

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

A meeting of the Regional Transportation Commission was held on August 15, 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
Desiree Barnson, Representing Ely Bus
Russ Merritt, City of Ely
Mike Cracraft, City of Ely
BJ Almberg, Basin Engineering 8:03 a.m.
Steve Baer, NDOT Representative 8:12 a.m.
George Chachas
Naomi Harris, Recording Secretary

Wayne Cameron called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

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

George started the meeting out by saying 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.

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 are the ones who used a federal grant for that project and they need to correct the fallacy.

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. He was supposed to put in curb and gutter and the valley gutter. He hasn't married the two drop inlets yet. He knows better than that. He was a contractor at one time. He doesn't know if they pulled his license but something is going on there that needs to be corrected. It's going on 5 - 6 years now.

DISCUSSION – UPDATES FROM NDOT – Richard Howe said NDOT was at the County Commission meeting yesterday and reported that they are delaying the work on Main Street. They said they will start at the museum and work east instead of west. They will go east and bypass downtown. The downtown project is kind of dead. They talked about reinstating the street light in front of the Hotel Nevada. There was question about putting that light back in because the project is going to be held off for quite a while. The Main Street Commission voted to prioritize projects. They deemed the Lund to Blackjack speed limits and enforcement as their No. 1 county priority. No. 2 priority was to put the heat back on the state to start up this project in Ely. Richard voted no because his No. 2 priority is passing lanes between Ely and Las Vegas, which he thought was more important. It did pass through the county to make No. 2 priority to put the heat on the state to continue with the project in Ely going west to east. He does not know where that is going to sit, as they are going back to re-evaluate all of that. They were here to inform the County Commission of what they are doing and it was a very nice presentation. BJ AlMBERG said he thinks they will go from Bell Avenue and go east and then up Great Basin Blvd. Wayne Cameron asked if that is where the drainage ditch is, down by the museum. BJ said yes they will be doing some drainage stuff down through the 7th Street area. Richard Howe said their comment as far as delaying the Ely project was cost. It went way up as in regards to flood control and all of that. It's close to \$50 million now. There's only so much money in the fund and only so much time they can do it. That's what was said in the NDOT update at the County Commission meeting. Wayne said they held a public hearing at the convention center.

Steve Baer said Richard Howe sent him a letter regarding the Baker Advisory Boards. Steve submitted a traffic study to be done. He said he thinks what Richard Howe was talking about was getting radar feedback signs. Steve said he likes them and he has requested the traffic division to do a speed study for Baker, McGill and Lund. He knows the guy has been out getting the loops out so they have already been starting collecting the data for that study. Hopefully they will get back to him in the near future to let him know if those signs can be installed at those locations.

Speaking to Richard Howe, Steve said he was not sure what Richard meant when talking about Geiver Alert Signs for all directions approaching the intersections. Richard Howe said he thinks they were referring to the radar feedback signs that stabilizes speed limits. He added that he really believes in those signs. The Sheriff's Department had one on Campton and it really slowed people down. Steve agreed and said statistically they are only 20% effective but he thinks when they look at statistics like that it is 20% effective to get you down to the 25 MPH speed limit or whatever it

may be. But you definitely slow down. He said they will have them for the Ely project coming down the canyon and another one out by the softball field where it transitions to 35 MPH.

Steve said they are finishing up 893, Spring Valley Road with a chipseal. He thinks before they shut down for the winter they want to get 487 and 488, which are the roads to the park through Baker.

Richard Howe said he spoke to Eric Trujillo and Bill Calderwood and between the State and the County, the cutoff road between the border into Baker will be mowed after the State is done with Spring Valley. He asked Bill Calderwood if that was correct and Bill said yes, the County and State will do some trade work and get it done.

Richard Howe asked if Bobcat Drive is a city road or county road all the way down to Great Basin College. Jim Alworth said from the college to the pump house on the hill is a city road. Richard said the vegetation is high on the side of that road. He asked Russ Merritt if he would check it out and get it mowed. He said it is not anyone's fault. It's due to a wet spring.

Steve Baer said Richard is right and said weeds are growing on all of their routes also, and it's hard to keep up. They are way behind on weed control especially when they are working on other betterments. It makes it hard to dedicate time and people to that. Plus there are issues of their mowers breaking down. Richard reiterated that he is not putting the blame on anyone. He's just stating what needs to be done.

Steve Baer said NDOT had to borrow RTC's oil distributor truck to hold some oil for them over the weekend because of a rain storm. He said that it is a really technical piece of equipment and the operator is critical at understanding it all. In his opinion, between the City and County, he would utilize one operator that is proficient who would run it for both sites. He said there are a lot of things that can get screwed up if you don't have a proficient operator. He said it sounds like the County has an operator who is pretty serious about it. He recommended that they keep that operator on the distributor truck full time, whether it's City work or County work. Bill Calderwood said he sent an email to the City that morning in regards to training operators on NDOT projects. He said that is how Gerald Lopez received training and got to the level of proficiency he is at now. The only problem he sees is if the the operator is sick or scheduled to be off during an oil project. Steve said NDOT has four distributors but generally they use three of them. They have five people who are certified on shooting the oil but they use the same three operators over and over just because the same operators can use the same truck. They understand their trucks and understand if something is not working right. It's better than switching operators. It is good bringing new drivers on and having them ride in the cab with the operator for training but you're going to get the best results from using the same operator that is most proficient. Bill Calderwood said the County's goal is to get a second operator trained. He rode in the cab with Gerald and said there are so many switches and so much going on in that truck that he didn't even talk to him. Gerald said once he gets comfortable with the truck he will communicate better but at the moment he needs to concentrate on the operation of the truck. Steve said he was just talking to Eric Trujillo about that. He said Gerald can come out when NDOT flushes out 893. They can have him do part of that work if the County would like more training opportunities for their operator.

DISCUSSION – UPDATES FROM CITY OF ELY – Russ Merritt said the County and the City completed the second road stabilization on Mill Street on Tuesday. He said Gerald Lopez and Hubert Brown (County guys) did an amazing job helping the City get that project done.

The seal for Mill Street is scheduled for August 28th. It will be a single, 1/2" chipseal. They have some upcoming rejuvenation oil projects scheduled for Lyons, Campton, Ogden and Mill Streets, which he will schedule and coordinate with Martin Troutt. He has the measurements of the roads already so he just needs to schedule the oil. They will also be starting a road stabilization on Belford Avenue this year.

Other than that, they will be continuing with regular road maintenance and filling potholes until winter hits. BJ Almberg added that they did Bobcat Drive as well.

Bill Calderwood asked if they are pulling the 1/2" chips from the Becko Pit and Russ said no.

Wayne Cameron asked Russ Merritt if he has a list of all of the City's projects. He said the City Council voted to use the RTC funds for something else. Wayne said he called Russ and asked him about it but Russ did not remember having a conversation about it. Wayne said Jeannette Trask called him and said the City Council wanted to move money around and so she wanted to verify that it would fit into the budget. Russ said he was not part of any of those conversations.

DISCUSSION – UPDATES FROM COUNTY – Bill Calderwood said on August 13th the County did a fog seal on 212N, which is now complete. They did change up some things since the last RTC meeting. Originally they were going to do a 1/2" chip this year and then a 3/8" next year. Both have been done. They found that the road seems to net together when they use the larger chip first and then the smaller one second and do it all at once.

As Russ Merritt indicated, the first applications of Mill Street and Bobcat Drive are done.

August 26th they will do the second stabilization on Pole Line. August 28th they will do the first 1/2" chip on Pole Line and 1/2" on Mill Street. September 4th they will do the second application of the 3/8" chip on Pole Line and on September 10th they will fog seal Mill Street to complete that one and a fog seal on Pole Line. They will have ± 4,000 gallons left over that they will split 50/50 with the City for spraying other roads. The next project for the County will be the Mitchell/Oxborrow.

The County contacted Doug Olsen with Western Emulsions because they want to build a set of scrubber brushes for their distributor truck this winter. They will get some plans and some free brooms for that scrubber. There is a line item within that budget for mechanics work so it doesn't matter which entity does it. So the City or County can build the brushes and bill the costs to that line item. They definitely want to have those scrub brushes for next spring. They can do a Spec B or shoot the oil a little thicker and shove it into the cracks. This will give them more options.

DISCUSSION – GAS TAX INCREASE TO ASSIST WITH ROAD IMPROVEMENTS – Wayne Cameron said he met with Senator Cortez Masto's office. One of the questions they asked was what are we planning on doing to generate more funding to improve the roads around here. Wayne wanted to put it out there and to get everyone's opinion on if they should pursue a 3–5¢ additional gas tax increase over a 10 year period.

Richard Howe said he spoke to John Ellison yesterday. He said the legislature's last term authorized all Nevada counties (except Washoe and Clark) to impose the diesel tax of 5%. BJ Alberg corrected that and said it's 5¢. Richard Howe said he personally is in favor of it. He said they can do it through the county by acclamation of a County vote or they can send it to the voters. There are diesel trucks traveling through here and the County is not collecting a nickel. He personally thinks White Pine County should move forward as quickly as possible to impose that 5¢ on the diesel fuel. There are people here with personal diesel trucks but the real revenue is going to come from the semi's coming through town. It's a revenue stream that can really benefit the County and they have an opportunity to collect. They put fuel indexing on the ballot and the people turned it down. But this is an opportunity through diesel tax. Richard is going to do some research and see how he can move forward and put it on the County agenda to impose the 5¢. He does not know if they can push it through as a County Commission vote or go to the citizens. The diesel tax is revenue they are losing right and left. They need to get some of that revenue to the City and County for road improvements. It has laid dormant and now they have the legislative backing to impose it.

BJ Alberg said he thinks it can go through the County if it is a super majority vote on the Commission. If not, he believes it has to go to a ballot question. Richard asked if a super majority is 4 out of 5 votes, not 3. BJ said yes and Wayne said yes, a super is 80%.

Richard Howe said with this revenue source and with the roads being what they are, it is time to pursue and he is going to proceed. If they want to do the gas tax next year and get a vote by the citizens, they need to get the ball rolling right now if that's what they choose to do through the City and/or the County combined. The citizens are driving on these roads every single day and they want them all done but there's only so much money in the pot. He's going to work on the diesel but this group needs to educate the public on the importance of gas tax. They haven't raised the gas tax since 1994. If they can do 5¢ tax for gas and diesel they can generate some revenue to improve the roads. Wayne Cameron agreed and said they need to show something if they are going to pursue some of this federal funding. BJ Alberg said he is in 100% agreement. When NDOT comes and says they do not have enough funding to do both sides of the street, it's unfortunate because fuel indexing was on the ballot two years ago and the residents voted it down. It was on the ballot everywhere except Washoe County because they already had fuel indexing there. Clark County had it as well, but they were "sunsetting" so they had to re-up it. After Clark County passed it on the November vote, the Clark County RTC made it clear that they did not want that funding going elsewhere after their residents are the ones who passed it. This is additional money to do Clark County projects. If White Pine County citizens would have passed it here there would have been possible funding to participate in projects. It's much easier to come in and ask for additional funding when you have something to offer, not just asking for a handout. He thinks it's very positive when you can show that you are trying to help yourself by coming in and implementing the things that are available to you. Richard Howe said that's what the public needs to be educated on. When they do educate the public, this Board, the City and County have to guarantee that a certain amount will stay within White Pine County's boundaries, which he believes the diesel tax does. BJ Alberg said he believes a percentage of the diesel tax will come back in but it is only for certain types of projects for the truckers. But those improvements have to be made and the money spent within White Pine County. Richard agreed and said a certain amount will go to NDOT and will come back to White Pine County. Everyone complains about the road conditions but they have to be willing to pay to fix it. The money has to come from somewhere.

Jim Alworth said he somewhat agrees with what they are saying but still there is such a great variance in funding. The City gets \$171,000/year in fuel tax, which doesn't even cover wages. The County gets close to \$2 million. They have been doing great working together but even if you add additional tax revenues, the City still does not have money. These last 2-3 projects that are happening wouldn't even have happened if it weren't for the cooperation of the City and County. You need to have a formula on how you are going to distribute the diesel tax with the City. Diesel trucks come in and out of Ely on the main drag. They do not travel on neighborhood streets. How are they going to give the City an equal amount of the additional 5¢? They can't just say do it with no plan.

Richard Howe said he understands that there has to be some give-and-take. But the County itself is ± 8,000 square miles. The City is ± 32 miles. That's another way to formulate how the money is distributed. He agrees absolutely with Jim that the diesel trucks are driving in on the City streets. There will be some type of negotiated deal on how the money will be distributed. Will it be a windfall? Probably not but the opportunity is a County opportunity through a legislative action to impose the 5¢. He agrees that the diesel trucks are coming in on the City part of the State Highway. But the County has ± 8,000 miles and the City has ± 32 miles.

Jim said they are trying to educate the people. They are the ones who are going to be paying this. If they get additional revenue they need to educate the people and tell them that they will be able to help the City. He understands the mileage and how they distribute according to mileage percentages. But how is it going to help the City? The City has no way of adding additional miles to their tabular to get more fuel tax. In his opinion, this Board or even the County Commission needs to look into helping the City with additional funds of say, (for example) \$300,000 right off the top since the County gets \$2 million. The City will never have enough money to do what they have to do with two guys. If you want to educate the people... what are the people going to get out of this?

Richard Howe said the gas tax is something that will be possibly be on the 2020 ballot and will have to be discussed further through meetings over the next 7-8 months. The diesel tax he was talking about earlier can be immediate. The first thing they have to do is tell the people that they are using the money for the roads, City or County. How that's distributed will have to be worked out. The question here is - is it a good idea to impose the gas tax? They need to discuss things further and decide if they want to put it on the 2020 ballot.

Bill Calderwood asked BJ Alberg if he remembered what the budget number looked like that the State provided with a breakdown on last year's gallons from 1-5¢ for the diesel tax. He thought White Pine County was looking at 5¢/gallon, in the neighborhood of ± \$800,000. BJ said he could go back and look. He said there was also another diesel tax on the legislature but that was for the cities, which did not pass. Just the counties passed.

Wayne Cameron said if everyone is ready to go for the gas tax then they need to form a little sub-committee with representatives for the City and County and BJ and they can sit down and dig up some figures. The intent over the last 4-5 years is for the RTC to spend money within the City limits. That's where they spent a lot of their money, doing improvements on roads around here.

DISCUSSION/ACTION/POSSIBLE APPROVAL – NEW ANTENNA EQUIPMENT AND REPEATER FOR PROGRAMMING NEW RADIOS IN ELY BUSES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$30,000 FROM PUBLIC TRANSIT BUDGET – Desi Barnson said when she went to order new radios for the new bus, she found out that the antenna repeater they were operating off of belonged to someone who is deceased and his license lapsed in 2011. With that being said, they were not operating how they were supposed to be. So to get new radios so they are doing everything legally, they need to get a new repeater because the trust has already been sold and the building, etc. of the gentleman who is deceased. She went to the TV District on Monday and they approved to let them put a repeater and equipment in their building at Squaw Peak. They should be getting some type of contract over to the DA for them to do that. But she is here to request help from the Public Transit budget for purchasing the repeater and equipment. She has a quote from Dan Peña, which he said is on the low end. The low end is \$23,470 but it can go up to \$30,000, which Dan will not know until he goes into the building.

Bill Calderwood said it will be a one-time cost and then after that they do annual site maintenance visits that will show up in the budget thereafter. Richard Howe asked how much they had in the budget. Desi said she visited with the Finance Department and they indicated that there is a substantial amount in the budget at the moment. Wayne Cameron asked if Desi's department would absorb the cost of the annual fee. Bill Calderwood said they would divide the fee into the number of sites so one entity does not have to pay for the full travel amount. He would think that would go into next year's Public Transit budget. He said as of this year, they split the annual preventative maintenance contract in thirds with the Fire District, the Road Department and Sheriff's Department. It makes sense to him to take care of the Ely Bus next year so Desi doesn't have to worry about it. It's done annually by Sierra Electronics. He will bring forward that cost during the next budget cycle.

Richard Howe made a motion to approve new antenna equipment and repeater for programming new radios in Ely Buses in the amount of \$30,000 from the Public Transit. 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 November 21, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. in the White Pine County Library Conference Room. If something comes up before then they will call for a special meeting.

***APPROVAL OF RTC MINUTES (04/18/2019)** – Wayne Cameron questioned George Chachas about his comments in regards to R-Place who put in new improvements on Aultman and 8th. George corrected it to 9th Street.

Richard Howe made a motion to approve the 04/18/19 meeting minutes with corrections mentioned. Wayne Cameron seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion was approved. Jim Alworth abstained since he is new to the Board.

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 put down that oil that doesn't meet minimum City specs. They didn't put in curb and gutter which is a requirement. They have got to stop wasting the money. That's why they have trouble getting

additional tax money. If the public sees them doing something with the money they will give it to them. But when they squander money they will not.

There has been no mention from the Board about asking the State about taxing electric cars. There is going to be more and more of them and they're not getting a dime from them. There should be an average cost implemented. Those people should pay that money. They share the road but they are not giving anything back.

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.

The community park across the street has some loose tarp. It's a distraction and if it comes loose it becomes a safety hazard. It's going to land on an oncoming car and then they will have real problems. It's not the first time he's brought this up. It's not being addressed. He doesn't know who gave them the permit to repair but he would get rid of them if it was up to him.

He sees around the community that they are putting up OHV signs which is nice. The problem is, they are blocking ADA access. Those signs should have been put on stop signs. It would have cost them less and taken less time to put up. Those in violation need to be pulled and repositioned.

Avenue A is a private road. You've done SNPLMA projects there and you're encroaching on private property. You've got to stop the double standards. You can't spend tax payer's money on private roads. If there is some kind of release, he would like to see it. He's asked 2-3 times already at the City Council meetings.

Lastly, Avenue D, north of the new Holiday Inn Express is not to City code. There is no crowning at the end of the road and the curb and gutter that was put in is not L-shaped. Behind the curb and gutter on the north side, you do not have a walkway. That property owner needs to address that. It's a \$13 million project. The City needs to address its code and they're not doing that.

Wayne Cameron adjourned the meeting at 8:44 a.m.