get an answer to what he brought up earlier. Ask if it's just Public Transit that is that way or is it everything that comes through this Board. The answer can change what you want to accomplish here. Even if that is the case, it was a policy that was put in place by the County Commission so it is a policy that can be modified if that's what the Commission chooses.

DISCUSSION/ACTION/POSSIBLE APPROVAL – REALLOCATE \$210,000 FROM CONTRACT SERVICES LINE ITEM #065-451-52915 TO COUNTY ROAD EXPENDITURES, LINE ITEM #065-451-52513 – Bill Calderwood said the County requested \$210,000 from the Contract Services line item that was approved by this Board that was to be used to do a slurry project in Lund. The City requested \$240,000 which was for slurry in the Murry Canyon area. He's making this request to move it from Contract Services because they ran some numbers and want to an in-house chipseal. The State has some chips available for them to use. They can do the streets of Lund for less than \$50,000 and he believes a chipseal is a better treatment than a slurry as well. So this request is for moving the County's portion of what they wanted to contract into their line item so they can use those funds for materials. Jim Alworth stated that the bottom line won't change, it's just a reallocation of funds. Bill said yes. They are not going to spend the \$210,000 so that is good for both entities too. He wanted to do it so they are not short on that supplies line item.

Richard Howe made a motion to approve. Jim Alworth seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was approved.

DISCUSSION/ACTION/POSSIBLE APPROVAL – TO CHANGE THE CITY OF ELY’S PERCENTAGE FROM 27% TO 29.3% BASED ON THE COUNTY REMOVING 16 MILES OF PAVED ROADS FROM WP003, RUBY VALLEY AND ADDING 3.78 MILES OF PAVED ROADS TO THE FOLLOWING: 212 NORTH (WP0836), POLE LINE ROAD (WP0846) AND GEORGETOWN RANCH ROAD (WP0832) AND THE CITY ADDING .3 MILES OF PAVEMENT TO BELFORD AND MILL STREET EFFECTIVE 12/1/2019 –

Jim Alworth said it’s been about 7 years since he was with the City but he thought at one time the City had 52 miles of paved roads. BJ Almberg said it is not 52 miles of paved roads but 52 miles total, including alleys, etc. Richard Howe asked how it effects the County. Bill Calderwood said it reduces the County’s percentage and increases the City’s percentage. Wayne Cameron asked if they had any figures to show. A breakdown was provided that showed 2.3%. BJ said they figured $2.3\% \times \$600,000$, which was $\pm \$15,000$. Bill Calderwood said there was a discrepancy with the percentages a couple of years ago due to a mistake by his predecessor. But the mistake was caught and the percentages were corrected. BJ said yes, the mistake was brought forward and the County Commission and RTC Board allocated it back to the correct percentages. Bill Calderwood said it is his recommendation to change these percentages because they are accurate. He contacted the State and asked if there is a definition of what they are calling an asphalt road. Humboldt County uses a mag-chloride to harden a road and then they do a double-chip over it and the State accepts that.

Richard Howe asked if this would hurt the County. Bill Calderwood said he went before the Road Commission in the spring and he talked about doing the re-grind on WP03. At that time he made the Road Commission aware of the fact that it would reduce the County’s percentage. In the long haul, the County is better off to reduce mileage. It will actually save money. You might get more money with more roads but if you have another 16 miles of asphalt to maintain, it’s a loss. He thinks it is good for both entities. He just wanted to make the Board aware that the percentages are going to change.

Richard Howe made a motion to approve. Jim Alworth seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was approved.

DISCUSSION – SET DATE FOR NEXT MEETING – After some discussion it was decided that the next meeting should be scheduled for February 20, 2020 at 8:00 a.m. in the White Pine County Library Conference Room.

***APPROVAL OF RTC MINUTES (08/15/2019) –** Jim Alworth made a motion to approve the 08/15/2019 meeting minutes. Richard Howe seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was approved.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (3 Minute Time Limit) – George Chachas wanted to remind them that Mill Street should have been a General Improvements District project. They would not have the problems that they are having now. Had the Developer put in the roads like he is required to do, it wouldn’t be the City’s responsibility to put a road in on a new development. Curb and gutter is a requirement and it wasn’t put in. The road is going to unravel on the sides.

There has been no mention from the Board about asking the State about taxing electric cars. If nothing else, you guys need to implement road tax in White Pine County on electric cars. You don't have to wait for the State. Those people aren't paying a dime for the maintenance and upkeep of the roads.

George wanted to remind them that there is drainage coming from the parking lot onto the sidewalk at the Copper Queen on Campton and Great Basin. It creates a slipping hazard in the winter time and it has not been addressed in years. The road is too narrow and the drainage has to go under the sidewalk and into a drop inlet, not across the sidewalk. That roadway was narrowed and it didn't go to the City Council. It needs to be brought back and addressed. Again, we have standards and it depends on who you are on whether they pertain.

Someone is putting up OHV signs, which is fine. Trouble is, they could have saved a lot of money if they attached them to the stop signs. Instead they are blocking ADA access. Handicapped people can't get past those signs. They have to go out in the road. He asked why they are wasting money. If it is not them then he'll go back to the City. But they need to start using the money wisely.

Avenue A is a private road. There were SNPLMA moneys used on that. You can't do that and it needs to stop.

He wanted to remind them that on 7th Street and down off the junction there was curb and gutter put in that wasn't put in properly. All you had to do was address the corner for ADA access but someone took it all out and put in a monstrosity. You better stick to your standards. It's a waste of money. He wants to know who paid for that curb and gutter. It's going to move water out into the street, not along the curb and gutter line.

Richard Howe wanted to say something in public comment. He's involved in I-11 and has been to Carson City, trying to get on their agenda. He asked to be on a conference call through the State Highway. He went and got approval to do all of that. They called him yesterday and there is something about the open meeting law that says he might not be able to do that in White Pine County. Because of the open meeting law there are only two facilities that can have that conferencing, which is Carson City and Las Vegas. He's still head strong on that and he's asking the State to review their process on their selection. So instead of going up 95, go the right way, which is 93. He's going to hopefully find out today or tomorrow. He does not want to drive all the way to Carson City for 3 minutes. He's working on it and is never going to quit. It's the right thing to do and if he can't get his 3 minutes at the State Highway because of open meeting laws then he'll have to do something else. He's looking to appear before them on the 9th. He has detailed backup material to send to every member. He wanted this Board to know that he asked the State to re-address their decision to go up 95. When they did it, their plan was to go up 95 to Fernely over to the spaghetti bowl and up 395. The first month they looked at that it wasn't feasible. Then they had to brainstorm so they went from Fernely over to Winnemucca up to McDermitt to the center of Oregon. Oregon does not want it and neither does Northern California at 395 through the center of Oregon. He went to the state of Idaho. They signed on. Elko is also signed on. The eastern part of the state and USMCA included. The state needs to realize that this is an interstate. It is not a highway between Las Vegas and Reno.

Wayne Cameron adjourned the meeting at 8:52 a.m.