

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

A meeting of the Regional Transportation Commission was held on January 18, 2018, 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
Jolene Gardner, City of Ely
Richard Howe, WPC Commission

ALSO PRESENT:

Bill Calderwood, WPC Public Works Director
BJ AlMBERG, Basin Engineering
George Chachas

ABSENT WERE:

Steve Baer, NDOT Representative
Dave Berky, City of Ely
Desiree Barnson, Representing Ely Bus
Naomi Harris, Recording Secretary

Wayne Cameron called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.

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

George Chachas opposes Item #7 on today's Agenda: **Discussion – To increase County road tax to be committed to road projects within White Pine County.** He opposes any type of increases to taxes. He said they have failed in accountability in regards to tax payers' money. They have failed to pave the road where he and Tom Oxborrow live. They have property out on McGill Highway and have been out there since 1974. Others living out on the highway have been there much less than that and their roads are paved. If the County can afford to pay a shop manager or parts manager out at the County shops, which they've never had before, then they have enough money to pave throughout the County.

He said The Board has failed to collect the \$19,000 back from the Tour and Rec Board. That Board is flush. They collect 13-1/2% room tax and pay out almost \$300,000 in salaries and bonuses. Nobody else does that. And there is very little return for that.

In addition, they have yet to have Keith Carson live up to his agreement to finish the valley gutter at Ruby and Orson. If you want to see one properly installed go up 2 blocks and take a look at the corner of Ruby and Ogden. That one has been properly installed. You're talking 2 years now. Maybe 3 years. Mr. Carson did a sub-par job on the 400 block of Parker Avenue. It appears you guys are selectively enforcing the law. He got paid pretty good money for that project and didn't

do it properly. It wasn't inspected and then he had excuses from here to eternity. Why should we (the taxpayers) pay more when you guys are squandering money? George is going to fight that tax. He wants accountability and so do the taxpayers of this community.

He is also disappointed because he has yet to receive information from The Board. He wants to know where is the policy is that states that anyone requesting public information must submit a request in writing via certified mail to the RTC. He told Chairman Cameron he should step down if he can't do the job.

George Chachas reminded the Board of the lack of ADA access on Avenue C and 11th Street where the new County Administration Building is located. Also Avenue M and 13th Street. They are still not in compliance with the law. Yet you want the taxpayers to pay more. He said they did it wrong and it needs to be corrected.

He wants to remind The Board about the erosion on 7th Street. He stated that Chairman Cameron told him that there was money in the budget to do curb and gutter before the project started. At the last meeting Mr. Berky said that he is aware of the problem and that he was going to take care of it. George said it is not going to come out of the City's budget. That was an RTC project and it needs to be addressed by RTC. We're going to lose a good street. He does not know what the State is going to do with the upper end of Great Basin and how it will effect that. But he has seen water come down that hill at a pretty good flow. And if it comes down at that flow you're really going to lose a good street.

DISCUSSION – UPDATES FROM NDOT – None.

DISCUSSION – CURRENT CITY OF ELY PROJECTS – BJ Almberg said their major road project is complete. The only thing they have left coming this year in the spring is all the seals they planned for. They basically postponed it to get through their construction project and take care of any change orders that came up so that they didn't overrun their budgets. Now that the project is complete they can proceed with the remaining budget they had for the seal project. It is still several months out. It will probably be into April before they can get somebody to come in here and seal the streets. They have to get into the spring with the warmer weather.

The City just recently agreed to a beautification project on 11th Street (Nevada Northern Rail Way) using some Federal grant funding (TAP) that they could attain for that. As a part of that, they are required to get at least 2 blocks of that completed based on the funding that was available. He wanted to put it out there because it might be something that, in the future, the RTC may be willing to participate a little bit or maybe add a cushion just to make sure that they can complete the 2 blocks minimum that is required. Jolene Gardner asked if it is going to be the upper 2 blocks. BJ said yes, the upper 2 blocks off of Aultman Street down to the Depot. Richard Howe asked if he was talking about Anderson's going down. BJ said yes. Richard Howe said he thinks that's a wrong move. He talked to Lee and Leanna Anderson and he said they are pretty upset about it. The semi trucks that go into R Place turn there and go down to Avenue E and go into the back side down there. If you come off of Main Street and beautify that road, or whatever you are going to do, if you put dividers in there, it will leave no access to the Flowers Unlimited and Andy's Western Wear. He don't disagree with the beautification but these businesses are active. If you go down past Andy's a block past Avenue E but stay on 11th Street that's no problem starting there.

Right now it is a wide street so you can turn left into the businesses. If you put a divider there you are limiting access to the active businesses. You could go down 2 blocks, or even 1 block and not touch those businesses that are right off of Aultman. In addition, the traffic coming off of Aultman turning into Anderson's parking lot will run right into a divider when leaving the parking lot. Right now you can leave Anderson's and turn left to get to the stop light.

BJ Alberg said there was a preliminary meeting on Tuesday evening. A center median is something that is not desired down that road. They had the same concerns Richard Howe has. BJ was supportive from a standpoint of a center median with curb and gutter is just an additional expense. The Flower Basket was at the meeting so they have seen the design and voiced their concerns. Richard Howe asked what their concerns were. BJ said their concerns were not necessarily for the median but for the limited parking for their customers. George Chachas said snow removal also. BJ said yes, snow removal concerns too.

Richard Howe said he is just expressing his opinion. It definitely needs beautification but they need to take a real strong look at that first block and accessibility to the businesses and the wide turning requirements for the big trucks that utilize that road.

Jolene Gardner asked about the preliminary drawing and said the State Highway is going to do some of the work. BJ Alberg said yes and went on to say that the exit from Anderson's parking lot is actually a dangerous situation. When people pull out of there and go left so close to the highway it creates dangerous traffic patterns. It's a situation similar to the McDonald's exit. And McDonald's is not even as close to the intersection as this is. When you go through their drive-thru and exit onto Highway 6 you cannot turn left there because there is a median because it is considered a dangerous traffic situation. One of the desires NDOT wants to see is fixing that dangerous outlet coming out of Anderson's. No one is trying to restrict traffic going down that road. Anderson's still has to be able to receive their delivery trucks. Richard Howe said one solution to get out of there is to make it a right turn only coming out of that parking lot. BJ said that would be the only median proposed as it will be used to enforce a right turn only exiting that parking lot. After that it would open up so you can still go down and park in front of the Flower Basket.

BJ went on to say that there is a committee that is trying to get that project completed all the way to the Depot. A lot of those committee members are looking at applying for other grants to make up the difference. He is not suggesting that the RTC make up the difference to complete the project but to be a partner and possibly throw in some funding to get them through the 2 blocks that was mandated to them.

Jolene Gardner asked about the different committees. BJ and Wayne Cameron explained that there are 2 separate beautification committees in town.

George Chachas expressed concerns about the proposed design and snow removal issues. Right now the plows go in and out. If you put any type of medians in it is going to cost more money and manpower to plow through there.

Wayne Cameron asked if the Volkswagen Settlement would be a possible funding source for that project. He said it was just announced Tuesday. Jolene Gardner asked what it is. Wayne said it is a settlement through the State. BJ said he would look into it.

BJ said they were able to get the roads reclassified as requested. At this point in time they have compiled about 1.5 million square feet. He wouldn't say they are all 100% roads because it was stuff that was actually around the City, including Georgetown Ranch, which is a County road. For the stuff that's immediately around the City, there is about 1.5 million square feet. The desire is to coordinate with Bill Calderwood and the County to include some of those additional roads that were also reclassified in the County area and come back together and apply jointly through the RTC for some Federal funding to do some maintenance on those roads. He believes initially they should apply for funding for major maintenance work, such as a chipseal with a seal on top of the chips and not necessarily tearing roads up and repaving. A lot of the roads are some of the main roads and are in a little better shape. That's how many square feet the City has compiled. He will get with Bill Calderwood to get some of the County's square footages compiled. Then they will work together compounding the costs for a chipseal and some of the things they propose to get done. They're working towards getting a number that they're comfortable with. They can get a lot accomplished from here.

Jolene Gardner asked if they could get more funding with more roads. BJ said with this reclassification, it allows them to actually apply for Federal funding. Most of that Federal funding comes in at a 5% match. So if you do a \$1,000,000 project, it would be at an expense of only \$50,000. He wouldn't think that the RTC board would have a problem coming up with \$50,000 for \$1,000,000 worth of improvements. That's their desire. They are working towards it. Now it's a matter of getting with the County to get their stuff included.

Wayne Cameron asked about the status of the cluster issue. BJ said that is another thing he will be talking to Bill Calderwood about. They just got an email regarding the census stuff. It's looking like they may have an opportunity to possibly modify their cluster and get that turned back to the City. If they can get a cluster defined as 5,000 people then they will qualify again for additional funding. So the roads that were just reclassified, even though they are included, if they can get this cluster approved, they can now get the roads that are not currently classified, which would mean the little side streets.

DISCUSSION – CURRENT COUNTY PROJECTS – Bill Calderwood said there is nothing going on with RTC projects.

He and the County Commission received an email from the Lund Town Council expressing their displeasure with no projects going forward in Lund. He put it on his Road Commission agenda for next Wednesday's County Commission meeting and will address the letter. Those were RTC projects that were proposed but they ended up going with the Murry Street project instead. Perhaps there was a miscommunication with the former Road Department Superintendent in not letting the Lund Town Council know what the RTC Board decided. Bill Calderwood took over the Road Department in July and he and Martin Troutt met with a couple of members of the Lund Town Council the end of August, maybe the first of September. They addressed why those projects were not done and what their plans were going forward with this coming year. Wayne Cameron asked if there was someone down in Lund doing a project at that time. Richard Howe said the State

Highway was down there and they looked at possibly saving some money by having them do those 2 Avenues. They were promised this and that but Murry Street took priority. He said Bill Calderwood has already addressed it. He added that they will get down there and address those but he thinks the (Lund Town) Council got up in arms. They were after Carol McKenzie and Bill Calderwood and everyone else and Carol is the most "Pro-Lund" person on the planet. He thinks Bill Calderwood was able to smooth that over but it was a pretty scathing letter. George Chachas said he wanted a copy of the letter.

DISCUSSION – PURCHASING EQUIPMENT WITH RTC FUNDS - BJ Alberg said he and Bill Calderwood spoke to the DA's office to see if it was a possibility for RTC to own equipment. They received an email back from the DA's office the other day that lists NRS277A.250 which basically says the RTC can acquire real and personal property. He believes that means they can purchase their own equipment. With that being said, he believes the RTC should proceed with is looking into a distribution truck so they can go out and seal their own roads and lots of different things. The County has a chip machine that they're working on so they will be able to chip and do maintenance on their roads and do seals on their roads. The County would be able to use it for other things such as possibly doing a mag-chloride on their dirt roads and do a much better application than just spraying it with a water truck. So it would be their recommendation to look at budgeting for that. Normally their typical budget is about \$600,000. Bill Calderwood and the County Road Department has looked into purchasing a distribution truck that would be no more than \$200,000 for that piece of equipment. He believes that would be the way to go. Then take the other \$400,000 and basically purchase materials for it so when the truck comes there will be money in there to seal the streets. This is what they have been working on. Being able to go in and partner with each other. That being said and along the same lines, both the City and County have approved the mutual aid agreement to be able to assist each other. Jolene Gardner said she thinks that is wonderful. BJ said he thinks it is wonderful himself. He believes that everything they have been working on and putting together is getting there and he thinks this will be the last straw to be able to allow greater things to happen for the area. Jolene said she thinks once people see the RTC is purchasing their own equipment it will be a good thing.

Bill Calderwood said one of the things they will possibly do (with the Board's approval) is establish a fuel line item for \$2,000 - \$3,000 worth of fuel and then they will establish a mechanic's line item so if the truck breaks down and needs repairs they can do it out of that budget. They can take it to the City shops or County shops to be repaired and those entities would be reimbursed through the RTC's line item for specific repairs so it's clean and they are not fighting over anything. One of the things he noticed when he took over was working with Martin Troutt and trying to get a handle on the budgets and how they worked. He asked if they had a set schedule as in how they rotated their projects for work to be done each year. He went back and looked at the history and said it's kind of hard for someone in his and Dave Berky's shoes to plan projects based on how the RTC funds are distributed. For example last year's great project (Murry Street) went over the amount they expected to pay so does that mean all of the other projects get delayed? He thinks if the RTC Board can purchase the truck and they have the money available for both entities to purchase the supplies then they won't have to rely on any one project going over thus pushing the other projects back. The deal with the Lund project is they had plans to do it and they (Lund Town Council) were told that it would be done for 2 years prior but other higher priorities came up and now they feel like they have been slighted. He believes this will really help with those

kinds of situations. Obviously preventative maintenance is where they need to be for a few years anyway.

Wayne Cameron asked if there should be language in the mutual aid agreement to address this RTC equipment or is it already covered. Richard Howe said he thinks they did the language to be "as needed". Bill Calderwood said this would be slightly different because the agreement with the City and the County specifies that if the County is assisting the City or vice versa that the City will run their equipment and the County will run theirs in case there is an accident and the familiarity with that piece of equipment. This will be a little bit different because this Board will be the owners of that equipment. BJ agreed and said they may have to put a policy or something in place for use of that equipment. The reason he says that is it's a complicated piece of equipment. It's not a water truck where someone can go jump in it and flip a switch to spray water. He thinks the RTC should put a policy in place so there is training for the operator's on this piece of equipment and only the people who have the training should be able to operate it. It will protect the RTC from someone jumping in it who doesn't know how to operate it. Bill Calderwood said Eric Trujillo from NDOT volunteered to do some training on how to operate it. He said you can actually fill them full of water and practice on asphalt. There are certain things to watch for and how to adjust your poundage if you're doing chips and stuff like that. Bill said Eric is a valuable resource and he's planning on using that resource. BJ said there are so many great things coming together with this agreement like NDOT coming forward to help out where they can.

Richard Howe said he thinks there should be a certificate or something on file showing who has had the training and whoever is not on that list for training cannot run that piece of equipment. Bill Calderwood said what they've done in the past is go to NDOT and pirate their policy and training and then make pertinent changes that are specific to the County Road Department and equipment. The County guys can keep them in their files and the City guys can keep theirs in their files.

DISCUSSION – TO INCREASE COUNTY ROAD TAX TO BE COMMITTED TO ROAD PROJECTS WITHIN WHITE PINE COUNTY – Wayne Cameron said he has not had a chance to speak with Elizabeth Frances in regards to funds they can bring into the County, specifically RTC funds. Richard Howe said he and BJ Almborg took a dry run at what it would cost taxpayers. He was thinking maybe \$100 or so, which is not a big deal to do the roads and streets in Ely. But it would actually double taxes per property which is never going to fly. Wayne said they are talking about gas tax. Richard said yes. In order to pay for that project it would cost \$30,000,000 - \$40,000,000. BJ explained that it is a little different than what Wayne was asking. They are talking about doing improvement districts, which would go on your tax roll, property tax. Wayne was talking about just a gas tax. He went on to say that it wouldn't come in as whole where they would do everything at once, it would just be additional funding coming in and over time they would make improvements. Richard Howe asked how much room they have in gas tax. BJ said that is a question that Elizabeth will have to answer because he believes there is a cap which you cannot go over. Richard Howe said yes there is a cap. BJ said he is not sure where the County is in regards to the cap but Elizabeth would have that answer. George Chachas said he believes the County is already there. He said we were the last county to come up in the state and the state said either you come up or you're going to lose whatever assistance you receive from the state. Wayne said he has noticed that different counties have gone up. Richard said Washoe is a county that is about \$.20 higher in fuel prices than other counties in the state. They have so many projects going

on so their gas tax is way up. BJ said Washoe and Clark counties have both implemented the fuel indexing. Clark County was the only one who passed it on the last ballot. It was not on Washoe County's ballot because it was already in place for them. He went on to say that he does not know what White Pine County's options are since that was voted down on the last ballot. It may limit what our options are as far as gas tax. He recommends Wayne still talk to Elizabeth Frances about it because she will have the answers. Wayne said they have been working together on other projects but just have not had the chance to go over this one.

George Chachas said in regards to the gas tax, they may get a few cents but the minute you put indexing on it, that's what killed you last time. The people will give you a little bit but they also want to see something done. That's the only reason it died here and he was one of the biggest ones pushing against it. There needs to be a cap and there needs to be accountability and the people are not getting it. Also if they double the taxes they should be ready to pack their bags. Bill Calderwood said he thinks it is smart business to put everything out there for the people to know.

DISCUSSION – SET DATE FOR NEXT MEETING – The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 15, 2018 at 8:00 a.m. in the White Pine County Library conference room.

***APPROVAL OF RTC MINUTES (11/16/17 Meeting Minutes)** – Item tabled.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (3 Minute Time Limit) –

George Chachas referenced the visual map given for the NDOT beautification project on 11th Street (Nevada Northern Rail Way). His main concern is snow removal. Businesses have to shovel the sidewalks and the only place to put the snow is in the gutter. There is going to be a huge problem because the plows will not be able to go from one end of town to the other and follow the sidewalk in a straight line. They want to eat, not beautification. They need traffic, not slowed down. He wants to see a map of what's going to happen downtown. The 11th Street East map he's looking at scares him.

He asked for a copy of the letter from the Lund Town Council. He also wants to remind them that Carol McKenzie put in a sidewalk. She claims it is not a sidewalk but it's outside her property line. It may be 3 feet wide. She sat on the Planning Commission for years. There is no ADA access on either end of that and some people have said that they can walk along the side of the highway. He said some people don't belong along the side of the highway and if you sit on the Planning Commission and you're making rules and regulations that we have to have a sidewalk and you have a standard then you should follow your own standard and that's not being done.

In regards to RTC projects and prioritizing and what the policy is, he would encourage that they think about having the towns pick their priorities and the RTC Board can pick and choose from there in accordance with priority and costs. That way you don't have the problem of second-guessing when you don't actually live there. All of those projects should come from Lund, Ruth and McGill. Then you can tell them this is what their priority list is, this is what the RTC can afford and this is what can be addressed.

Wayne Cameron adjourned the meeting at 8:42 a.m.

