

# REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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A Special meeting of the Regional Transportation Commission was held on February 22, 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  
Gretchen Baker, Snake Valley Trails Partnership (8:10 a.m.)  
George Chachas  
Naomi Harris, Recording Secretary

**ABSENT WERE:**

BJ Almborg, Basin Engineering  
Dave Berky, City of Ely  
Steve Baer, NDOT Representative  
Desiree Barnson, Representing Ely Bus

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

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

**Public comment:**

George Chachas has not seen anything in regards to the Campton and Great Basin intersection. It is way too narrow for the amount of traffic we have. He has not seen or heard anything from the State or the RTC. That intersection needs to be widened. The minimum width on that street is 55' per City code.

In regards to 622 7th Street where the old grade school is located, the Indians called it the Trail of Tears. There was a federal grant up there and those people put rip rap in the road. That has not been addressed and it was a federal grant. He said if they don't want to screw up any other grant they better make sure that one is done properly.

George said he is here on behalf of the Greater Downtown Business District as their spokesman saying they want the 4 lanes downtown, as-is. He's talked to different people who have gone to Elko who claim the streets look good but you pass a lot of closed businesses. George does not want that here. Downtown is slowly shriveling and they do not need another spike in the coffin.

**DISCUSSION/ACTION/POSSIBLE APPROVAL – TO WRITE A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR A TAP GRANT APPLICATION FOR A MULTI-USE PATH IN BAKER, NEVADA WITH POSSIBLE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN FY20** – Bill Calderwood said he sent an email to Elizabeth Frances asking if the RTC can legally use RTC funds for a project like this because it does not fit within any of the City or County right-of-ways. She has not been able to research that yet. She did respond with an email, however, addressed to Catherine Bakaric and cc'd to Bill Calderwood which he read aloud:

*“5% is \$38,500 and the application is under the County’s name, which obligates the County to that amount. I have mixed feelings on this, as I have not had time to research whether or not the RTC funds (the proposed source for the match) can be used for this project. If you place it on for ratification it can always be tabled and I will try to research by the submission deadline. This is the best answer I have for right now.”*

Richard Howe said he spoke to Elizabeth Frances also. They can do a letter of support but the 5% match, \$38,500 is not part of this budget cycle. They talked about using “In Kind” services utilizing the citizens of Baker to offset that \$38,500, which is fine. But like the email from Elizabeth says, there is a question about the County funding a project like that when it is located in an NDOT’s right-of-way, not the County’s. He believes the best way to handle that 5% match is to put it back into the hands of the Trail Committee. The County cannot commit to that until the legality question is answered. The letter of support is ok. Wayne Cameron agreed and said it is in the future which gives them enough time to come up with the correct answer. He is still kind of apposed to it but next year they can look at it, if it is legal. If it is not, it’s a moot point.

Richard Howe asked if the RTC budget that was turned in for FY19 included this and Wayne Cameron said no it did not. This would be something to look into for the 2019/2020 budget.

Richard Howe added that they also need to be aware of setting precedence for others. What they do not want is to have another trail committee come in and ask for funding. Once you commit to something like that it opens doors. The “In Kind” services for the 5% match and the letter of support are ok but putting the County’s stamp on committing to the \$38,000, or 5% match is not the thing to do.

Bill Calderwood made a request that the Board look carefully at the location of the trail. He said it kind of just runs out to the south of town. Jolene Gardner asked if it will run along the highway. Bill said yes. He would understand it better if it ran from the Visitor’s Center toward the Caves because the application states that they are requesting the trail due to the increased vehicle traffic going to the Caves. He does not understand what the intent of the Trail Committee is. Maybe there is a plan to tie into that trail down the road?

Richard Howe asked Bill Calderwood if the Road Department has to get permission from the State to do maintenance on their part of the right-of-way. Bill said he thinks since it is their right-of-way they (the State) would oversee everything within that right-of-way.

When Gretchen Baker entered the meeting (8:10 a.m.) Bill Calderwood asked her how the trail location was selected. He said it seems to him that the trail running south is very random. It has no point of start. Is the intent to go down and turn around?

Gretchen said they have had a number of community meetings over the years. She said they thought that a path along the highway would be most logical because it goes down to the ball field, there is a group of houses down there with kids who have no other good way to get to school and it can also tie into the road that goes to the water tank which leads to a whole series of other dirt roads that are on BLM land. Bill Calderwood said when he looked at it he didn't understand why it was running there as opposed to taking it from the Visitor's Center and heading straight up to the Park. In the application it talks about the increased traffic to the Park so he was curious why it didn't go straight up there to service the Park.

Gretchen said eventually they would like to do that but it is about 5-1/2 miles to the Park so it would be a lot more costly to go that direction. They thought they would start by doing this simple 1 mile project where there is a lot of use and it is flat. Going up to the Park you gain 1,500 ft. in elevation. They see people who do not have vehicles who are living in the apartments that have to walk on the highway back and forth to get groceries at the convenience store so that just seemed like a very logical place to start a trail.

Richard Howe updated Gretchen on the conversation they had before she arrived. He told her that the County is not in a position to absorb the 5% match, equaling \$38,500 and the RTC budget did not include it either. They also talked about "In Kind" services, which would be the trail committee members or Baker citizens raising the money. He said the letter of support is not a problem. The major concern is where the \$38,500 is coming from. He wants to see a clear path to that. Speaking for the County, he does not want to set a precedence of doing a 5% match to them and then every time someone wants something like that they come running to the County. Another big question is the NDOT right-of-way and where is the County's responsibility in regards to that. The last issue is the location. It would be nice to have it going up towards the Park. It looks to him like the trail is to support the residents of the town which gets them from the Visitor's Center to town safely, which he has no problem with. Safety is first. He would like to see the trail go up towards the Park.

Gretchen said it is steep to get up to the Park. She said they see tourists wandering around town after hiking up in the park who want to walk their dogs, etc in town so something flat is desired. And something that is accessible more times of the year because right now the Park is closed due to the snow. The trail is something that would be open year around.

Bill Calderwood stated that he was surprised with Steve Baer's comment at the last meeting saying that NDOT would ultimately be responsible because it falls within their right-of-way. He asked if there was anything said beyond that comment. Did NDOT ask for a maintenance plan from them? Gretchen said no, they have not asked for a maintenance plan. Bill also told Gretchen that before she got to the meeting he told the Board that he contacted Elizabeth Frances to ask if the RTC can fund projects outside of the County's right-of-way but she does not have the answer to that yet.

Gretchen said the matching 5% would come during the construction phase, which is in 2020 so that part of the RTC budget hasn't been funded yet. But the Snake Valley Trails Partnership's members are willing to volunteer to do whatever "In Kind" services necessary to help with funding. She does not think they can make the complete 5% match just with their volunteer hours so they would need to find some additional funding. Richard Howe said his request to Gretchen is to really put that to the forefront as to where they are going to get that money and bring it to the County. They have until 2020 so it is not included in any of their current budgets. He wants a clear picture of how much they can come up with on their own and how much they would be asking for afterwards. The letter of support is not a problem and the Park brings in a lot of tourists so of course a nice trail system would be supported.

Richard Howe made a motion to write a letter of support for a TAP grant application for a multi-use path in Baker, Nevada with no financial costs be mentioned in the letter at this time. Jolene Gardner seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was approved.

#### **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (3 Minute Time Limit) –**

George Chachas suggested that the bike trails planned for Aultman go out to Baker to help those folks out. He said tourism is very important to Ely. Vacant buildings and vacant motels are not so they need to keep that in mind.

He still sees no signage at the Charter School. You have a couple hundred students out there and a lot of traffic. The safety aspect has not been addressed for several years. He does not know if that is a County, City or State issue but someone is dragging their tricycle. Wayne Cameron said it was addressed at a State meeting. George said he has been bringing it up for over a year and has not seen anything done about it. Wayne Cameron said the State is looking into a multi-facet light that will turn on and off at a certain times.

The other concern George has is the lack of an overhead pedestrian ramp. He said they are going to create one heck of a problem over and above what is out there with the amount of foot traffic in that area. They're going to put in a new jail and they are not doing anything for public safety. At the last City Council meeting or the one prior, they approved another possible motel in that area with over 3 stories. Everywhere you go they say to stay away from traffic... don't put schools near truck stops. And what do they do? They put a school out there and then they find a truck stop to put in. Jolene Gardner said the Charter School is supposed to be moving. Richard Howe said it is moving to Avenue M. George said the kids need to move across that highway now. He's talking about public safety.

Wayne Cameron adjourned the meeting at 8:21 a.m.